



Royal Kennel Club

# Obedience Regulations

2026

## **Royal Kennel Club Regulation Booklets**

This is one of a series of booklets designed to present the Regulations in a more accessible form. The complete set of Rules & Regulations is of course still available within the Royal Kennel Club Year Book.

There are booklets available for Breed Shows, Obedience Shows, Agility Shows, Working Trials and Bloodhound Trials, Heelwork to Music, Field Trials and Rally. Whilst including all the relevant regulations also included is an extract from the B Regulations on the requirements of dog registration.

# ROYAL KENNEL CLUB COMPETITIVE OBEDIENCE SHOW REGULATIONS

*As at 1st January 2026*

## GENERAL REGULATIONS

### 1. Eligibility.

- a. Competitive Obedience show licences will be issued only to registered or affiliated societies or other organisations approved by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club in accordance with the provisions of Regulation G4. (Licensed Competitive Obedience Shows), with the exception of companion dog show licences which will be issued only to unregistered organisations only.
- b. Dogs entered at Royal Kennel Club licensed Competitive Obedience shows, with the exception of companion dog shows, must be registered at the Royal Kennel Club in accordance with Royal Kennel Club Regulations for Classification and Registration [B].
- c. Only dogs of six calendar months of age and over are eligible for competition at Royal Kennel Club licensed Competitive Obedience shows. However, show organisers may accept Not for Competition entries at their discretion. Dogs 12 weeks and over are eligible to enter Not for Competition.
- d. If, in the opinion of the Board, a dog is of a savage disposition it shall be ineligible for entry at any show held under Royal Kennel Club Regulations.
- e. Persons disqualified or suspended under Royal Kennel Club Rules are not eligible to take part in any Royal Kennel Club licensed event.
- f. No activity shall be conducted which permits, encourages or develops aggression in a dog.

### 2. Welfare of dogs.

An exhibitor (or competitor) whose dog is entered at a Royal Kennel Club licensed event should take all reasonable steps to ensure the needs of their dog(s) are met, and should not knowingly put their dogs' health and welfare at risk by any action, default, omission or otherwise. A breach of this Regulation may be referred to the Board for disciplinary action under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations. The use of pinch collars, electronic shock collars, or prong collars, is not permitted at any Competitive Obedience show licensed by the Royal Kennel Club. This shall apply at the venue and within the precincts of the show.

### 3. Code of Conduct.

Those taking part in Royal Kennel Club licensed/approved events are expected to maintain and abide by the highest standards, in accordance with Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and appropriate Codes of Conduct as published from time to time.

#### **4. Licensed Competitive Obedience shows.**

Licensed Competitive Obedience shows. Licensed shows held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations are those held under licence granted by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club and are:

- a. Championship obedience shows - open to all competitors, except where a qualification for entry has been approved by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club. Royal Kennel Club Obedience Certificates are offered, and any number of standard or special classes may be scheduled, including qualifying heats for Royal Kennel Club competitions. Only Royal Kennel Club registered societies are eligible for these licences.
- b. Premier obedience shows - open to all competitors. Any number of standard or special classes may be scheduled, including qualifying heats for Royal Kennel Club competitions. Only Royal Kennel Club registered societies are eligible for these licences.
- c. Open obedience shows - open to all competitors. Any number of standard or special classes may be scheduled, except qualifying heats for Royal Kennel Club competitions.
- d. Limited obedience shows\* - where entry is limited to;
  - (i) Members of the show society
  - (ii) Competitors resident within a specific area
  - (iii) Specific breeds
  - (iv) By numbers (such numbers to be stipulated in the schedule)
  - (v) Or otherwise subject to approval of the Board of the Royal Kennel Club.
- e. Matches\* - where entry is limited to members of the societies.
- f. Companion dog shows\* - at which registered and unregistered dogs are eligible to compete.

On the day of the event a current public liability insurance document must be held or the event will be deemed to be unlicensed.

\*Dogs which have won an Obedience Certificate or obtained any award that counts towards the title of Obedience Champion under the rules of any governing body recognised by the Royal Kennel Club are not eligible for entry at these shows. Qualifying heats for Royal Kennel Club competitions may not be scheduled at these Shows.

#### **5. Permission to hold shows.**

- a. The Board shall have the power to grant, withhold or cancel permission to hold any licensed Competitive Obedience show.
- b. Any cancellation or abandonment of a show without prior permission of the Board must be reported in writing to the Royal Kennel Club without delay, and must be carried out in accordance with the relevant Royal Kennel Club published event cancellation policy.

#### **6. Societies are required to apply for permission to hold Special Events.**

Applications should be submitted to the Royal Kennel Club by email at least six months before the start of any qualifying heats for the event.

Special Events are designated as any activity-related event which cannot be included on the schedule of a normally licensed show/trial/competition due to being invitational and therefore not open to all competitors, or which are not being held at a licensed show. Where competitors qualify for a final via heats held at that

and other shows/trials/competitions, special event permission must be sought for the final whether it is held in conjunction with a licensed show/trial/competition or as a separate standalone event. This would not apply where all of the heats are held at the same show/trial/competition at which the final is held.

The regulations relating to the disqualification and forfeit of awards will apply to these events.

### **7. Jurisdiction and responsibilities.**

The officers and committee members of the society / or the licensee holding the licence are deemed responsible for organising and conducting the show safely and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Royal Kennel Club and agree to abide by and adopt any decision of the Board or any authority to whom the Board may delegate its powers subject to the conditions of Regulation G41. In so doing those appointed as officers and committee members, or the licensee, accept that they are jointly and severally responsible for the organisation of the show and that this is a binding undertaking.

Any decision given against the society under Rule A11 of the Royal Kennel Club Rules may be communicated by the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club to the Secretaries of registered or affiliated societies holding licensed events, and may also be published in the Royal Kennel Club Journal, together with a report of the proceedings in the matter.

Any notice sent to the Secretary of the Society at the contact address duly lodged at the Royal Kennel Club shall be deemed full and sufficient notice on the part of the Royal Kennel Club of (a) any proceedings, matters or decision of the Board, or of any Authority to whom the Board may have delegated its powers or (b) of anything arising out of the show licence or to the conduct of the Show, or (c) of any other matter whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the same. Any change in officers or committee members must be notified to the Royal Kennel Club.

### **8. Application.**

The application for a licence to hold an Obedience Show must be made to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club at least six months before the proposed date of the show together with the appropriate licence fee.

### **9. Documentation.**

At every Competitive Obedience show the following documents must be available:

- a. The licence for the show.
- b. A current public liability insurance document, which must be clearly displayed.
- c. A copy of Royal Kennel Club Rules and relevant Competitive Obedience Regulations.
- d. A copy of the schedule for the show.
- e. The completed entry forms for the show.
- f. A Royal Kennel Club incident book, containing details of all incidents occurring at the show, a copy of which must be submitted to the Royal Kennel Club within 14 days .
- g. A list of results for each class must be retained by the society for at least 12 months from the date of the show.

### 10. Removal of dogs.

Following discussion between the chief steward and the show management and/or a veterinary surgeon, a dog shall be prevented from competing and/or removed from the show if it is:

- a. A bitch which is in season.
- b. Suffering from any infectious or contagious disease.
- c. Interfering with the safety or chance of winning of an opponent.
- d. Of such temperament or is so much out of control as to be a danger to the safety of any person or other animal.
- e. Likely to cause suffering to the dog if it continues competing.

The circumstances of such a removal shall be recorded in the show incident book and submitted to the Royal Kennel Club

### 11. Competition of dogs suffering from contagious or infectious disease.

No dogs suffering from any infectious or contagious disease or having been exposed to such disease during the period of 21 days prior to the show may compete. Competitors infringing this Regulation will be liable to be fined and/or to be dealt with under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11.

### 12. Objections.

- a. An objection must be lodged directly with the Royal Kennel Club within seven days after the last day of the show and under these circumstances a copy of the objection must be sent to the show secretary.

When an objection is lodged the following information must be given;

A statement detailing the objection, quoting the relevant regulation(s).

The objection fee of £35, or such amount as may from time to time be decided by the Board.

The name and address of the objector.

The name and address of the owner of the dog (if relevant).

All relevant evidence.

The objection fee may be returned after consideration of the objection.

- b. With the exception of objections made under Regulation G10 (Removal of Dogs) the dog should be allowed to compete and a full report made to the Royal Kennel Club.
- c. The right to lodge an objection to a dog or any action taken at a show is limited to anyone in attendance at the show not under a term of suspension imposed by the Royal Kennel Club, or the owner of a dog competing or his accredited representative.
- d. No objection shall be invalidated solely on the grounds that it was incorrectly lodged.
- e. Objections or alleged breaches of Royal Kennel Club Regulations shall be referred to the Board who shall have the power to delegate the hearing of the objection or breach of regulation to the relevant Committee or may decide to refer the matter for disciplinary action under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11.
- f. Any appeal against the relevant Committee decision must be lodged within fourteen days of the decision being given and will be subject to the prescribed appeals procedure as shall be determined by the Board from time to time.

**13. Fraudulent or discreditable conduct at Competitive Obedience shows.**

The secretary of a Competitive Obedience show must immediately report in writing to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club any case of alleged fraudulent or discreditable conduct, or any default, omission or incident at or in connection with the show which may come under his notice, even where parties concerned have indicated that they intend taking no action and at the same time forward to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club all documents and information in connection therewith which may be in his possession or power. If evidence is placed before the Board to its satisfaction that undue influence has been exercised by any person(s), or that any improper means have been used to influence the appointment of a judge or to interfere with the exhibition of a dog at any show held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations, the Board may require all correspondence and evidence in connection with the case to be produced in order that may deal with the offender(s) under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11.

**14. Penalty for infringement of Royal Kennel Club Rules by the Competitive Obedience show society.**

The Board shall have power to fine the show society which has breached Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations in the conduct of the show.

**15. Obedience Certificates.**

- a. The Royal Kennel Club will offer an Obedience Certificate (Dog) and an Obedience Certificate (Bitch) for winners of first prizes in Class C Dog and Class C Bitch at a championship show, provided that the exhibits do not lose more than 15 points out of 230, and provided also that the classes are open to all breeds.
- b. Judges must also award a Reserve Best of Sex provided that the exhibit has not lost more than 15 points out of 230.

**16. Obedience Championships.**

- a. The Royal Kennel Club will offer at Crufts Dog Show each year the Royal Kennel Club Obedience Championship-Dog and the Royal Kennel Club Obedience Championship-Bitch. A dog awarded one or more Obedience Certificates during the calendar year preceding Crufts Dog Show shall be entitled to compete.
- b. The tests for the championships shall be those required for Class C in these Regulations.
- c. Caller stewards and scribe stewards officiating in the Crufts Obedience Championships on either day must not work a dog in the championships.

**17. Sponsorship and donations.**

No offer of sponsorship or donation may be made on condition that a specified person is appointed to judge.

**18. Payment of sponsorship.**

In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the liability of the sponsor(s) of any class or classes at a show shall be limited to making good any deficiency between entry fees received and any prize money paid out.

The show secretary must intimate the amount of sponsorship due within one calendar month of the close of the show and the sponsor(s) must pay this amount within fourteen days of receipt of such notice. If the sponsorship is not paid within the specified time the show secretary must report the matter to the Royal Kennel Club.

**19. Facilities.**

- a. Judging rings shall not in any circumstances contain less than 83 sq m (900 sq ft) of clear floor space and shall not be less than 6 m (20 ft) in width except that for Championship Class C the ring must contain not less than 148 sq m (1600 sq ft). Ring sizes should, where possible, be considerably larger.
- b. Width of unobstructed gangways between rings shall be not less than 2 m (6 ft) and where there is a ring on one side only the width of unobstructed gangway shall be not less than 1 m (3 ft).
- c. The obstruction of gangways is prohibited.
- d. Each ring must be enclosed by ropes or by other suitable means.

**20. Awards.**

There shall be at least 4 awards including reserve on offer in every class. Printed award cards must be given and must indicate the name of the society, the type and date of the show, the nature of the award and the name of any commercial firms donating the awards.

**21. Schedule.**

The show organisers must issue a schedule for the show, such schedule to follow the layout of the specimen schedule provided by the Royal Kennel Club and conform with Royal Kennel Club Regulations. No modifications may be made to the schedule after it has been published, except by permission of the Royal Kennel Club, and such modifications must be advertised.

A copy of the schedule issued for each show must be retained by the organisations for at least one year from the date of the show and must be forwarded to the Royal Kennel Club if requested, together with any other documents.

**22. Entry forms.**

- a. An entry form must be issued with each schedule and shall follow the layout of the specimen entry form as published by the Royal Kennel Club and conform to Royal Kennel Club Regulations. No modifications may be made to the entry form after it has been published, except by permission of the Royal Kennel Club and such modifications must be advertised.
- b. All entry forms must be preserved by the show committee for at least twelve months from the closing date of entries and must be forwarded to the Royal Kennel Club if requested, together with any other documents.

**23. Control of dogs.**

The owner, competitor, handler or other person in charge of a dog at Royal Kennel Club licensed events must at all times ensure that the dog is kept under proper control whilst at the licensed venue including its environs, car and caravan parks and approaches. This Regulation applies before (at any time during the set up period at the venue), during the event and afterwards (at any time during the breakdown of the event). The mating of bitches within the precincts of the competition, as stipulated above, is forbidden. An exhibitor or competitor should ensure that contact details for any handler are available and must be provided upon request in any investigation of a breach of this regulation by such handler.

**24. Entry for competition.**

- a. Societies have discretion to accept online entries only, postal entries only, or both online and postal entries. Schedules must clearly state the way in which entries may be made.

- b. The show organisers may reserve to themselves the right to refuse any entry(ies).
- c. Entries for a show must close at the time indicated in the schedule, which must be no later than fourteen days before the show opens.
- d. Entries received by post bearing an official postmark dated on or before the date for closing of entries must be accepted subject to any proviso included in the Schedule or to the conditions of Regulation G24.b.
- e. Entries from competitors claiming that missing entries have been correctly posted must be accepted on the day of the show, subject to the conditions of Regulation G24.b. Such claims will have to be substantiated to the Royal Kennel Club which will request documentary evidence, subsequent to the show.
- f. A dog must at the time of entry for a show be registered as required by Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations in the owner's name (or registration or transfer applied for). In the case of joint registered owners the full name of every registered owner must be given.

Where an owner makes an entry on behalf of another joint registered owner(s) or where an agent enters on behalf of a single or joint registered owner(s) such person must have the authority and consent from the single or joint registered owner(s) to sign the entry form on their behalf thereby binding them all to Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations. In the event of any dispute, evidence of such authority and consent will be required.

A dog acquired subsequent to entry having been made at a show may compete as the new owner's property provided that an application for the transfer has been forwarded to the Royal Kennel Club before the show, and the new owner has undertaken to abide by the Regulations and conditions of the original entry form (and in accordance with the conditions set out above).
- g. A separate application for entry must be made by each owner and acceptance of the entry declaration must be given in accordance with the provisions specified thereon - whether in writing or via the internet. Entries cannot be accepted without the owner's acceptance of the entry declaration and the appropriate fees, or the express permission of the show secretary in the event of a deficit in fees; such outstanding amounts shall become a debt due and require payment upon demand.
- h. In estimating the number of awards won, all wins up to and including 25 days before the start of the competition shall be counted when entering for any class. For these purposes a competition shall be defined as all classes covered within the same schedule. In the event that a dog becomes eligible for the next class at a particular show, after the entry for that show has been sent, it is the competitor's responsibility to notify the show secretary or the show processor at least 14 days before the date of the show. The dog should then be moved into the appropriate class(es). The dog must be moved into the corresponding number of classes as were entered at the lower class. If there are fewer or no classes available for the next class the competitor should be offered a refund of the relevant entry fees. The show organiser is not required to split a class should entries exceed the maximum of 60 as a result of this notification process.

- i. If a competitor reports less than 14 days before competition that a dog has been entered which is ineligible for a particular class, the dog must be withdrawn from the competition in that class; no refund of entry fee(s) shall be due.
- j. No transfer between classes or parts of classes is permitted unless an entry error has been made by either the show executive or printer. If any handler works their dog in the wrong part of a split class then that dog shall be excluded from working in the correct part of that class. If the handler works the dog in a wrong class (e.g. Beginners instead of Novice), then the dog shall be excluded from the lowest class entered. The judge of the class in which the dog has been incorrectly exhibited must advise the chief steward as soon as possible of the incident. The chief steward shall, upon such notification, advise the judge(s) in the other relevant class(es) that the dog is ineligible to work in that class.
- k. A dog must not compete in the same class more than once, including special classes.

#### **25. Animals allowed in show.**

No animal other than one officially entered shall be brought into the precincts of a dog show during its continuance, except any dog registered to assist the disabled, or dogs required for educational or instructional purposes or by permission of the Board.

However, at the discretion of the show society, a dog brought to the show by a spectator may be admitted into the precincts of the dog show, with the proviso that those in charge of the dog sign a declaration confirming the dog is free from disease and that the dog will be kept under proper control at all times.

#### **26. Free passes.**

The show organisers shall provide all competitors with a free pass enabling them to enter the show at any time of the day their competition is scheduled, but in the case of a dog owned in a partnership only one such free pass need be issued. Additional free passes may be issued at the show organisers' discretion.

#### **27. Catalogue.**

Marked running orders championship Class C - The show society must publish a marked running order containing the following:-

- a. On the front outside cover or title page, the name of the society, the type, venue and date of the show as described on the licence and any additional title for which prior permission has been given by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club; the secretary's name, a contact address and telephone number and the name of the chief steward.
- b. Championship Class C - An alphabetical index containing the names of competitors, the number and name of each exhibit and the number of the Championship Class C in which it is entered, giving a separate line to the name of each competitor, and the full particulars of the exhibit as given on the entry form completed by the competitor.
- c. Submission of running order - Within fourteen days of the close of the show, a copy of the official marked running order, containing a full and correct list of the entries in the required classes as detailed above, with all the awards correctly marked, must be submitted to the Royal Kennel Club.

**28. Dog fouling.**

- a. Any owner, competitor, handler or other person in charge of a dog is required to remove as soon as possible any fouling caused by their dog(s) at any Royal Kennel Club licensed show within the licensed venue and within the environs of that event including car and caravan parks and approaches.
- b. Any organisation holding a Royal Kennel Club licensed event is required to provide an adequate number of receptacles for the disposal of such fouling.

**29. Veterinary support.**

- a. The secretary of a licensed show is required to arrange veterinary support compatible with the arrangements for the show and the anticipated entry.
- b. The competitor/owner shall be responsible for any such fees, charges or the like should veterinary support be called upon during the continuance of the show.

**30. Management.**

Show organisers are responsible for the following:

- a. Classes may be scheduled in any order but this order must be followed at the show except that show organisers, by publication in the schedule, may reserve the right to vary the order of judging when the entry is known.
- b. The maximum number of entries allowed in any class is 60. If the entry received exceeds 60, except for Championship Class C, the class shall be equally divided (to within one dog) by a draw. If the resulting individual class entry, after division, exceeds 60 a further division of the total class entry shall take place so that each equal division of the class is 60 or less. In all classes, other than Championship Class C, if the entry received exceeds 50 the class may, at the discretion of the show organisers, be equally divided by a draw (to within one dog). If the resulting individual class entry, after division, exceeds 50 a further division of the total entry may take place so that each equal division of the class is 50 or less. Prize money for each division (which must be judged separately) shall be the same as that offered for the original class.
- c. Where classes are divided, competitors entered therein shall be notified of all changes.
- d. The maximum number of dogs a person may judge on one day is 60. Reserve judges may enter dogs for competition at the show but may not compete if called upon to judge. Show organisers should appoint sufficient judges for the expected entries.
- e. Where the entry for Championship Class C exceeds 60, it will be reduced to 60 by a ballot based on a system of merit.  
To calculate the merit score for the dog, points are allocated for places gained at previous shows on the following scale:-

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Open Class C	5 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
CH. Class C	20 points	12 points	8 points	4 points
Crufts Obed	30 points	18 points	12 points	6 points

Points are calculated for placing between the date on which previous wins are calculated for entry to the show (i.e. up to and including 25 days before the start of the competition) and the same date ONE year earlier.

Competitors not having given a merit score will be considered as having none. The merit score for all competitors in Championship Class C will be on display at the show.

Competitors claiming an incorrect merit score must be reported to the Royal Kennel Club.

- f. Ballot for running orders.
- (1) A draw for the running order in Championship Class C must be made prior to the show.
  - (2) Where the draw makes provision for reserve competitors they should not be substituted before 12 noon on the day of the show and they shall be worked consecutively after the first 60 dogs have been called to work. Reserve competitors in attendance at the show and excluded by the Regulations from the final running order shall receive a refund of their entry fee for the class.
  - (3) Where a draw for the complete running order of classes other than Championship Class C is not made, show managements must conduct a ballot to determine a running order for at least the first 6 competitors/ dogs in these classes.  
Sub paragraph (3) does not apply to limited shows.
  - (4) In classes where a complete or partial running order has been made the relevant competitors must be notified before the day of the show.
  - (5) In classes where there is not a full running order all competitors must personally report to the ringside of all classes entered and book in, by marking a list of entries, within one hour of the scheduled time for the commencement of judging of the class. In classes where a full running order has been made, competitors must book in on arrival at the show or by 12 noon, whichever is the earlier. The class lists are to be provided by the show management and should be available from the stated opening time of the show. Wherever possible ring scoreboard stewards shall be appointed to assist with this booking in procedure.
  - (6) All published running orders must be strictly observed. Competitors reporting late will be excluded from competition unless they have previously reported to the chief steward that they are actually working a dog in Championship Class C.
  - (7) The chief steward may, in exceptional circumstances, relax the running order. All such decisions must be recorded in the show's Royal Kennel Club incident book.
- g. Judges should, whenever possible, provide their own caller stewards, but the show management shall provide any caller stewards if necessary. Caller and scribe stewards used by judges at the show must not work a dog on the same day, with the exception that a caller and scribe stewards may compete in one class, other than the class in which they are officiating, provided that the class in which they are officiating has 25 entries or less. Caller and scribe stewards taking up this option will be exempt from any running order and may compete at a convenient time agreed by the judges concerned.
- h. Neutral and decoy scent cloths must be provided by the show executive for all classes as applicable and shall comply with the requirements set out in Annex C.

### 31. Use of firearms and sound amplifiers.

The use of firearms is prohibited and use of sound amplifiers is forbidden except as authorised by the show management.

### 32. Approval of judges.

- a. Show societies must apply to the Board for approval of Championship Class C judges for championship obedience shows, at least nine months before the date of the Show, on the form provided. Approval for all first time appointments must be applied for a minimum of eighteen months before the date of the show, on the form provided. Prior to being granted Board approval, judges must have been assessed by a Royal Kennel Club approved assessor. Individuals may apply to the Board for approval to award Championship Obedience Certificates for the first time, provided that the judge has fulfilled the minimum criteria in accordance with Regulations G32.b and G32.c. Subject to approval judges would be included on the list of Approved Championship Obedience Judges.
- b. On application for a person's first appointment to judge Championship Class C the minimum conditions which apply are:  
A person must:-
  - (1) have at least eight years judging experience which must include 30 championship and/or premier and/or open show appointments of which at least 15 must be Open Class C and two each of Beginners, Novice, Class A and Class B, and
  - (2) have completed and passed an Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure examination on the Royal Kennel Club Academy prior to attending a Royal Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar.
- c. *Qualifications for judges at premier and open shows and for the non certificate classes at championship shows-*  
On first appointment judges must satisfy the show committee that they:
  - (1) have progressed' out of Beginners at a licensed championship, premier or open obedience show as a handler.
  - (2) have acted as a caller steward or scribe (for the whole class) for any scheduled standard classes on eight occasions at licensed championship, premier or open shows, at least three of which must be as a caller steward; and
  - (3) have completed and passed an Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure examination on the Royal Kennel Club Academy prior to attending a Royal Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar.
  - (4) have attended a Royal Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging Seminar and passed the assessment.
- d. A judge's first three appointments for shows must be restricted to Novice. The next three appointments must be up to and including Class A. Before accepting an Open Class C appointment, a Judge must have completed at least twelve appointments in total. These must include a minimum of three Novice, three Class A and three Class B appointments. It is the individual's responsibility to retain proof of their judging appointments.

- e. Intervals between judging appointments.
  - (1) Judges of Obedience Certificates will only be approved to judge an Obedience Certificate for Dogs and/or an Obedience Certificate for Bitches once in each year calculated from 1st January to 31st December.
  - (2) There is no minimum interval between appointments to judge classes, other than Obedience Certificate Class 'C', at championship obedience shows.
- f. A person must not judge Open Class C at more than 6 shows in any year calculated from 1st January to 31st December.

### **33. Judges and judging.**

- a. Judges at Royal Kennel Club Competitive Obedience shows are expected to maintain and abide by the highest standards in accordance with Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and appropriate Codes of Best Practice as published from time to time.
- b. One judge only may officiate for each class (or each part of a divided class) and must be present in the ring and observe the dog in the ring at all times.
- c. Variations to tests are not allowed except as provided for in Regulation G(E) 2.b.
- d. Judges at Competitive Obedience shows must not enter for competition a dog which is recorded in their sole ownership, or handle a dog, at the show at which they are judging. A dog recorded in part ownership with the judge may be entered for competition in any part of a class other than the part which the judge is judging.
- e. In any test in which judges' articles are used, none should be injurious to the dog, and must be capable of being picked up by any breed entered in that test.
- f. Judges must provide their own scent cloths for all classes as applicable and these cloths must be of the same texture. These cloths must be between a minimum of 15cms by 15cms (6ins) and up to a maximum of 25.4cms by 25.4cms (10ins), and judges' cloths must have a non-detachable weight.
- g. The Board of the Royal Kennel Club shall have the power to grant, withhold, suspend or cancel the approval of any judge.
- h. The judging of Championship Class C takes priority over all other classes.
- i. In the event of dogs obtaining equality of marks, 'Run Offs' to decide the winning dogs will be judged one at a time by completing one or more of the tests for that class as set out in Annex A.
- j. In classes with 10 or less entries the award of 1st place may be withheld if in the opinion of the judge the standard of work does not merit the award. (This sub-paragraph does not apply to Championship Class C).
- k. A judge of Championship Class C must record each dog awarded 215 points or more in the judging book. The show secretary will record these in the official marked catalogue.
- l. Judges are not permitted to make a public commentary on the dogs whilst judging. Any other commentary must not include mention of a dog's name or reference to previous awards.

- m. Imperfections in heeling between tests will not be judged but any physical disciplining of the dog by the handler in the ring or any uncontrolled behaviour of the dog such as snapping, unjustified barking, fouling the ring or running out of the ring even between tests must be penalised by deducting points from the total score and the judge may bar the dog from further competition in the class.
- n. Judges should be aware of the responsibilities of chief stewards as outlined in Regulation G Annex E.
- o. The decision to withdraw from competition is entirely at the discretion of the competitor, who must signify to the judge that they wish to withdraw.
- p. The Board of the Royal Kennel Club shall have the power to grant, withhold, suspend or cancel the appointment of any judge.

### **34. Judging contracts.**

- a. Invitations to judge must be made by show organisers in writing and must include a declaration to be signed by the judge, stating that they are qualified to judge in accordance with Royal Kennel Club Competitive Obedience Show Regulation G32 (Approval of Judges). Show organisers must ensure that written acceptances are received and these must be followed by written confirmation of the appointment by the show organisers upon which a judging contract will be deemed to have been formed; except that in the case of appointments to award Obedience Certificates, the contract to judge will only be formed when Royal Kennel Club approval of the appointment has been given.
- b. Show organisers are required to include the following wording in judges' invitation letters:

'In accepting this invitation you agree to be bound by Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and the Royal Kennel Club Code of Best Practice for Judges and confirm that you are qualified to judge in accordance with Competitive Obedience Regulation G32. In addition, you will familiarise yourself with the Royal Kennel Club G Regulations which are current at the date of the judging appointment. In doing so you also recognise that you are obliged to notify us in writing of any change in personal circumstances which may affect your ability to fulfil this judging appointment. You should note that we reserve the right to cancel the contract before the date of the appointment if there is such a change in your circumstances, which in our reasonable opinion would adversely affect your ability to fulfil the appointment. Clubs may cancel a judging appointment where there is clear evidence that the judge's ability to fulfil the appointment has been adversely affected, or in consultation with the judge.'
- c. All judging contracts are subject to cancellation at the discretion of the Royal Kennel Club in the event of the judge being subject to relevant disciplinary action.
- d. In the event of a judge failing to honour an engagement to judge, the Board will require reasons for such failure, and in the event of the explanation not being considered satisfactory, the Board may impose a fine. Similarly, in the event of a society not honouring a judging contract, the society may be required by the Board to give reasons for such failure, and in the event of the explanation not being considered satisfactory, the Board may impose a fine upon the society.

- e. In the event of such fines not being paid within the time stipulated by the Board, the judge or officers and committee members of the society / or the licensee, as applicable, may at the discretion of the Board be dealt with as if a complaint under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11 had been lodged and proved to the satisfaction of the Board.

### **35. Competing.**

- a. After a dog has commenced competing in a class, no substitution of handler is permitted in that class.
- b. For the duration of the show and including those in the exercise area, all dogs must be on a lead except when competing or practising prior to competition.
- c. No dog shall be allowed in the judging ring other than those competing in the class being judged.
- d. Nothing may be carried, worn or displayed by a handler or a dog during judging which is capable of indicating the identity of the dog or owner nor must anything be said or any action taken which identifies the dog. If requested by the judge or ring steward a handler may (at their choice) disclose their first name and dog's pet name for possible show report use.
- e. Any dog which is not presented for the scent exercise when called for testing will be considered to have withdrawn from the class.
- f. In all tests, dogs must compete in the same order but the judge may relax the running order where necessary in the scent tests. These must not be carried out during the main ring work but will take place as a separate test at the judges discretion.
- g. Food and/or toys shall not be carried or given to a dog under test except in Introductory and Pre-Beginner Classes where silent toy and food rewards may be used in accordance with the relevant class Regulations and in a Special Class if specified in the class definition. Competitors must not distract other dogs when rewarding their dog with food, toy or play. (Refer to Obedience Code of Conduct)
- h. Dogs may only wear a half-check collar or a smooth collar when in the ring. A medicated collar may also be worn in the ring.
- i. No person shall carry out punitive correction or harsh handling of a dog at any time whilst at the licensed venue, including its environs, car and caravan parks and approaches.
- j. No competitor shall impugn the decision of the judge or judges.
- k. After the commencement of judging the responsibility for dogs being brought to the ring to compete is entirely the competitor's.

### **36. Practice rounds.**

Practice rounds are permitted at the judge's discretion and the judge's decision is final, provided their main purpose is to aid the dog's or handler's confidence and their experience of the working ring, and subject to the following:

- a. Where practice rounds are allowed they must be available for all competitors in that class.
- b. The judge may limit the amount of time taken, which is to be no longer than the actual round.
- c. The competitor may only practice those exercises that are set out in Regulation G(A) 'Eligibility and Schedule of Classes' for the class in which they are entered.

- d. The use of toys which emit any noise and the use of food are not permitted.
- e. The usual rules and etiquette for those who compete must be followed except that the handler may use as many commands as are necessary to aid the dog, and may touch the dog in a non-harmful and non-intimidating manner.
- f. Excessive exuberance from the handler or dog will not be permitted if the judge considers that it could interfere with the chances of winning of dogs and handlers working in adjacent rings.

### **37. Disqualification and forfeit of awards.**

- a. A dog may be disqualified by the Board from any award whether an objection has been lodged or not, if proved amongst other things to have been;
  - (1) Shown at an unrecognised show.
  - (2) Entered for competition or handled by a person disqualified or suspended under Rule A11, as from the date of the complaint having been lodged at the Royal Kennel Club and for the period of disqualification or suspension.
  - (3) Not entered on a Royal Kennel Club approved entry form in the name and with the details which are recorded with the Royal Kennel Club.
  - (4) Entered after the date announced for closing of entries, subject to the conditions of Regulation G24.e. or contrary to Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations.
  - (5) Suffering from an infectious or contagious disease.
  - (6) Shown in a class for which it was not entered.
  - (7) Exhibited for competition or handled in the ring by a judge of dogs at that show, except where a dog is recorded in part ownership with the judge, in which case the dog may be entered for competition in any part of a class other than the part which the judge is judging.
  - (8) Registered or recorded as owned by the scheduled judge within a period of twelve months prior to the show. This shall not apply to dogs owned by a judge appointed in an emergency.
  - (9) Handled at a show within the previous twelve months by the scheduled judge. This shall not apply to dogs owned by a judge appointed in an emergency.
  - (10) Handled in the class by the scheduled judge's spouse, immediate family, or resident at the same address as the scheduled judge. This shall not apply to a judge appointed in an emergency.
  - (11) Not correctly registered and recorded in the name of the owner at the Royal Kennel Club or as provided in Regulation G24.f.
  - (12) To have been the subject of any other default, omission, action or incident occurring at or in connection with the show rendering it unfair that the award should be allowed to stand.
- b. A dog shall be disqualified by the Board from any awards gained whether an objection has been lodged or not, if entered in a class for which it is ineligible and not withdrawn from competition and the competitor may be fined at the discretion of the Board.
- c. The owner of a dog disqualified for any of the above reasons is liable to forfeit all entry fees paid, and all prize money won by such dog.

### **38. Payment and delivery of prize money and printed awards.**

- a. All prize money and printed awards must be available for collection at the show.
- b. A competitor who does not collect prize money and/or printed awards, except those for special awards on the day of the show, should make arrangements for its collection within 31 days of the show, otherwise the prize money and/or awards will be forfeited.
- c. Where any money prize is offered in the schedule it must be paid in full, without deduction except in cases where amounts are legally due to a show executive.
- d. In the event of the disqualification of an award winner subsequent to the receipt of any prize or prize money, such prize or prize money must be returned at once on receipt of a demand from the show organisers. A failure to comply with any request shall be reported to the Royal Kennel Club and may be dealt with under Rule A11.

### **39. Order of merit when dogs are disqualified.**

If a dog be disqualified, the prize to which it would otherwise have been entitled shall be forfeited. The committee may at its discretion move up the dog or dogs next in order of merit (up to and including reserve or fourth place) to take the prize or prize(s).

### **40. Penalties.**

The Board shall have power to impose any of the following penalties upon any person for any breach of Royal Kennel Club Regulations subject to a right of appeal, notice of intention of which must be lodged within 14 days from the date on which the decision is given and subject to the prescribed appeals process as shall be determined by the Board from time to time;

- a. Warn
- b. Censure/Reprimand
- c. Apology directive (Conduct Regulation or the Control of Dogs Regulation)
- d. Fine
- e. Award disqualified

In addition, the Board may make the following directives;

- f. A dog's registration record may be marked 'incident recorded'
- g. A dog's registration record may be endorsed 'not eligible for entry in any event held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations, nor any unlicensed event recognised by the Royal Kennel Club.'

The right of appeal against directives f) and g) listed above extends to an appeal on the finding of fact of a deliberate dog bite only, but does not extend to an appeal against those directives f) and g) in terms of cancellation or modification of such directives if there is a finding of fact of an intentional dog bite.

In the event of any fine not being paid, or non compliance with any apology directive issued within the time stipulated by the Board, then that person may, at the discretion of the Board, be dealt with as if a complaint under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11 had been lodged and proved to the satisfaction of the Board.

For complaints of conduct whether at a licensed event or on social media, in addition to a warning issued - a short term fixed period of refusal of entry/attendance at Royal Kennel Club licensed events may also be imposed in accordance with procedures to be published from time to time to implement this regulation.

#### **41. Delegated powers of the Scottish Kennel Club.**

- a. For the purpose of paragraphs 1, 4 and 5 of these Regulations the power to grant, withhold or cancel permission to hold any licensed Competitive Obedience show in Scotland, other than a championship obedience show, shall be delegated to the Scottish Kennel Club.
- b. For the purposes of these Regulations, all powers of the Board relative to shows held in Scotland and licensed by the Scottish Kennel Club are delegated to the Executive Council of the Scottish Kennel Club. Applications for licences, objections and allegations of fraudulent or discreditable conduct relative to Competitive Obedience shows licensed by the Scottish Kennel Club must be made to the Secretary General of the Scottish Kennel Club, Unit 2 - Ground Floor, Satellite Business Park, Macmerry, Tranent, East Lothian. EH33 1RY.

#### **42. Eligibility and schedule of classes.**

The detailed Regulations for Eligibility and the schedule of classes are given in Annex A.

#### **43. Specific Regulations for obedience matches.**

The specific Regulations for obedience matches are given in Annex B.

#### **44. Descriptions and explanatory notes for obedience tests.**

Detailed descriptions and explanatory notes for the obedience tests are given in Annex C.

#### **45. Instructions as to the duties of obedience ring stewards.**

The instructions as to the duties of obedience ring stewards are given in Annex E.

#### **46. Instructions as to the duties of obedience chief stewards.**

The instructions as to the duties of obedience chief stewards are given in Annex F.

## ELIGIBILITY AND SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

### ELIGIBILITY

1. In the following definitions of classes first prize wins in limited show obedience classes and open shows confined to one breed do not count for entry in open, premier or championship show obedience classes but do count for eligibility at limited obedience shows or open shows confined to one breed.

2. Dogs are ineligible to compete at limited and match competitions which have won an Obedience Certificate or obtained any award that counts towards the title of Obedience Champion under the rules of any governing body recognised by the Royal Kennel Club. Obedience Champions are only eligible to compete in Class C at open, premier and championship shows.

3. A dog not qualified to enter Championship Class C must be entered in the lowest available class for which it is eligible and may also be entered in another class if desired plus one additional class at the society's discretion. Only qualified dogs may be entered in Championship Class C and these dogs may also enter Open Class C and one additional class at the society's discretion. (Note the qualifications for Championship Class C and Obedience Warrant.)

Exemptions from this regulation are:-

A dog entered in a Good Citizen Dog Scheme Special Pre-Beginner Obedience Stakes Class or

A dog entered into a Young Kennel Club (YKC) obedience class which may also be entered in a maximum of two other scheduled classes (including YKC classes) for which it is eligible or

A dog only entered in a special class (or classes) provided such a class (or classes) are defined in the schedule. Such entries must be made in line with the show's closing date for entries.

4. *Progression on wins.* Progression from each class will be determined by the eligibility for the class as referenced in Regulations G(A). To count for progression wins must be gained in standard classes at Royal Kennel Club licensed Open, Premier or Championship Obedience shows. A first place will count towards progression.

5. *Progression on points.* At the handler's discretion a dog may progress up to the next class, up to and including into Open Class C, by gaining points at each level, using the Obedience Excellent scale of points scheme as follows:

- Ten points for first prize
- Four points for second prize
- Two points for third prize
- One point for fourth prize

If this method of progression is selected, the handler must ensure the show secretary/chief steward signs the dog's Obedience Record Book at the first show entered in the higher class. There is no time limit on this progression, however, once

a dog or handler has progressed, they cannot return to the class that they progressed from. All wins and places to fourth since 1 January 2019 can be included when calculating points. Points are specific to a particular class and cannot be used against a lower or higher class.

Points required for progression on points are as follows:

1. 10 points required for progression from Introductory
2. 20 points required for progression from Pre-Beginners.
3. 20 points required for progression from Beginners.
4. 20 points required for progression from Novice.
5. 30 points required for progression from Class A.
6. 30 points required for progression from Class B.

6. Progression may be on wins or on progression points and the handler may select their preferred means of progression on a class by class basis. A class will be won by the dog that has lost the least number of points in the test, unless otherwise stated for special classes.

7. *Obedience Record Book*. Any handler wishing to progress on points must have an Obedience Record Book as evidence of points gained at eligible shows and which must be available for inspection by the show management and/or the judge on the date of any competition entered by the owner/handler. This must include details of any wins, and any points, that allow for progression. Details will include the show date, name and type of show (Open, Premier, or Championship), judge, class, placing and points.

8. Societies may schedule classes other than those defined below. The eligibility for Special classes must be defined by the society and included in the schedule. The word 'Special' must be included in the title of the class.

## **CLASSES**

### **9. Introductory.**

- a. This class is to introduce and support newcomers to competitive obedience competition. In this class incentives in the form of a toy or rewards may be given to the dog before the exercise, at the end of an exercise or in between exercises within the reward area of the ring. The reward area must be distinct from the working area. Rewards include food which must be carried in a small closed container during the exercises, either in the handler's pocket or left on the reward table, and only verbal and physical cues may be used to keep the dog engaged. The judge will designate the reward area in the competitive ring where food or a toy may be given to the dog by the handler.
- b. To compete in the Introductory Class a handler or dog must not have gained a 1st place in any competitive obedience class, placed 1st to 3rd in Novice and have not elected to progress on points from Introductory.
- c. Handlers will not be penalised for encouragement or extra commands in all exercises.

- d. In any exercise attempted the competing team cannot lose all the allocated points for that exercise but must be awarded a minimum of one point for each exercise they have attempted.
- e. The detailed test will be:
- (1) Engagement - this will be marked throughout the test - the use of motivators and rewards before and between exercises which may include food, silent toys, tricks, and verbal and physical praise within the reward area of the ring. Toys and food in a closed container, must either be left on the reward table, or be concealed in the handler's pocket during tests, where only verbal motivation may be used to keep the dog engaged. 10 points
  - (2) Heelwork to be set and marked as 2 distinct exercises:-
    - 2a. 'Heelwork set up on lead' and 2b. 'Heelwork on lead'
      - a) Heelwork Set Up - on lead, handler to set the dog up in heelwork position, in a designated spot, facing the judge, on steward's command. Handler to be asked if they are ready, when this is acknowledged, steward will say 'end of test' 2 points
      - b) Heel on lead, from a moving start and detailed in Annex G(C)4 c and d - Tests 8 points
  - (3) Recall, to be set and marked as 3 distinct exercises:-
    - (a) 'Recall Present' – On lead dog sitting in front of the handler, handler takes one step back on steward's command, then calls the dog into the present again on steward's command, the steward will say 'end of test' 2 points
    - (b) 'Recall Finish' – on lead. Dog sitting in front of the handler, on steward's command, handler directs the dog to heel, whilst keeping feet still, the steward will say 'end of test' 2 points
    - (c) 'Recall – on/off a long line – handler's choice'. On command, the handler shall leave the dog in a sit or a down in the direction instructed. When instructed, the handler will halt and then turn to face the dog. When instructed, the handler will recall the dog which must return briskly – no present is required, but will not be penalised – once the dog has returned, the steward will say 'end of test' 6 points
  - (4) TOTAL 30 points

### 10. Pre-Beginners.

- a. To compete in Pre-Beginners a handler or dog must not have won two first places in either Pre-Beginners or Beginners nor gained a third place or above in any other competitive obedience class (Introductory Class excepted) and have not elected to progress on points from Pre-Beginners. In this class incentives in the form of a toy or rewards may be given to the dog before the exercise, at the end of an exercise or in between exercises within the reward area of the ring. The reward area must be distinct from the working area. Rewards

include food which must be carried in a small closed container during the exercises, either in the handler's pocket or left on the reward table, and only verbal and physical cues may be used to keep the dog engaged. The judge will designate the reward area in the competitive ring where food or a toy may be given to the dog by the handler.

- b. The detailed tests will be:
- |                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| (1) Heel on lead | 15 points |
| (2) Heel free    | 20 points |
| (3) Recall       | 10 points |
| (4) TOTAL        | 45 points |

### 11. Beginners.

- a. To compete in Beginners a dog must not have won a total of two or more first places in Beginners class or one first place in any other competitive obedience class (Introductory class and Pre-Beginners excepted) and have not elected to progress on points from Beginners; plus, the handler must not have won a first place in any other Obedience class (Introductory class, Pre-Beginners and Beginners excepted) and have not elected to progress on points from Novice.

Handlers that have previously entered Novice as their lowest available class before 31 December 2024 may elect to continue to treat Novice as their lowest available class. Once they have elected to do so they will not be eligible for Beginners thereafter.

- b. The detailed tests will be:
- |                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| (1) Heel on lead         | 15 points |
| (2) Heel free            | 20 points |
| (3) Recall               | 10 points |
| (4) Retrieve any article | 25 points |
| (5) TOTAL                | 70 points |

### 12. Novice.

- a. For dogs which have not won 2 first places in Competitive Obedience classes (Introductory class, Pre-Beginners and Beginners excepted) and where the handler has not elected to progress on points from Novice.

- b. The detailed tests will be:
- |                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| (1) Heel on lead        | 20 points |
| (2) Heel free           | 25 points |
| (3) Recall              | 10 points |
| (4) Retrieve a dumbbell | 15 points |
| (5) TOTAL               | 70 points |

### 13. Class A.

- a. For dogs which have not won 3 first prizes in Class A, B and Open Class C in total and where the handler has not elected to progress on points from Class A.

- b. The detailed tests will be:
- |               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| (1) Heel free | 30 points |
|---------------|-----------|

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- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| (2) Recall  | 15 points  |
| (3) Retrieve a dumbbell, handlers will use their own dumbbell   | 25 points  |
| (4) Scent discrimination. The handler's scent and no decoys. There must be a total of 6 scent cloths. | 30 points  |
| (5) TOTAL   | 100 points |

**14. Class B.**

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| a. For dogs which have not won 3 first prizes in Class B and Open Class C in total and where the handler has not elected to progress on points from Class B.            |            |
| b. The detailed tests will be:  |            |
| (1) Heel work. The dog shall be required to walk at heel free and shall also be tested at fast and slow pace. Each change of pace shall commence from the halt position | 40 points  |
| (2) Send away, drop and recall.   | 40 points  |
| (3) Retrieve any one article provided by the judge.   | 30 points  |
| (4) Scent discrimination. The handler's scent with one decoy. There must be a minimum of 6 and up to 10 scent cloths.   | 40 points  |
| (5) TOTAL   | 150 points |

**15. Class C.**

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| a. For Championship Class C at Championship Shows, dogs must have won out of Novice, Class A and Class B, or have progressed on points from those classes, and have won Open Class C on one occasion and have been placed not lower than third on three further occasions; all Open Class C places and wins must have been won under different judges at Royal Kennel Club licensed shows. |            |
| b. At open and premier shows, and in the Open C Classes held at championship shows, open to all dogs.  |            |
| c. At limited shows, open to all dogs except Obedience Certificate winners and dogs which have obtained any award that counts towards the title of Obedience Champion or the equivalent thereof under the rules of any governing body recognised by the Royal Kennel Club.   |            |
| d. The detailed tests will be:   |            |
| (1) Heel work. The dog shall be required to walk at heel free, and also be tested at fast and slow pace. The dog shall also be required, whilst walking to heel at normal pace, to be left at the stand, sit and down position.  | 60 points  |
| (2) Send away, drop and recall.  | 40 points  |
| (3) Retrieve any one article provided by the judge.  | 30 points  |
| (4) Distant control. Dog to sit, stand and down. Six instructions to be given.   | 50 points  |
| (5) Scent discrimination. The judge's scent and one or more decoys. There must be a minimum of 6 and up to a maximum of 10 scent cloths.   | 50 points  |
| (6) TOTAL  | 230 points |

**16. Multi-choice class.**

- a. Open to all dogs and handlers.
- b. Where there is a choice of exercise the handler will make the choice and inform the judge prior to the commencement of their round.
- c. Extra commands are permitted throughout.
- d. Awards to be given for dogs competing in three award categories. The lowest class for which a dog is eligible must be noted on the master and judge's score sheet prior to competing:
  - (1) Pre-Beginners and Beginners
  - (2) Novice and Class A
  - (3) Class B and Class C
- e. The detailed tests will be:
  - (1) Heel free. The dog shall be tested at two paces of the handler's choice. The change of pace is to take place on the move and the judge will be required to specify which part of the test will be at the faster pace. 20 points
  - (2) Retrieve a dumbbell over a jump or directed retrieve. Must not be the first exercise 20 points
  - (3) Distant control. Dog to sit, stand and down. Three instructions to be given 20 points
  - (4) Send away and drop. Must precede recall exercise 20 points
  - (5) Recall to the front with present or to heel on the move 20 points
  - (6) TOTAL 100 points

**17. Capped classes.**

- a. Organisers of open or Championship obedience shows may set an optional capping level on the entries to be accepted in any standard or special class, and may decline entries received after the capping level has been reached.
- b. Wins and places in standard classes capped in accordance with this Regulation will count towards progression at open and Championship shows and for Obedience Warrant points.
- c. Where a capping level is set, it must be set at a minimum of 35 entries received in respect of Open Shows and 90 entries received in respect of Championship Shows. There is no maximum level at which a cap may be set. Capped classes may be split into two or more divisions in accordance with Regulation G30.b.
- d. The capping level for each capped class must be clearly specified in the show schedule.
- e. The capping level applied may be adjusted upwards by a maximum of 10% after the closing date of a show at the discretion of the show organisers. Capping levels may not be adjusted downwards after publication of the schedule except with the prior permission of the Board of the Royal Kennel Club.

- f. Where total entries received exceed a capping level, entries must be processed in the order received. Processing of entry forms, and of online entries where applicable, must be managed so that the date of receipt of each entry is recorded. (It is permissible to set different opening and closing dates for online entries from those applying to postal entries.)
- g. Entry fees for entries which are received after the capping level has been exceeded must be refunded in full.
- h. Entry forms must allow competitors to specify, if their entry for any capped class is declined because the capping level has been reached that:-
  - (i) they wish the dog to remain entered in all other classes, or
  - (ii) they wish their entire entry for the dog in question to be cancelled, or
  - (iii) they wish their entire entry for all dogs they have entered at the show to be cancelled.In all such cases the relevant entry fees must be refunded in full.
- i. Notifications under Regulation G24.h (dogs which have progressed to the next class) must be processed in order of the date of receipt of the notification.

## **SPECIFIC REGULATIONS FOR OBEDIENCE MATCHES**

(to be read in conjunction with Royal Kennel Club  
Competitive Obedience Regulations)

1. An obedience match may be a competition between club members or an inter-club competition between associations, clubs, societies or branches of clubs or other organisations approved by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club.

2. Only registered clubs, societies and dog training clubs or other organisations approved by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club may hold obedience matches.

3. A club or other approved organisation may hold up to 12 obedience matches per annum. In the case of clubs which have registered branches, each branch may hold up to 12 obedience matches per annum.

### **4. Application.**

- a. Registered clubs' and societies' applications for authority to hold matches is to be included within the annual return required under Regulation C.4.b. Applications by other approved organisations are to be made annually with renewal of the registration fee.
- b. On the day of the event a current public liability insurance document must be held or the event will be deemed to be unrecognised.

### **5. Regulations.**

- a. The committee of the organising club may reserve the right to refuse any entry on reasonable grounds.
- b. Puppies under 6 calendar months of age are not eligible for competition at obedience matches.
- c. No dogs suffering from any infectious or contagious disease or having been exposed to such disease during the period of 21 days prior to the match, may compete. Competitors infringing this Regulation will be liable to be fined and/or dealt with under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11.
- d. Dogs, which have won an Obedience Certificate or obtained any award that counts towards the title of Champion under the rules of any governing body recognised by the Royal Kennel Club, are not eligible for entry in matches.
- e. Prize cards, diplomas or other printed awards may be awarded at obedience matches provided such awards are clearly over printed 'MATCH'.

## DESCRIPTIONS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES FOR OBEDIENCE TESTS CLASSES

### 1. General.

- a. In all classes the dog and handler should work as a team. In all exercises the dog will work in a happy and natural manner whilst maintaining its natural topline. Its head position should in no way compromise its topline or impair the natural movement of the dog. At no time should the dog impede the handler's movement. The dog may be encouraged and praised except where specifically stated. The emphasis of all exercises is that the dog must be judged for accuracy.
- b. Instructions and commands to competitors may be made either by the judge or the steward by delegation except during heelwork when commands must be given by the caller steward.
- c. In all tests the left side of a handler will be regarded as the 'working side' unless the handler suffers from a physical disability and has the judge's permission to work the dog on the right hand side.
- d. The start and finish of each test must be clearly indicated.
- e. It is permissible for handlers to practise their dogs before going into the ring provided there is no punitive correction; this is similar to an athlete warming up before an event.
- f. Timetable of judging - to assist the show executive the following guide timetable is issued:
 

(1) Class C .....	8 dogs per hour
(2) Class B .....	10 dogs per hour
(3) Class A .....	12 dogs per hour
(4) Novice .....	12 dogs per hour
(5) Beginners .....	15 dogs per hour
(6) Pre-Beginners .....	12 dogs per hour
(7) Introductory Class .....	10 dogs per hour
(8) Multi-choice Class .....	8 dogs per hour
- g. In all tests, the points must be graduated, dependent upon the severity of the fault(s).
- h. The dog should be led into the ring for judging with a smooth collar or half-check collar with lead attached (unless otherwise directed) and should be at the handler's side.
- i. Competitors in Championship Class C who have lost more marks than would enable them to qualify with 215 marks at the conclusion of the judging may withdraw from the class with the judge's approval. The decision to withdraw is entirely at the discretion of the competitor and judges must not compel such competitors to withdraw.
- j. Unless expressly included in these regulations and associated annexes, no deviation will be allowed. Any such deviation shall be considered a breach of the regulations and such breaches as notified shall be placed in the show's Royal Kennel Club incident book.

## 2. Equipment.

- a. Any equipment provided by the show organisers, judges or stewards must not be edible or injurious to the dog, nor must it be any material that could easily fracture or splinter.
- b. Retrieve articles and scent cloths provided by the judge must be easily picked up by any breed entered in that class and be readily visible to the dog. Cloths must be between a minimum of 15cms by 15cms (6ins) and up to a maximum of 25.4cms by 25.4cms (10ins), and all scent cloths must be of the same texture and have a non-detachable weight.
- c. Any markers used in the ring must not contain any moving parts.
- d. All ring equipment must be removed prior to the commencement of scent tests.
- e. In Beginners handlers will provide their own article.
- f. In Novice, Class A and Multi-choice Class handlers will provide their own dumbbell.
- g. Classes B & C the judge will provide a separate similar article for each dog.
- h. In Multi-choice Class the show organisers must provide two washable dumbbells of similar size to each other for each dog entered into that test or facilities to enable the dumbbells to be washed between tests.
- i. In Multi-choice Class the show organisers must provide a hurdle to be at least 91.4cm (36ins) wide, with higher side supports, which is filled in from ground level up and to be adjustable in height between 30.5cm (12ins) and 61cm (24ins). The hurdles must not be collapsible or be able to be displaced by the dog.

## 3. Commands/signals.

- a. Pre-Beginners, Beginners and Novice - the competitor shall be allowed to use as many commands and signals as necessary.
- b. Class A - simultaneous command and signal may be used for each exercise. The use of the dog's name will not constitute an extra command if used with the command and signal.
- c. Class B and Class C - one command or signal may be used for each exercise except in the send away. The use of the dog's name will not constitute an extra command if used simultaneously with the command or signal.
- d. Multi-choice Class - the competitor shall be allowed to use as many commands and signals as necessary throughout the test.

## 4. Tests.

- a. Judges must ensure that all manoeuvres can be satisfactorily accomplished by all breeds that may be entered in the class.
- b. In all classes the handler may use the dog's name with a command or signal without penalty.
- c. Heelwork - in all classes at the start and end of the test the dog should be sitting straight at the handler's side except in Introductory, which will be from a moving start.
- d. Heel on lead (applicable to Pre-Beginners, Beginners and Novice) - The dog should be sitting straight at the handler's side. On command the handler should walk briskly forward with the dog at heel. The dog's shoulder should be approximately level with and reasonably close to the handler's leg at all times when the handler is walking. The lead should be slack at all times. On the command to turn, the handler should turn smartly in the direction indicated and the dog should keep its position at the

handler's side. Turning manoeuvres must not be coupled together. The handler and dog must be allowed several paces if required to turn again. On the command 'Halt' the handler should halt immediately and the dog should sit straight at the handler's side. Throughout the test the handler may not touch the dog or make use of the lead without penalty. Heelwork may include large circles or arcs as part of the heelwork exercise.

- (1) Introductory Class. Heel on Lead will be broken down into distinct tests, as detailed above, Heelwork from a moving start, to be on lead and will be:-
    - a) A large 'figure of 8' .....8 points
    - b) Or a large 'S' shape.....8 points
    - c) Or an arc or circle in one direction, break off and reward and the pattern then repeated in the opposite direction.....4 points plus 4 points
  - (2) Pre-Beginners and Beginners Classes. In these classes the only permissible turns are turns of 90 degrees to the left or right and 180 degrees about turns to the right.
  - (3) Novice. Turns as specified in clause 4.d.(2) above, and diagonal turns to the right.
- e. Heel free - (applicable to all classes) The test must be carried out in the same manner as heel on lead and with the same restriction on turns except as specified below.
- (1) Pre-Beginners, Beginners and Novice - to be as heel on lead.
  - (2) Class A. Turns, circles and arcs as in sub-paragraph (1) above and diagonal turns to the left and to the right are permissible.
  - (3) Class B. In this class at normal and slow pace the only permissible turns are turns of 90° to the left or right, 180° about turns to the right or the left and diagonal turns to the right and left. Medium or large circles and arcs can be included. At fast-pace the only permissible turns are turns of 90° to the left or right, diagonal turns to the right and 180° about turns to the right. Medium or large circles and arcs can be included.
  - (4) Class C
    - (i) *Permitted turns*  
At normal and slow pace the permissible turns are 90° to the left or right, 180° about turns to the left or right, diagonal turns to the left or right, and circles or arcs. At fast pace, the only permissible turns are 90° to the left or right, diagonal turns to the right and 180° about turns to the right, and circles or arcs.
    - (ii) *Multiple and combination turns*  
Heelwork patterns may include multiple or combination turns at normal and/or slow pace, provided that such turns, once started, must continue in the same direction and do not exceed a total of 360°. For example, a 'double left about turn' or a 'left about turn-left turn' is permitted, but a 'left about turn-right turn' or an 'about turn-left turn' is not. After the completion of a multiple or combination turn, the handler and dog must be allowed several paces before being required to turn again.
    - (iii) *Figures of eight and weaving*  
Figures of eight and/or weaving between poles/markers may be introduced at normal and/or slow pace. The distance between poles or markers must be sufficient to allow for the largest dog likely to be entered in that class.

(iv) *Stand, sit and down*

At some time during the test, while working at normal pace, the dog shall be required to be left at the stand, sit and down position in any order (the order to be the same for each dog) as and when directed by the judge. The handler shall continue forward alone, without hesitation, and proceed as directed by the judge until upon reaching the dog, both shall continue forward together in accordance with the instructions given.

- (5) Multi-choice Class - The duration of the test to be no more than two minutes with the heelwork at two paces – the handler to choose which two of the three paces (slow, normal and fast) they wish to perform and to advise the judge accordingly. The permitted turns for the test will be the same as for Novice.
- f. Recall-
- (1) Pre-Beginner Class to Novice: At the start of the exercise the dog should be in the sit or down position (handler's choice of position) at the handler's left side. On command, the handler shall leave the dog in the direction instructed. When instructed, the handler will halt and then turn to face the dog. When instructed, the handler will recall the dog which must return briskly to the 'present' position and sit. When instructed, the handler will command the dog to go to the heel position on the handler's left side and sit in the 'heel' position.
- (2) Introductory Class – will be divided into three parts – 4.f.(1)a. Present, 4.f.(1)b. Finish and 4.f.(1)c. Recall, and will each be tested separately.
- a) 'Present' – on lead dog sitting in front of the handler, handler takes one step back on steward's command, then calls the dog into the present on steward's command, the steward will say 'end of test' . . . . . 2 points
- b) 'Finish' – on lead dog sitting in front of the handler, on steward's command, handler directs the dog to heel and finish in a sit, whilst keeping feet still. The steward will say 'end of test' . . . . . 2 points
- c) 'Recall' On/off a long line – handler's choice. At the start of the exercise the dog should be in the sit or down position (handler's choice of position) at the handler's left side on or off a long line (handler's choice). On command, the handler shall leave the dog in the direction instructed. When instructed, the handler will halt and then turn to face the dog. When instructed, the handler will recall the dog, which must return briskly to the handler. A present is not required, but will not be penalised. The steward will say 'end of test' . . . . . 6 points
- (3) Class A: The handler will be instructed to leave the dog in the sit or down position (handler's choice of position) and walk away from the dog. Upon further instruction, whilst the handler is walking away from the dog, the handler shall command the dog to come to the heel position and continue the heelwork until instructed to stop. The point at which the dog is called to heel and the halt point shall be the same for all dogs. After calling the dog to heel at no time shall the handler walk directly towards it.

- (4) Multi-choice Class: After rewarding the dog following the send away, the handler will put the dog into a sit or down position (handler's choice of position) and leave the dog. On command, the handler is to recall the dog in a straight line, at the handler's choice, by:  
 EITHER  
 halting and turning to face the dog then recalling and the dog to sit in front, all on command (no finish is required)  
 OR  
 at the half-way point recalling the dog to heel while continuing to walk away from the dog, then the dog and handler to continue forward in a straight line until commanded to halt.
- g. Retrieve a dumb-bell/article -
- (1) Beginners to Class C. At the start of this exercise the dog should be sitting at the handler's side. On command the handler must throw the dumb-bell/article in the direction indicated. The dog should remain in the sit position until the handler is ordered to send it to retrieve the dumb-bell/article. The dog should move out promptly at a smart pace to collect the dumb-bell/article cleanly. It should return with the dumb-bell/article at a smart pace to the 'present' position and sit. On command the handler should take the dumb-bell/article from the dog. On further command the dog should be sent to heel.
- (2) Multi-choice Class. The handler will choose either a directed retrieve or retrieve a dumb-bell over a jump as detailed below.
- a. Directed retrieve. Three dumb-bells to be used – one provided by the handler which is to be retrieved, and two washable plastic dumb-bells of similar size to each other provided by the show society. At the start of the exercise the dog to sit at the handler's side, at a distance of at least six metres from the point where the middle dumb-bell will be placed. A steward to place the three dumb-bells, equally spaced, in a row approximately six metres long from end to end, with the handler's dumb-bell always placed first. The handler's dumb-bell to be placed on either the left or the right end and the show society's dumb-bells in the middle and at the remaining end. On command the handler to direct the dog to the dumb-bell to be retrieved. The dog to set out promptly at a smart pace, collect the correct dumb-bell cleanly and return to sit straight in front of the handler. On command the handler to take the dumb-bell from the dog. On further command the dog to be sent to heel.
- b. Retrieve over a jump - At the start of the exercise the dog to sit at the handler's side, in front of the hurdle, at a distance decided by the handler. On command the handler to throw a dumb-bell or other suitable article of their choice over the hurdle. The dog to remain in the sit position until the handler is instructed to send it over the hurdle. On command the dog to jump over the hurdle, collect the dumb-bell/article cleanly, and return over the hurdle to sit straight in front of the handler. On command the handler to take the dumb-bell/article from the dog. On further command the dog to be sent to heel.  
 A dog running round the hurdle or making more than casual contact with the hurdle must be penalised.

Hurdles to be 30.5cm (12ins) in height for smaller dogs – 40.6cm (16ins) or less at the withers – and for all sizes of veteran dog (i.e. aged over 8 years), and to be 61cm (24ins) in height for all other dogs. To be filled in from ground level upwards such that a dog on one side is unable to see a retrieve article on the other side. Hurdles should be at least three feet wide, with side supports appreciably higher than the filled in part which the dog is to clear; they should not have 'wings'. Hurdles should not collapse and should not be able to be displaced by the dog.

h. Scent discrimination -

- (1) All neutral and decoy cloths must be provided by the show organisers. The judge must provide cloths on which to put the handler's or judge's scent.
- (2) All neutral cloths must be of a similar colour within each class. Each decoy's cloths must be of a similar colour within each class. All judge's cloths must be of a similar colour within each class and marked to identify that they are the judge's cloth.
- (3) Cloths must be placed in position by a steward and must be at least 1m (3ft) and not more than 1.6m (5ft) apart.
  - (i) Class A - The 6 cloths must be set out in a straight line, which may be in any direction.
  - (ii) Class B and C - The pattern of cloths is at the judge's discretion, with a minimum of 6 up to a maximum of 10 being used.
- (4) Use of decoy cloths – The use of decoy cloths will be as follows:
  - (i) Class A – No decoys will be allowed
  - (ii) Class B – One decoy cloth must be used
  - (iii) Class C – One or two decoy stewards must be used; a decoy steward may not decoy more than two cloths.
- (5) Method of taking scent in Class A and Class B – Scent, if given, must be given to the dog directly from the hand.
- (6) Method of taking scent in Class C – Scent must be given directly to the dog via the cloth provided by the judge. It is not permissible to throw or place this cloth on the floor prior to or during the giving/taking of scent. In addition the judge shall not be required to place his hand on or lean towards the dog.
- (7) Decoy stewards must not handle a cloth for longer than the handler in Class B, or the judge in Class C. Cloths must be stored out of reach of the dog whilst not in use.
- (8) Any cloth which in the opinion of the judge has been sufficiently fouled in any way so as to disadvantage other competitors must be replaced by a fresh cloth.
- (9) At the commencement of the test the dog must be brought to a designated point. The dog must be facing away from the cloths while scented/decoy cloths are placed in position. When the cloths have been placed, the handler must give the dog scent, stand up straight facing the scent area with the dog in the sit position at the handler's left side and send the dog on command from the judge or steward to find the correct cloth. The dog, on finding the correct cloth must then complete the test as for the Retrieve Test.
- (10) Limiting the time for this test is at the judge's discretion.

- i. Send away, drop and recall -  
The following applies to Class B, Class C and Multi-Choice Class:
- (1) On command of the judge, the handler to bring the dog to the place indicated, set up the dog and stand upright with the dog in the sit position at the handler's left side. On further command, the handler to send the dog in the direction indicated by the judge; upon further command from the handler, the dog to drop at the designated area.
  - (2) Class B & C only. After the dog has been dropped, on further direction from the judge, the handler to call the dog to heel whilst walking where directed by the judge and both to continue forward until ordered to halt.
  - (3) No obstacles to be placed in the path of the dog.
  - (4) Notwithstanding Regulation G(C)3.d., simultaneous command and signal is permitted to send the dog.
- j. Distant control -
- (1) The dog shall be positioned in the stand, sit or down at a marked place. Then upon further instruction the handler shall leave the dog and walk to a designated point a minimum of 10 paces and a maximum of 20 paces from the dog. The handler will then turn and face the dog. When commanded the handler shall instruct the dog to change position on six occasions (the order for each dog shall be the same). The position from which the handler commands the dog must remain the same. Upon completion of the position changes the handler upon instruction will return to the side of the dog and upon a further command 'test finished' will break the exercise.
  - (2) Movement in any direction of more than the body length of the dog must be penalised.
  - (3) In the event of a handler giving an incorrect position or the dog missing the position, the dog must be commanded to change to the correct position before continuing with the test.
  - (4) Multi-choice Class. To be the same as the Class 'C' test with the following exceptions:  
The dog's distance from the handler to be between 3 and 5 paces (a steward's normal paces to be used)  
Three instructions to be given in the same order for each dog  
The judge to decide which position the dog is to be left in  
Extra commands to be permitted without penalty throughout.

## INSTRUCTIONS AS TO THE DUTIES OF OBEDIENCE RING STEWARDS

### 1. Authority/responsibilities.

- a. A steward's responsibilities are at all times to assist the judge in the course of his duties and to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the ring.
- b. Stewards should always remember that the judge is in overall control of the ring and accordingly should follow the judge's directives.

### 2. Duties.

- a. Before judging:
  - (1) To ensure that all equipment has been provided in the ring and that the score sheets and prize cards are available for each class with a copy of the catalogue.
  - (2) To report to the judge on his arrival and acquaint himself with the judge's tests and instructions.
  - (3) To advise exhibitors that judging is to commence after which the responsibility for dogs being brought into the ring at the correct time is entirely the competitors.
- b. During judging:
  - (1) To ensure that all commands are given in the same place and in the same manner for each dog and competitor.
  - (2) To ensure each competitor gives the correct ring number for their dog when entering the ring.
  - (3) To ensure that there is no interference with dogs being judged.
- c. After judging:
  - (1) To complete the award slips and obtain the judges' signature at the conclusion of the class.
  - (2) To mark the results of the classes in the catalogue and hand the completed copy to the judge.
  - (3) To ensure that the judge signs the Obedience Certificate, Reserve Obedience Certificate and any other awards.

## **INSTRUCTIONS AS TO THE DUTIES OF OBEDIENCE CHIEF STEWARDS**

### **1. Authority/Responsibilities.**

- a. A chief steward should have at least eight years of competitive obedience experience, a sound knowledge of the Royal Kennel Club Rules and G Regulations, and a familiarity with the Royal Kennel Club complaints procedure.
- b. A chief steward's responsibilities are to at all times ensure that competitors and judges abide by the Royal Kennel Club Rules and G Regulations.
- c. A chief steward acts as decision maker in all matters relating to the Royal Kennel Club Rules and G Regulations for the duration of the show.
- d. A chief steward must fully document all decisions and actions taken in relation to the G Regulations in the show's Royal Kennel Club incident book.
- e. A chief steward supports the show management team in the smooth running of the show.

### **2. Duties.**

- a. The show executive shall appoint a chief steward whose name must be announced in the schedule, and who must not enter for competition a dog which is recorded in their ownership or part ownership or work a dog or act in any other capacity at the show.
- b. In the event of extreme adverse conditions at a show a judge may alter exercises as deemed appropriate at the time and must always obtain full agreement of the chief steward unless in an emergency situation. The chief steward must be advised of the change and the reasons for it at the earliest opportunity. Any alteration to exercises must be reported by the show management to the Royal Kennel Club within 14 days of the date of the show.
- c. Should a judge be prevented from completing a class which has commenced, the chief steward shall decide what action is to be taken, the guidance for chief stewards booklet refers.
- d. The chief steward and the show management must act to remove a dog from the show under the conditions of Regulation G10.
- e. When notified of a dog which has been incorrectly exhibited the chief steward shall advise the judge(s) in the other relevant class(es) that the dog is ineligible to work in that class, Regulation G24.j. refers.
- f. A competitors inability to compete in a running order must be reported to the chief steward in the first instance, Regulation G30.f.(6) refers.
- g. The chief steward alone shall be responsible for the control of any running order, which may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the competitor will be required to work as directed by the chief steward and judge(s) of the relevant class(es) whose joint decision shall be final. All such decisions must be recorded in the show's Royal Kennel Club incident book, Regulation G30.f.(7) refers.

## **OBEDIENCE EXCELLENT QUALIFICATION**

On application by the registered owner(s), an "Obedience Excellent Qualification" will be issued for a dog that has obtained the required amount of points for places gained at Open and Championships Obedience Shows. The scale of the points is as follows:

1. 10 points for a first prize.
2. 4 points for a second prize.
3. 2 points for a third prize.
4. 1 point for a fourth.

The required points to achieve each qualification are as follows:

1. 10 points required for Introductory.
2. 20 points required for Pre-Beginners.
3. 20 points required for Beginners.
4. 20 points required for Novice.
5. 30 points required for Class A.
6. 30 points required for Class B.
7. 40 points required for Class C.

This qualification may be used on entry forms for dogs qualified and will be shown in show catalogues. Only one such qualification may be shown so that as a dog progresses to a higher qualification, the lower one may no longer be used. Points towards the required excellent qualification in any particular class will be awarded as a result of gaining places in that class and/or any higher class.

## REGULATIONS FOR ENTRIES IN THE STUD BOOK, CHAMPIONS AND WARRANTS

As at 1st January 2026

### 1. Stud Book Qualifications.

- a. An entry in the Stud Book shall consist of the registered name of the dog, its sex, colour, date of birth, owner, breeder and an extension of its pedigree limited to three generations, or a Stud Book reference within that limit.
- b. All dogs must be entered in the Stud Book in the name of the registered owner at the time of qualification.
- c. A Royal Kennel Club Stud Book number will be assigned to each dog accepted for entry.
- d. A neutered dog, which has qualified for an entry in the Stud Book will be listed therein with the letters 'NEUT' appearing after its name.
- e. The following dogs are entitled to entry in the Royal Kennel Club Stud Book subject to regulations a, b, c, and d above.
  - (6) Winners of first, second or third Prizes in Championship Class 'C', at Championship Obedience Classes.

### 2. Championship qualifications.

- e. *Title of Obedience Champion (Ob Ch)* The following dogs shall be entitled to be described as Obedience Champion.
  - (1) Any dog awarded three Obedience Certificates under three different judges in accordance with the Royal Kennel Club Regulations for Obedience Classes.
  - (2) Any dog which has won a Royal Kennel Club Obedience Championship.

### 3. Warrants.

#### c. *Obedience Warrants*

An Obedience Warrant will be issued on application by the registered owner at the time of qualification in respect of a dog that has obtained 100 progression points (as defined in General Regulations G Annex A). The points are to be gained at Championship Premier or Open Obedience Shows, and must include the following:

- (1) 20 points in Novice Class.
- (2) 30 points in Class A.
- (3) 30 points in Class B.
- (4) 10 points for a first prize in Open Class C on at least one occasion.
- (5) 10 additional points in Open Class C, which must be gained after 1 January 2022.
- (6) Where a dog had to progress because it had won a first prize, or first prizes, at a higher level, then additional points achieved at a higher class may be used to supplement points at a lower class to achieve the 100 points total.
- (7) The title 'OW' may be used after the name of the dog on show entries and in catalogues

## ROYAL KENNEL CLUB REGULATIONS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

As at 1st January 2026

### **20. Dogs for competitions.**

Dogs entered for any form of Royal Kennel Club competition i.e. show classes, field trials, gundog working tests, obedience, working trials, agility, heelwork to music, and rally must be registered in the name of the person(s) making the entry. If, at the closing date for entries, the owner(s) have applied for but have not received the Royal Kennel Club registration certificate, the dog shall be entered in the name shown as the first choice on the application form for registration and the name should be followed by the letters 'N.A.F' (name applied for). In the case of applications for transfer of ownership and change of name, the dog should be entered 'T.A.F.' (transfer applied for) 'C.N.A.F.' (change of name applied for) where application has been made but not received. Dogs are exempt from registration in the following cases:-

- a. Dogs either exhibited exclusively in classes specially exempted by the Royal Kennel Club Board or in special classes sanctioned by the Board.
- b. Hounds belonging to recognised packs

**ROYAL KENNEL CLUB REGULATIONS FOR THE  
REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF TITLE  
OF SOCIETIES, BRANCHES AND BREED COUNCILS  
AND THE AFFILIATION OF AGRICULTURAL  
SOCIETIES AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES**

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*As at 1st January 2026*

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**5. General**

- c. A Royal Kennel Club licence is issued to the designated society only and it is non transferable under any circumstances.

**Contact Details for Liaison Council Representatives – Obedience**

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## OBEDIENCE REGULATION AMENDMENTS

### Amendment to regulation G6

Regulation G6. Societies are required to apply for permission to hold Special Events.

**TO:**

Applications should be submitted to the Royal Kennel Club by email at least six ~~weeks~~ **months** before the start of any qualifying heats for the event.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

### Amendment to regulation G8

Regulation G8. Application.

**TO:**

The application for a licence to hold an Obedience Show must be made to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club at least six ~~weeks~~ **months** before the proposed date of the show together with the appropriate licence fee.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

### Amendment to Regulation G32.d

Regulation G32.d

**TO:**

A judge's first three appointments for shows must be restricted to Novice. The next three appointments must be up to and including Class A. Before accepting an Open Class C appointment, a Judge must have completed at least ~~a further nine~~ **twelve** appointments **in total**. These must include a minimum of **three Novice**, three Class A and three Class B appointments. It is the individual's responsibility to retain proof of their judging appointments.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to Regulation G(A)9.a

Regulation G(A)9.a. Introductory.

**TO:**

In this class, ~~only incentives in the form of a toy or rewards are allowed to be carried by the handler in the competitive ring and~~ may be given to the dog **before the exercise**, at the end of an exercise or in between exercises **within the reward area of the ring. The reward area must be distinct from the working area.** Rewards include food which must be carried in a small closed container during the exercises, **either in the handler's pocket or left on the reward table, and only verbal and physical cues may be used to keep the dog engaged.** The judge will designate ~~the~~ **reward** an area in the competitive ring where food **or a toy** may be given to the dog by the handler.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to Regulation G(A)9.b

Regulation G(A)9.b

**TO:**

To compete in the Introductory Class a handler or dog ~~must not have gained a 1st place in any competitive obedience class,~~ **placed 1st to 3rd in Novice** and have not elected to progress on points from Introductory

(Insertions in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

Amendment to Regulation G(A)9.e.i

Regulation G(A)9.e.i. Introductory.

**TO:**

e. The detailed test will be:

- (1) Engagement - this will be marked throughout the test - the use of motivators and rewards before and between exercises which may include food, silent toys, tricks, and verbal and physical praise within the reward area of the ring. Toys and food in a ~~sealed~~ **closed** container, must either be left on the reward table, or be concealed in the handler's pocket during tests, where only verbal motivation may be used to keep the dog engaged. 10 points

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

### Amendment to Regulation G(A)10.a

Regulation G(A)10.a Pre-Beginners.

**TO:**

In this class, ~~only incentives in the form of a toy or rewards are allowed to be carried by the handler in the competitive ring and~~ may be given to the dog **before the exercise**, at the end of an exercise or in between exercises **within the reward area of the ring. The reward area must be distinct from the working area.** Rewards include food which must be carried in a small closed container during the exercises, **either in the handler's pocket or left on the reward table, and only verbal and physical cues may be used to keep the dog engaged.** The judge will designate **the reward** an area in the competitive ring where food **or a toy** may be given to the dog by the handler.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

### Amendment to Regulation G(A)17

Regulation G(A)17

**TO:**

- a. Organisers of open **or Championship** obedience shows may set **an optional** capping level on the entries to be accepted in any standard or special class, and may decline entries received after the capping level has been reached.
- b. Wins and places in standard classes capped in accordance with this Regulation will count towards progression at open **and Championship** shows and for Obedience Warrant points.
- c. **Where a capping level is set, it** must be set at a minimum of 35 entries received **in respect of Open Shows and 90 entries received in respect of Championship Shows.** There is no maximum level at which a cap may be set. Capped classes may be split into two or more divisions in accordance with Regulation G30.b.

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through.)

(Effective 1 January 2026)

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