

Self-Directed Learning Requirements for Trainees, Fast Trackers and Upgrading Judges.

What is self-directed learning? Self-directed learning is a way of people developing their own knowledge, skills and experience in a flexible manner at their own pace. For judges this can include writing or even reading materials such as the Judges' Guidelines.

There are several compulsory activities required as part of the judge training programme for those either wishing to join the British Dressage Judges list for the first time or to upgrade to a new level. The purpose is to provide access to the knowledge and experience needed to become a good judge. Judges are expected to organise these opportunities for themselves and do it in their own time with the help of the following guidelines. There are four activities that must be completed and signed off using the templates available on your Cloudtrainer account before the final assessment.

These include:

- Sitting in- for a minimum of 30 horses with 2 different judges (all judges)
- Writing - for a minimum of 20 horses with 2 different judges (fast trackers and trainees only)
- Practise judging- 20 practise tests, with 10 being reviewed by a tutor judge (all judges)
- Observing training- 2 sessions of a minimum of 2 hours each (all judges)

Sitting in, writing and practise judging must be completed at British Dressage affiliated competitions (not including freestyle classes) at the level you are working towards.

PLEASE NOTE: As long as you have fulfilled the minimum of 30 horses with at least two different judges for the sitting in and have written for 20 horses with at least two different judges, you can evidence these at different venues, different classes and different days if you so wish to reach the required number of horses for sign off. This also applies for practise judging, you can submit any combination of 20 sheets to the Tutor Judge to select 10 to review.

You are able to evidence all self-directed learning activities stated above that have been completed no later than 12 months ago.

Sitting in, writing and practise judging must be completed at an affiliated competition at your relevant level. With all of the self-directed learning it is essential that candidates are respectful of the class judges, riders, horses and uphold the values of the Judges' Code of Conduct.

Sitting in

Sitting in with a judge while they are judging a test is intended to improve understanding of how the judge manages a class and their writer at the appropriate level. It also provides an insight into how they deal with the different movements, and this is where the focus should be rather than on the actual marks and comments given. To fulfil the requirements, a minimum of 30 horses at the level the judge wishes to upgrade to, with 2 different judges is required. This is a compulsory requirement for trainees, fast trackers or for upgrading judges.

Sitting in: making arrangements

To make arrangements to sit in candidates will need to find an appropriate class in the schedules and contact the organiser to ask their permission to do it. Candidates will also need to get the name of the class judge and make contact to ask their permission to sit in with them. Candidates should be able to check the time of the class on the venue website and at the same time print off a starter list. Make sure to arrive in good time and be tidily dressed. During the class there may be moments when the class judge has time to answer questions, but candidates should find out at the start how they would like to conduct sitting in during the class and whether they would be willing to discuss anything further after the class. Candidates must always remember that anything heard during the class was between the rider and judge and should not be discussed with anyone else.

Please note that sitting in for National Championships is not arranged through the show organisers. If places do become available, they will be strictly limited, if opportunities become available these will be advertised in the judge's newsletter.

Writing

Writing for a judge is intended to help judges learn to manage a writer, develop empathy with them by gaining experience as a writer and learning how experienced judges work with their writer. This should include a minimum of 20 horses at the level with two different judges and is for trainee judges and fast trackers only.

Writing: making arrangements

To make arrangements to write for a judge, the candidate should find a suitable class in the schedules and contact the organiser to ask if it would be possible to write for the judge of a class of the right level. Normally organisers will be very pleased to have someone ask to write, they will confirm the start time of the class nearer the time. Writers should be sure to arrive in time, be tidily dressed and ask the judge if there were things they would like to be done in a particular way. It is important that writers know the test well beforehand.

Practise judging

Practise judging provides an opportunity to judge tests at the level and in real time without the pressure of marks and comments actually counting. It will help develop the skills needed to assess the way of going, evaluate the performance of the movements of the combination and decide on the appropriate mark and comment, while having to keep up with the class. In short, it is an opportunity to put the skills learned through the workshops, training and other self-directed learning activities into practise. Candidates need to complete 20 tests in total at the level, they can be from more than one occasion. 10 of these sheets will be sampled and reviewed by a Tutor Judge. Practise judging is required for trainees, fast trackers and upgrading candidates.

What will the Tutor Judge assess? Tutor Judges will check that the requirements of a test have been understood. These requirements include the need to always give a comment for a mark of 6.5 or lower, that the comment and mark for a movement must support each other, that the collective marks and comments must be based on the movement marks and comments and the relevant collective directives should be underlined to indicate that they need improving. The assessing Tutor Judge will not have seen the tests used to practise judge and does not need to be the class judge when completing practise judging. They are not forming

an opinion of the actual assessment of the way of going or the performance of the movements, more that appropriate judging principles have been applied.

Practise judging: making arrangements

A list of Tutor Judges can be found by [clicking here](#). In advance of the Practise Judging sessions, candidates will need to organise their own sheets and make contact with a Tutor Judge by email well in advance of the practise sessions to ensure they are happy to review the sheets. Candidates will need to find an appropriate class in the schedules, it should be possible to check the time of the class on the venue website beforehand and at the same time print off a starter list. Candidates must also contact the event organiser to seek permission and to check whether there are the facilities for practise judging at the venue. It could be that candidates need to park a car somewhere around the arena, sit in an empty judge's box or sit in the gallery with a writer. It is important that candidates also find out the name of the class judge to gain their permission. Candidates should make sure to arrive in good time to get settled with the writer well before the class to avoid any disruption to competitors, it is important that candidates do not cause any impact on the competitors, class, judge or venue. Candidates must ensure they are dressed in a tidy and professional manner.

All 20 tests must be sent to the Tutor Judge who will select 10 of them to assess, all 20 will then be returned. Candidates deemed not yet competent at the level will need to repeat the practise judging, to demonstrate that they have understood the feedback from the Tutor Judge.

Before sending off the sheets they should be added up and the mark and % score detailed at the bottom of each one. The scores should also be filled in on a copy of the starter list with the candidate judge's name on. It is important that candidates include an SAE with the correct postage to enable the Tutor Judge to return them once they complete their evaluation along with an assessment sheet, which should be added to the Judges Portfolio once completed. It is important to keep this sheet as candidates cannot come forward for final assessment until all elements are complete. If the Tutor Judge deems candidates not yet competent (NYC) they will need to have another attempt. There is no limit on the number of attempts to be successfully evaluated, the only limitation is that this must be achieved within the registration period (2 years) prior to coming forward to final assessment.

There is a cost of £20 for reviewing practise judging sheets and this must be paid directly to the Tutor Judge.

Observing training

Observing training involves a visit to a rider/trainer/coach's yard. The purpose is to develop a deeper understanding of the horse's way of going and what is involved to produce the correct way of going and riding of the movement at each level. We appreciate that finding a full two hours at one level may be challenging and if necessary, the level above may be included. We recommend a minimum of 2 two hours sessions for trainees, fast trackers and upgrading candidates for each upgrade although we recommend further time watching training sessions with successful trainers/riders/coaches as this will always be a good investment.

Observing training: making arrangements

It is the judge's responsibility to identify, select and contact an appropriate rider/trainer/coach to ask them if it is possible to observe training sessions. We would encourage judges to observe someone who is experienced in riding and producing horses, to provide an all-round

insight into training the movements and developing the way of going (ideally having competed at a regional as a minimum at the level of observation). It is important candidates arrive in plenty of time and ask the rider/trainer/coach where they would like them to sit and whether they are happy to have a discussion afterwards. Some riders/trainers/coaches may be prepared to discuss things during or after the session, although it is important to remember this is an observation and candidates should not interfere with the rider/trainer/coach's session, particularly if they are working with an external rider. Do not video or take pictures and if at any point the rider/ trainer/coach feels you are becoming a distraction you could be asked to leave. Remember that if candidates were to judge any of the horses in the session at a later date, they must be judged as they appear on the date and not with any preconceived ideas. At the end of the session the rider/trainer/coach must sign off the record sheet and this should be added to the judge's portfolio.

Candidates may also fulfil this requirement at a regionally arranged clinic, training session or yard visit where training is taking place. The sessions must be relevant to the level or be the level above. Please contact the relevant RDO to find out what opportunities are available in your region.

Candidates will need to ask riders/trainers/coaches in advance if/what they will charge for the session and pay them accordingly at the time.

Any judges need to ensure all parties have third party liability insurance.