



GUIDE FOR HEELWORK TO MUSIC JUDGES



Contents

Introduction.....	4
Chapter 1. Code of Best Practice for Judges	5
Introduction	5
Integrity.....	5
Health Guidelines	5
During Judging.....	6
General.....	6
Heelwork to Music	6
Summary	7
Section 2. Invitation to judge	7
Chapter 3. At the Competition	8
At the competition all judges should:	8
Judging the dogs.....	8
Marking Criteria	10
Judging Criteria for Accuracy and Team Performance:.....	10
Judging Criteria for Musical Interpretation:	10
Avoidance of Injury	11
.....	12
3.31 Explanatory Notes for Content and Flow	15
3.31.9 General considerations for Content and Flow	16
3.32 Explanatory Notes for Accuracy and Team Performance	16
Explanatory Notes for Musical Interpretation.....	17
Additional Penalty Points.....	19
3.35 Scoring.....	19
Content and Flow	20
Accuracy and Team Performance.....	20
Musical Interpretation	20
Judges Scoring Explanatory Notes.....	21
Judges marking scheme.....	21
Practice rounds.....	22
Mentoring	23



What is Heelwork to Music mentoring?	23
Inappropriate routines.....	23
Cultural Appropriation.....	23
Guidance for handlers and judges	24
Handlers with disabilities	24
3.45 Use of Incident Book	25
Chapter 4. After the Competition	25
Records.....	25
Chapter 5. Judges Reports.....	26
Chapter 6. Overseas Judges and British Judges Officiating Overseas	26



Introduction

This guide is intended as a useful reference for those embarking on a judging career in Heelwork to Music and to assist established judges to understand their obligations to competitors, competition organisers and Royal Kennel Club.

It is important that the information enclosed is read in conjunction with the Royal Kennel Club Regulations, which always take precedence. The updated regulations are published every January in a separate booklet for each activity. Heelwork to Music judges should read in particular the annual 'Heelwork to Music Regulations' booklet found in the Heelwork to Music Judges section on the Royal Kennel Club website at www.royalkennelclub.com

These Regulations apply to all judges whether domiciled in this country or overseas who officiate at Royal Kennel Club licensed competitions. The references refer to appropriate Royal Club Regulations or announcements in the Royal Kennel Club Journal.

It should be noted that this book is intended as a guide to the relevant Royal Kennel Club Heelwork to Music Regulations.

Chapter 1. Code of Best Practice for Judges

The overall and stated objective of the Royal Kennel Club is to promote in every way the general improvement of dogs and this objective also applies to judges.

The overall aim and objective of a judge, at whatever level, is to provide value for the time, training, effort and money which the competitor puts into preparing their dog.

There is therefore an expectation that judges will be competent. Judging is not a right but a privilege. Judges should be respected by the competitor. To that end the following Code sets out the relevant aspects that Judges should be capable of demonstrating.

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Integrity

- 1.1 Judges should act honestly and impartially when undertaking an appointment.
- 1.2 A dog should be placed on merit according to the competition regulations.
- 1.3 Judges should conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the standing of a judge at all times whilst at a competition and in any other capacity which might have a bearing on the interests of the canine world.
- 1.4 Judges are referred to the factors set out below which may be said to affect their standing and may result in exclusion from judging lists or future judging contracts or withdrawal from an agreed appointment:
 - 1.4.1 Criminal convictions
 - 1.4.2 Threatening behaviour at any time
 - 1.4.3 Misrepresenting or abusing authority
 - 1.4.4 Not judging in accordance with the Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations
 - 1.4.5 Harsh handling as a competitor or judge at any time
 - 1.4.6 Breach of Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations
 - 1.4.7 Using the name of the Royal Kennel Club in an unauthorised manner.

Health Guidelines

- 1.5 Judges are expected to decline, or to withdraw from an appointment which they cannot fulfil. The aim of the competition can only be fulfilled when the judging of dogs is carried out in a fully competent manner.
- 1.6 Ill health of various kinds can temporarily or permanently make it impossible for a person to complete a judging appointment according to the demands which are set forward in this Code of Best Practice. A Society or Club can, if necessary, either temporarily or permanently cancel the judging contract should it become

- 1.7 Judges must be able to undertake the judging of the dogs with an obvious independence and with confidence and conviction. Judges must not at any time rely on others to assist with the main work of judging.
- 1.8 Judges must be capable of meeting the physical requirements of fulfilling the judging appointment.
- 1.9 From the above it follows that a person with definite lessening of capabilities, and who is dependent on assistance or the presence of various forms of technical help, may need to consider if he or she is capable of fulfilling a judging appointment in an adequate and satisfactory manner.
- 1.10 The competition organisers shall endeavour to establish that invited judges are able to fulfil their appointments.
- 1.11 As far as reasonably possible the competition organisers are responsible for ensuring that the aims of the competition are fulfilled and that the competitors receive the quality of judging that they deserve.
- 1.12 The Royal Kennel Club has an overriding responsibility and may in individual cases either temporarily defer or permanently withdraw approval when the judge in question is considered not to have the necessary capabilities. That is not to say that any particular disability will preclude judging. A common sense approach needs to be adopted by both competition organiser and judge.

During Judging

Judges should observe the following formalities when judging:

- 1.13 Conduct themselves in a courteous manner to all and concentrate fully on the dogs. It is inadvisable for judges to call any competitor by their name, initiate or engage in a conversation initiated by a competitor whilst judging is in progress.
- 1.14 Dress in a conventional and acceptable fashion precluding them from being the centre of attention, or from causing any distress to the dog competing or its owner.
- 1.15 Judges should not consume alcoholic drinks or use or activate a mobile telephone or other electronic devices whilst judging. Mobile telephones should be switched to silent or turned off when judging.

General

The following are general requirements for judges:

- 1.16 Absolute integrity in order to judge honestly and impartially, and to place dogs solely on their merit.
- 1.17 A suitable temperament and sufficient stamina to cope with what can be a physically and mentally demanding task.
- 1.18 To judge in a customary fashion acceptable to the competitor.

Heelwork to Music

- 1.19 A comprehensive knowledge of Heelwork to Music and its Regulations.
- 1.20 An understanding of the Royal Kennel Club Judges and Judging Regulation.
- 1.21 Knowledge of the qualifications required to judge at Heelwork to Music competitions - Judges Approval Regulation.

Summary

- 1.22 It is the responsibility of the judge to take into account the differences in working style of the various breeds.
- 1.23 Judges should have a comprehensive knowledge of competition procedures and etiquette. It is the responsibility of the judges to keep abreast and up to date with developments in such matters.
- 1.24 Judges should be familiar with the Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and the Code of Best Practice for Judges as amended from time to time and to keep up to date with all relevant regulations governing the competition and judging.
- 1.25 Judges should give value to the competitor and ultimately the activity in question. Judges should act at all times with honesty, integrity and impartiality.
- 1.27 The Royal Kennel Club reserves the right to observe a judge

Section 2. Invitation to judge

The soliciting of judging appointments is not acceptable. Judges usually receive a first invitation whilst working through the Heelwork to Music judges mentoring scheme and being seen as a successful handler.

Judges at all Heelwork to Music Competitions should:

- 2.1 Ensure that they have received a written invitation from the Competition Society.
- 2.2 Confirm that they are available and are able to comply with any conditions laid down by the Competition Society, as long as these do not contravene Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations. Judges will be asked to return a declaration confirming that they currently meet the qualification and health requirements laid down in the Heelwork to Music Regulations.
- 2.3 Advise the society the number of classes / dogs they are willing to judge.
- 2.4 Ensure that the acceptance is followed by written confirmation of the appointment by the competition society.
- 2.5 The invitation, acceptance and confirmation form the basis of a contract between the judge and the competition society. All parts of the contract may be conducted electronically.
- 2.6 If a Judge is unable to honour an engagement the judge should notify the competition society immediately.
- 2.7 Confirm the reason in writing to the competition society in order that a report can be made by the competition society to the Royal Kennel Club.

Chapter 3. At the Competition

At the competition all judges should:

- 3.1 Arrive in ample time for their judging appointment – it is discourteous to keep the competition society and competitors waiting.
- 3.2 On arrival, report to the competition organiser to collect their judging pack and badge/rosette, together with any other papers, instructions and special requirements.
- 3.3 Establish the layout of the venue including where the judges tables are situated. (Judges must be seated a minimum of 2 metres apart, except in exceptional circumstances).

Judging the dogs

Judges influence the future of all canine competitive activities and therefore part of their responsibility is to ensure their chosen activity develops in a sensible and measured way, devoid of exaggeration.

Heelwork to Music is becoming increasingly popular with dog training enthusiasts and with members of the public and as that popularity grows, it becomes ever more important that judges do not reward movements and routines which clearly compromise the health and welfare of the dog. Whilst judges should reward degrees of difficulty of moves within a routine, this must not be allowed to spiral into competitors attempting increased levels of difficulty to gain more points to the detriment of the dog or the sport in general. There is a need to ensure that routines, costumes, music and props do not give the impression that this activity is less of a dog training competition and more of a show business act. Spectator appeal is important but routines must not demean this skillful dog training activity or compromise the dignity of the dog.

- 3.4 Judges should concentrate solely on the routine they are judging.
- 3.5 Judges must judge in accordance with the Royal Kennel Club Regulations (L).
- 3.6 Judges should not wait for competitors who are late reporting to work as this would delay the rest of the competition for the following competitors.
- 3.7 Judges must remove from the ring any dog which is physically disciplined by the handler and also any dog which, if permitted to continue working, would suffer. The removal must be reported to the competition organiser and noted in the Competition Incident Book.
- 3.8 In the event of dogs obtaining equality of marks in Heelwork to Music competitions, the Accuracy and Team Performance mark will decide the result. In Freestyle competitions, the Musical Interpretation mark will decide the result. Where there is still equality of marks the order shall be decided at the discretion of the lead Head Judge.

- 3.9 If the overall score is below 60% (18 marks), the class points will be withheld for that routine. There shall be at least four awards on offer in every class and printed award cards and rosettes may be given but the associated points would be withheld.
- 3.10 The eligibility of dogs entered in any class is not the responsibility of the judge. Any queries should be referred to the competition organiser.
- 3.11 Food or toys shall not be carried in the ring or given to the dog whilst in the ring.
- 3.12 Once the music has started the handler must remain in the ring at all times. When in the ring, handlers are working under the Heelwork to Music Rules and Regulations. Therefore it is not acceptable for a handler and dog to leave the ring in order to give the dog a food reward and then return.
- 3.13 The handler is under the jurisdiction of the judges and they must be able to see what the handler is doing to the dog.
- 3.14 There is also a health and safety aspect that must be addressed with regards to potential interference with other dogs and/or competitors if a handler left the ring to feed the dog.
- 3.15 If a handler leaves the ring, unless it is to retrieve a dog which has left the ring, they will be deemed to have withdrawn and not allowed back.
- 3.16 Dogs may only wear a smooth or half-check collar which may be decorated.
- 3.17 Judging decisions shall not be impugned by competitors.
- 3.18 Consultation with the competition organiser should always take place in the event of anything unusual occurring during judging. This will ensure that relevant information is made available in the event that a report to the Royal Kennel Club is necessary.
- 3.19 No person shall carry out punitive correction or harsh handling of any dog at any time within the precincts of the competition.
- 3.20 No costume or routine should bring discredit to the sport.
- 3.21 Props appropriate to the routine may be used and must remain in the ring and not intentionally removed until completion of the routine. Both the use of firearms and simulated gunshot are prohibited.
- 3.22 If the music stops during a routine the competitor must be given an opportunity to complete the routine. The handler's back-up music may be used and/or alternative equipment, if this was the reason for failure. The judges should continue marking from the point at which the music stopped. If the competitor chooses to withdraw from the class, no marks will be awarded.
- 3.23 The duration of the routine should be a maximum length as detailed below. An over-run of 5% is permitted, but 2 marks will be deducted from the final score for any time taken in excess of this. All routines must be timed by an official timekeeper appointed by the Organising Society, who will record the duration of each routine and advise judges of any over-run. The routine starts when the music begins and ends when the music finishes.

Starters maximum time limit – up to 2½ minutes

Novice maximum time limit – up to 3 minutes

Intermediate maximum time limit – up to 3½ minutes

Advanced maximum time limit – up to 4 minutes

- 3.24 There must be a minimum of two and a maximum of three judges for each class, and judges should be seated a minimum of 2 metres apart, except in exceptional circumstances, whereby the society should notify the Royal Kennel Club as soon as possible. Each judge will mark all three sections of the Judging Criteria.

Note: All Crufts Qualifying heats should be judged by three judges (where possible). Judges must not judge more than three Heelwork to Music and three Freestyle qualifying classes in any calendar year (1 January to 31 December).

Marking Criteria

- 3.25 There are three sections of the Judging Criteria, and each section is marked out of 10 by each judge, and the marks then averaged to calculate the dog's score. The sections are Content and Flow, Accuracy and Team Performance, and Musical Interpretation. Judging Criteria for Content and Flow:
- 3.26 In this section, the following four criteria must be used to evaluate competitors' scores.
- 3.26.1 The programme content conforms to the definitions for Heelwork to Music or Freestyle and should be varied with no excessive repetition of movement and content being appropriate to the routine
- 3.26.2 All movement should be appropriate to the structure and conformation of the dog.
- 3.26.3 The content should flow naturally and be formulated in order to create an interesting routine that makes good use of the ring.
- 3.26.4 Degree of difficulty of movements should be taken into account.

Judging Criteria for Accuracy and Team Performance:

- 3.27 In this section, the following four criteria must be used to evaluate competitors' scores.
- 3.27.1 Movements from the team including heelwork should be accurately and smoothly executed
- 3.27.2 The dog should work in a natural, willing and committed manner.
- 3.27.3 The dog should respond promptly and appropriately to cues given. Signals from the handler should be subtle and form part of the handler's movement.
- 3.27.4 The dog and handler should work as a team, presenting a captivating performance for the audience and judges, giving an overall appearance of harmony between dog and handler..

Judging Criteria for Musical Interpretation:

- 3.28 In this section, the following four criteria must be used to evaluate competitors' scores.:

- 3.28.1 Interpretation of the rhythm, phrasing and timing of the music should be apparent; the choice of music should suit the team
- 3.28.2 Choreography should be apparent with the story or theme being inspired from the music. The choice of moves by both handler and dog should be well represented by the chosen music.
- 3.28.3 Primary emphasis of musical interpretation should be on the dog's movements although the handler may be expressive
- 3.28.4 Handlers' dress and any props used should be suitable and applicable to the interpretation of the routine with all the props integrated into the performance.

Avoidance of Injury

- 3.29 No activity shall be conducted which may be injurious to the dog. Extreme or unnatural moves (see below) which are not beneficial to the dog's structure and conformation and which may be degrading, harmful or injurious to the dog must be avoided and if used will result in the dog's immediate removal from the ring.

Dog balanced on handler's shoulders whilst handler is standing

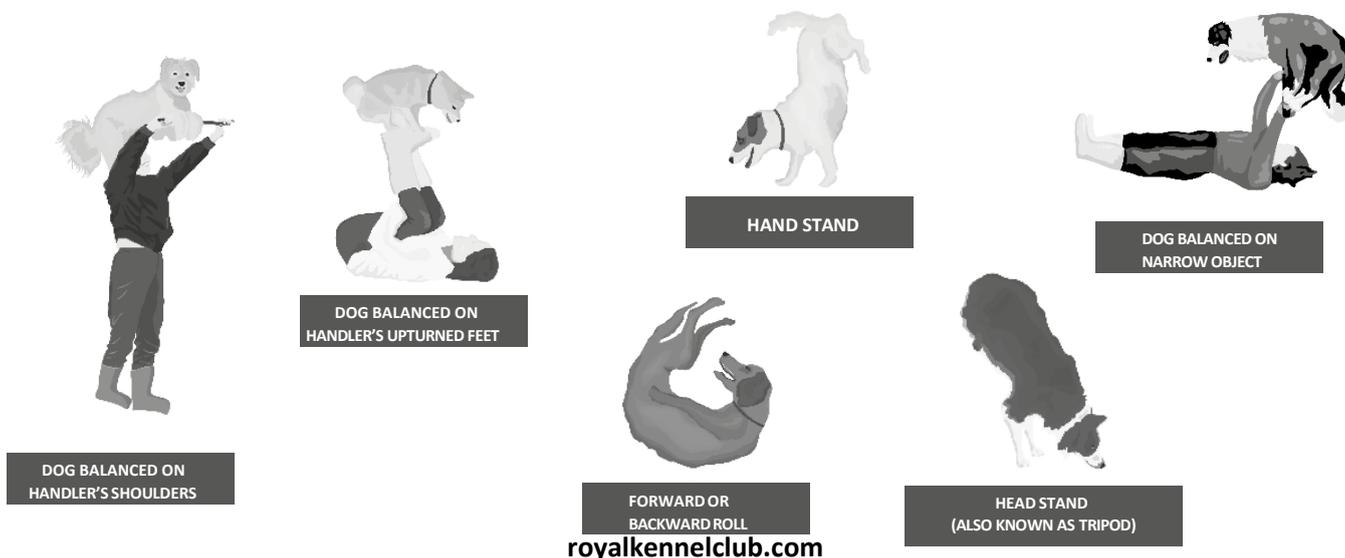
Dog balanced on handler's upturned feet or any variation of this move

Hand Stand - Where dog is independently balanced on its front feet, either moving or statically

Head Stand (Also known as tripod) - Or any variation of this move where dog is balanced on its nose and front feet with back feet off the ground

Dog balanced on narrow object- Dog balanced on narrow object such a stick, beam or tightrope, or similar object

Forward or backward roll - Where dog is required to roll forwards or backwards
See illustrations below:



3.29.1 Any move which a judge deems to be excessive, extreme, risky or unsuitable for the dog should be penalised in Content and Flow e.g excessive hind leg work or jumping, or extreme angles where a dog backs up its handler or a prop. The floor surface should be taken into consideration and if unsuitable e.g very hard or slippery, handlers should be prepared to omit high impact or fast moves. A judge may stop marking if unhappy with what a dog is asked to do but if continuing to work, in their opinion will cause suffering, the routine must be terminated and the team removed from the ring.

3.3 There are 8 recognised heelwork and wheelwork positions for the purposes of Heelwork to Music competitions. There are no compulsory moves in Heelwork to Music and as such handlers are not expected to attempt or contain all of the following heelwork positions in any single routine. Judges therefore should not down mark any routine for not containing all of the heelwork positions.



Dog on left of handler facing forwards. Dog's right shoulder in close proximity to handler's left leg



Dog on right of handler facing forwards. Dog's left shoulder in close proximity to handler's right leg.



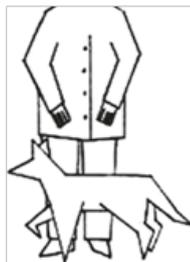
Dog on left of handler facing backwards. Dog's left shoulder in close proximity to handler's left leg.



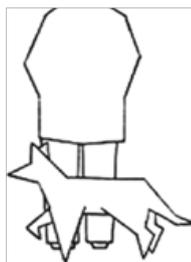
Dog on right of handler facing backwards. Dog's right shoulder in close proximity to handler's right leg



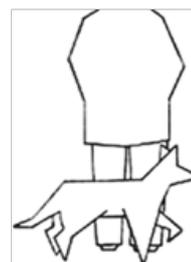
Dog across front of handler facing handler's left. Dog's left shoulder in close proximity to handler's left leg



Dog across front of handler facing handler's right. Dog's right shoulder in close proximity to handler's right leg.



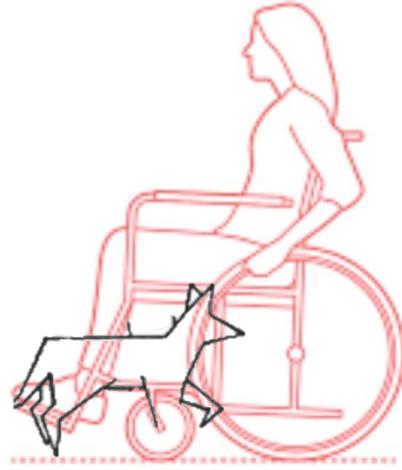
Dog across back of handler facing handler's left. Dog's right shoulder in close proximity to handler's left leg.



Dog across back of handler facing handler's right. Dog's left shoulder in close proximity to handler's right leg.



Dog working on the left facing forwards. Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's mid-thigh.



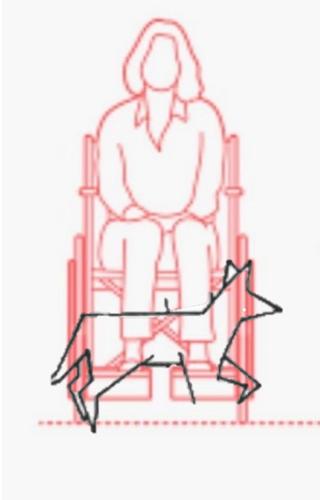
Dog working on the left facing backwards. Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's mid-thigh.



Dog working on the right facing forwards. Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's mid-thigh.

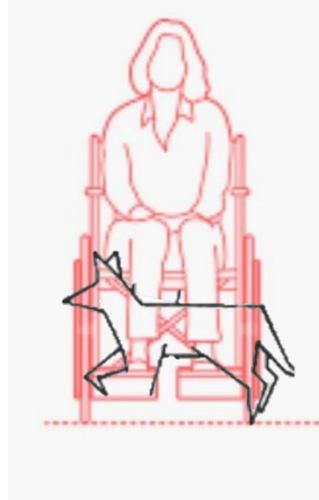


Dog working on the right facing backwards. Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's mid-thigh.



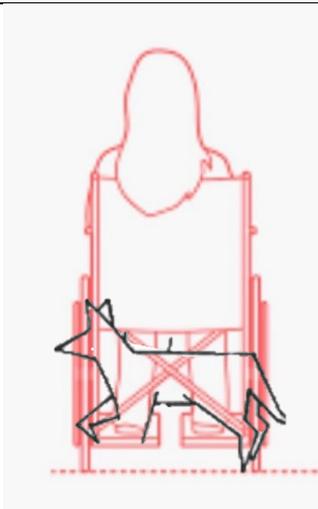
Dog working across the front of the handler's wheelchair facing left.

Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's left leg.



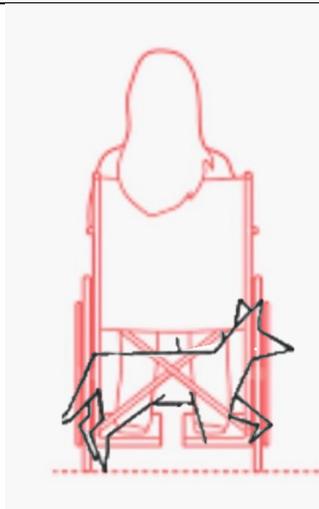
Dog working across the front of the handler's wheelchair facing right.

Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's right leg.



Dog working across the back of the handler's wheelchair facing left.

Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's left shoulder. **Wheelchairs are not permitted to move backwards whilst dogs are in this position.**



Dog working across the back of the handler's wheelchair facing right.

Dogs shoulder should be in line with the handler's right shoulder. **Wheelchairs are not permitted to move backwards whilst dogs are in this position.**

3.31 Explanatory Notes for Content and Flow

3.31.1 For the content to conform to the definitions for Heelwork to Music and Freestyle, a Heelwork routine must comprise of at least two thirds heelwork and a Freestyle routine must comprise of at least two thirds freestyle. A routine that, in the opinion of a judge, does not contain sufficient heelwork in Heelwork to Music or freestyle in a Freestyle routine, does not conform and therefore should be marked down accordingly.

Note: It is not possible for a judge to know exactly how much heelwork versus freestyle is in a routine; this will be down to personal judgement. Where a Heelwork to Music routine contains far too much freestyle the marking of the freestyle elements must not be inflated i.e. as freestyle may only be a maximum 1/3rd of the routine, only 1/3rd of the marks should reflect the freestyle elements. i.e. 3.3 maximum score out of 10. The same applies to a Freestyle routine where over 1/3rd of the routine is comprised of heelwork.

3.31.2 Judges should look for a range of moves and movement in a variety of positions, directions and speeds for the dog and handler.

Note: All of the 8 recognised heelwork and wheelwork positions are not compulsory (fig. 3.3 and 3.4) The range of positions used should be appropriate for the level of competition. Similarly, the amount of backing, side stepping and different speeds will also be level dependent. Judges must decide what is acceptable for them at each level and be consistent in judging all competitors at that level in the same manner.

In Freestyle there are no compulsory moves. There should be a range of moves and sequences, positions relative to the handler, directions in movement etc. which should not be unnecessarily repetitive.

3.31.3 Some moves will be repeated, but it is excessive repetition which should be marked down where one or two moves predominate e.g. repeated spinning and weaving and little else. Certain moves may be appropriately repeated in several parts of the routine and some may be performed in different styles and positions relevant to both handler and ring, which is not repetition.

3.31.4 Note that Heelwork cannot be deemed repetitious as it is the integral part of a Heelwork to Music routine. Handlers may choose to do only heelwork and no freestyle. Judges should look for variety in the use of positions, directions of movement, different speeds, interesting pathways and patterns across and around the ring, all dependent on the level of competition. In Starters, for example, it may be acceptable to see one or two positions but in higher classes more will be required.

3.31.5 The content is appropriate for the routine if the moves are relevant to and complement the performance, its theme, style and/or story. They should have a purpose. It is not appropriate for handlers to include a series of irrelevant moves just for the sake of it or to fill the time.

3.31.6 Types of moves and heelwork should be chosen by the handler to showcase the dog to the best of its capabilities i.e. its age, size, structure and conformation.

Judges should be mindful of unsuitable moves. Any move which the dog finds difficult or is obviously reluctant to perform, should not be included. (see 3.29.1)

3.31.7 Movements should be smooth with well thought out transitions, to create a flowing and interesting performance. The available space should be well and effectively used. This point is to deter routines being limited to a small part of the ring and to show that a varied and interesting pattern of movement is desirable.

3.31.8 The difficulty of a move cannot be generalised to a breed of dog. It is not acceptable to mark a routine down because a judge considers a move easier for a particular dog. The degree of difficulty may be dependent on class level, dog size or shape e.g. many small dogs stand naturally on their hind legs whereas many long backed or large heavy dogs find this hard – but there are always exceptions.

A judge should recognise and appreciate the technical difficulty of certain moves and sequences but must remember to keep things in perspective within the routine, division and level.

The position of a dog relevant to the handler should be considered under difficulty e.g. behind, facing away or at a distance.

Also to be considered is the degree of obvious physical and or verbal cues – unobtrusive integrated cues being more difficult than overt cueing.

3.31.9 General considerations for Content and Flow

- Did the routine conform to the class definition?
- Was it varied with no unnecessary repetition?
- Were the moves in context?
- Were moves appropriate for the dog?
- Was the routine interesting?
- Did it flow as a seamless performance?
- Was the ring space used effectively?
- Was there any degree of difficulty to consider?

3.32 Explanatory Notes for Accuracy and Team Performance

3.32.1 Accuracy and smoothness are achieved when the dog performs clearly defined, smoothly executed and finished moves without being rushed or erratic. There should be a natural flow within each element and from one move or sequence to the next rather than disjointed or contrary movements.

In a heelwork routine the dog should work in a consistent position relative to the handler, with its body parallel to the leg of the handler in any of the 8 recognised positions selected. Deviations in position, such as forging ahead, lagging, working wide or popping up, should be down marked. The judge should also be looking at the way the dog moves e.g. consistency of rhythm and smoothness. Freestyle moves should be completed and polished, e.g. a spin should be a full and smooth rotation, not half hearted or erratic. Similarly a paw lift should be clearly

obvious, not hesitant or indecisive. Moves should be clean, clear and confidently performed.

3.32.2 The dog should be willing and committed to perform its moves demonstrating

good focus on both handler and the 'job in hand'. It should move naturally and freely without impeding the handler and not look hesitant or worried. Judges should recognise signs of stress and lack of commitment in the dog's body language and behaviour e.g. running off and ignoring the handler, stopping to sniff or scratch, lip licking, frantic jumping up at the handler. The dog may be verbally encouraged and praised but should not be physically restrained or controlled such as cupping the nose or holding the collar. Neither should a handler resort to nagging or shouting if it fails to respond as this will add to the stress and detract from the performance. Unnecessary physical assistance should be penalised with points deducted in this section.

3.32.3 If at any time during the competition a dog is physically disciplined in the ring it should be removed by the lead judge who will stop the music and speak to the competitor so that they understand the reason. Harsh verbal abuse is not acceptable either and if this occurs, the team should be removed by the lead judge or penalised with points deducted from this section as necessary.

3.32.4 Cues are usually verbal and/or signaled and should not be intrusive to the performance. Props can also be used to cue behaviours. The dog should react appropriately to the cue when first given and not anticipate, fail to respond or require additional cueing. All cues should be as subtle as possible for the dog and integrated into the performance. This will be dependent on the level of competition, experience and confidence of the dog.

3.32.5 There should be an image of oneness between the dog and handler where both partners work confidently and in harmony with each other. Neither dog nor handler should be working harder than the other. The handler's movement should complement the dog's movement, enabling it to perform moves to the best of its ability. They should not be intrusive or detract from the dog's performance e.g. a handler bending over the dog, patting their leg or gesticulating excessively. The performance should capture and hold the interest and attention of judges and audience.

3.32.6 General considerations for Accuracy and Team Performance

- Were the moves accurately and smoothly performed?
- Did it respond appropriately and quickly to cues?
- Were the cues subtle and cleverly integrated into the performance?
- Were the dog and handler committed as a team?
- Did the team sell their performance to the judges and audience?

Explanatory Notes for Musical Interpretation

3.33. Musical interpretation means an understanding and feeling for the music and interpreting this through the choreography. It should be remembered that handlers have freedom to choose their own music and therefore should match it to themselves and their dog in order to interpret it effectively with feeling and

meaning.

Good timing, rhythm and phrasing should all be apparent in the musical interpretation. Also the nuances such as tempo, crescendo and diminuendo should be recognised and addressed e.g. a dramatic build-up of the music should be translated by appropriately matched movements and a pause may be marked by a well-timed pose or similar halt in the routine.

- 3.33.1 The routine should show structure and planning, using the ring to showcase the dog and its best moves to good effect. It should not look like unprepared busking but rather there should be evidence that the handler is spatially aware through their thoughtful and effective positioning and patterns of movement around the ring and how and where elements are joined. Moves should be carefully chosen to represent and interpret not only the music but also the story, theme, style and where included the lyrics, which the music inspires and engenders. The programme should have a sense of overall completeness and should not be a series of unrelated or irrelevant disjointed tricks, heelwork positions, speeds, etc.
- 3.33.2 The judges' attention should be centred on the dog, its performance being of primary importance. The handler may be expressive where appropriate but should not detract from or overpower the dog. Handler and dog movements should complement each other, and the dog should be involved throughout the performance. If it does very little, sits or stops, scratches or sniffs the ground, looks disinterested or lacks vigour, there will be an imbalance in the partnership and it will not meet this criteria. Handler movement must never take precedence over the dog.
- 3.33.3 The handler's outfit should enhance the interpretation and complement the music and story, theme or style of performance which emanates from it. It must not detract from the dog. Props must have a purpose in the routine, which should be apparent to the judges and used to aid interpretation and not be just ornamental. If a prop appears to be used purely as a training aid or reward, this should be penalised. The dog should use the prop as cued, not play with or be distracted by it.
- 3.33.4 Costume is not mandatory nor is the use of props. However, this is a spectator sport and dress should be smart and appropriate. A costume can add spectator appeal and help a handler to 'get into character' and give meaning to the routine, therefore costume should be encouraged where appropriate. It should not bring the sport into disrepute or adversely affect interpretation.
- 3.33.5 General considerations for Musical Interpretation
 - Did the interpretation of the music demonstrate good timing, rhythm and phrasing?
 - Was the music suitable for both members of the team?
 - Was choreography evident in the imaginative structure of the performance?
 - Were the moves/movement inspired by the music to create a purposeful programme?
 - Did the dog's movements take precedence even if the handler was expressive?
 - Was the handler's costume applicable and helpful to interpretation?

- Were props, if used, integrated into the routine and relevant to the performance?

Additional Penalty Points

There are two penalties which incur marks that are deducted from the final score.

- 3.34.6 Excessive barking or noise. Each judge should make a deduction for this if it is excessive e.g. if in the opinion of the judge it intrudes and spoils the performance. A maximum of 4 points may be deducted, in proportion to the amount of barking/noise throughout the performance. Judges must record any deduction they wish to make on the score sheet which is then handed to the score keeper. The sum of the points deducted will then be averaged between the judges by the score keeper.
- 3.34.7 There is a 2 point penalty for music which exceeds the permitted times for each class. Judges are advised by the time keeper if a performance overruns the allowed time but the actual mark is deducted from the final score by the score keeper, not by the judge.

3.35 Scoring

It is essential that all competitors in a class are judged and marked in the same way in order to be fair to every team.

- 3.35.1 The following Score Structure is intended as a guide to help judges assess routines so that the marks they award are appropriate for and reflect the standard of performance:

0 – 1.9 Foundation skills need consolidation on today's performance

2.0 – 3.9 A basic and limited performance requiring further work

4.0– 5.9 Performing at an adequate level with scope for improvement. Points will be awarded above this level

6.0– 7.4 A reasonably good and competent programme addressing the criteria, but requiring finesse

7.5 – 8.9 A highly competent performance, meeting the criteria and demonstrating informed and appropriate skills

9.0 – 10 Outstanding. A sophisticated performance demonstrating creativity and flair and exceeding all criteria

- 3.35.2 Before undertaking any appointment judges must carefully consider how they will apportion the allocated points for each of the three sections of criteria.

Content and Flow

Criteria to be considered:

- The programme content conforms to the definitions for Heelwork to Music or Freestyle and should be varied, with no excessive repetition of movement, and the content being appropriate to the routine.
- All movements should be appropriate to the structure and conformation of the dog.
- The content should flow naturally and be formulated in order to create an interesting routine that makes good use of the ring.
- Degree of difficulty.

Total 10 points

Accuracy and Team Performance

Criteria to be considered:

- Movements from the team including heelwork should be accurately and smoothly executed.
- The dog should work in a natural, willing and committed manner.
- The dog should respond promptly and appropriately to the cues given. Signals from the handler should be subtle and form part of the handler's movement.
- The dog and handler should work as a team, presenting a captivating performance for the audience and judges, giving an overall appearance of harmony between dog and handler.

Total 10 points

Musical Interpretation

Criteria to be considered:

- Interpretation of the rhythm, phrasing and timing of the music should be apparent; the choice of music should suit the team.
- Choreography should be apparent, with the story or theme being inspired from the music. The choice of moves and handler and dog movements should represent the chosen music well.
- Primary emphasis of musical interpretation should be on the dog's movements although the handler may be expressive.
- Handlers' dress and any props used should be suitable and applicable to the interpretation of the routine with all the props integrated into the performance.

Total 10 points

3.35.3 All the judges should write judges reports and in the event of a problem such as harsh handling, they are able to report accurately for the Incident Book.

Judges Scoring Explanatory Notes

- 3.36 Judges must value the fact that they're making an impression on each team. A good judge is upbeat and appreciative of the efforts of every routine, no matter what the skill level.
- 3.37 If the less advanced teams are discouraged by a judge who looks disinterested, then they may lose interest in HTM. That is not to say that judges cannot be honest. Truly successful judges learn to encourage while offering constructive criticism.
- 3.38 Judges should avoid evaluating the content of a performance by the number of moves/tricks attempted; instead, they must assess the diversity of the content and its relevance to the chosen music/theme/story. A judge should look for good technique, appropriate to the class.
- 3.39 Another misconception of would-be judges is the notion that, if they score every routine highly, then the competitors will think they're excellent judges. Most competitors know when the judge is being honest with the awards. The majority of competitors want a straightforward evaluation of their routines and are willing to learn from the experience.
- 3.4 An experienced judge can quickly assess these factors collectively:
- Timing - if a team is not moving in time with the music.
 - Togetherness - the partnership of dog and handler working together in harmony and synchronisation with each other.
 - Musicality and Expression - the basic characterisation of the routine to the music being played and the choreographic adherence to the musical phrasing and accents.
 - Presentation - does the team sell their routine to the audience? Do they move, with enthusiasm, exuding confidence in their performance? Or do they show strain or introversion?

Judges marking scheme

- 3.41 The following notes for performance standards (top, middle and low scores), should be considered as further guidance for judges. This is about judging what you see, not what you previously know about the dog/handler. Therefore you are judging what you see on the day which may mean that a dog that has previously been a winner may not have performed well in this instance.

Top marks

- 3.42 To be able to award top marks the following areas need to be carefully considered:
- 3.42.1 Eloquent and controlled use of space
- 3.42.2 Projection of the routine idea is demonstrated in an informed, transparent and wholly appropriate manner
- 3.42.3 The performance is presented in a sophisticated and highly polished manner
- 3.42.4 Projection of the theme/style is demonstrated in an informed and appropriate

manner

3.42.5 The performance is presented with flair, demonstrating an understanding of the

specific genre and style relating to the chosen music

3.42.6 Accurate and articulate use of the dog's/handler's bodily skill in relation to the chosen theme/style

Middle marks

3.43 Prior to awarding the dog and handler team average or middle marks, the following areas need to be carefully considered:

3.43.1 Projection of the routine idea is demonstrated in an adequate manner, though there may be some inconsistency throughout the performance

3.43.2 The performance demonstrates an understanding of the specific genre and style

3.43.3 The use of dog's/handler's body language sometimes lacks efficiency and clarity

3.43.4 The use of space has been considered, but the routine sometimes lacks control and planning

3.43.5 The use of focus is inconsistent throughout the performance.

Lower marks

3.44 Lower marks could be very disheartening to the handler but in some cases marks at the lower end of the scale should be used. This way the right dogs will progress through the classes as they have shown the standard required to progress. The following things may make you decide to award low marks:

3.44.1 A lack of efficiency in the use of body language, showing very little evidence of articulation

3.44.2 The handler lacks control and planning in her/his use of space

3.44.3 Focus between the dog and handler is limited

3.44.4 Projection of the routine idea is extremely limited

3.44.5 The performance will demonstrate a very basic understanding of the genre and style.

Practice rounds

Practice rounds are permitted at the judges' discretion and the judges' decision is final, providing their main purpose is to aid the dog's or handlers' 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 the class and must comply with the division entered.

b. The time taken must not exceed the duration for routines at the relevant level.

c. The use of toys which emit any noise, and the use of food are not permitted

d. The usual rules and etiquette for those who compete must be followed, except that the handler may use as many cues as necessary to aid the dog and may touch the dog in a non-harmful and non-intimidating manner.

e. 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 other dogs and handlers.

Mentoring

From 1 January 2023, prior to being fully qualified, a judge must undertake mentoring by an approved Heelwork to Music mentor on three separate occasions:

- observing the whole class from the ringside and discussing it with the mentor
- carrying out two judging appointments, at starters or novice, and discussing the marking and results with the mentor.

After the third appointment the judge may undertake any further appointments.

What is Heelwork to Music mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person in heelwork to music. In the context of the Judges' approval, mentoring is a learning and development experience where a mentee is assisted by a heelwork to music mentor in developing skills and knowledge and a full understanding of judging heelwork to music.

A mentee must have a minimum of three mentoring sessions. If more than three sessions are felt necessary by the Mentee, or, based upon feedback from mentors, additional mentoring sessions may be allocated.

Responsibilities of a Heelwork to Music mentor

- Agreeing how best to conduct the mentoring activity, to best meet the needs of the Mentee, in line with Royal Kennel Club requirements and guidance.
- Encouraging the mentee to express and discuss their ideas, concerns and understanding of the sport.
- Encouraging the mentee to play an active part in the session and use questions to encourage the mentee to demonstrate their knowledge.
- Helping Mentees to review their progress and set realistic and practical options for judging
- Helping Mentees to reflect on and learn from the mentoring experience.
- Taking due care and consideration when providing feedback to Mentees. Feedback should be constructive and honest.
- Referring mentees to other sources of information, advice or further support where appropriate.

Inappropriate routines

Cultural Appropriation

Cultural appropriation can be defined as the exploitation of another culture's religion (their symbols/beliefs etc.) and cultural traditions/dance steps/fashion/music. It is defined as the

inappropriate or unacknowledged adoption of an element of a culture or identity by another – particularly problematic when this happens by a dominant culture to a minority culture. When cultural elements are copied, particularly from minority cultures and used outside of

their original context, it is often viewed negatively and is particularly harmful when talking about indigenous people working for cultural preservation.

Guidance for handlers and judges

- Competitors must not include any elements in their routines which may be considered inappropriate in terms of historical, cultural, or racial issues, in order to prevent any potential allegations of bringing the discipline into disrepute. Regulation L12.f. states 'No costume or routine should bring discredit to heelwork to music.
- Avoid portraying any cultural/racial group or people, particularly avoiding oppressed/minority cultures/races.
- Avoid portraying people with disabilities in any routine.
- Costumes and actions shall not be used that will reinforce stereotypes about any cultural or racial group or people with disabilities
- Competitors should avoid any routine that may be perceived as cultural appropriation and cause offence to a group of people united by their race of culture.
- Competitors may be asked to change or withdraw their routine at any time if the Royal Kennel Club perceived that any element of the routine should fail to follow this guidance and therefore break the existing L regulations which state that no costume or routine should bring discredit to heelwork to music.
- Music choice - must also be taken into consideration and competitors should ensure that the words used in the lyrics could not be deemed to be offensive. Some lyrics which were considered perfectly acceptable in other times would not be considered acceptable today.

Handlers with disabilities

- Wheelchairs come in many styles and forms, but all have limited manoeuvre capabilities and can not move sideways.
- All bags must be removed from the wheelchair prior to entering the competition ring. Any bags which are permanently attached to the wheelchair and therefore can not be removed must be emptied prior to entering the competition ring.
- Safety considerations: in-addition to the current HTM inappropriate moves wheelchair competitors must not allow their dogs to jump over themselves and the wheelchair front to back or back to front, however dogs may jump from side to side i.e. when jumping over a prop such as a cane.
- Dogs should also not be allowed to climb/jump onto the handler and jump over the handlers' head or from the back of the wheelchair.
- Dogs will work with a small gap between themselves and the wheelchair. This should be expected to prevent the dog from colliding with the wheelchair however,

the gap should be consistent throughout the routine in all worked positions.

- Safety considerations must be taken into account when dogs are performing heelwork behind the wheelchair as shown in positions 7 and 8 of fig 3.4. It must be noted that the handler is unable to see dogs working in this position and dogs with long coats or indeed tails could become entangled in the wheels of the chairs. However, as the L regulations clearly state that all 8 heelwork positions are not expected to be performed in any single routine, these two heelwork positions are at the discretion of the handler as to whether they wish to teach their dogs these positions in the same manner as able-bodied handlers do. However, handlers must not move their wheelchairs backwards whilst their dogs are working in the rear heelwork positions. This is particularly deemed dangerous for all dogs.
- As all wheelchairs are of different styles, the dogs' shoulder should be level with the handler's mid -thigh. This is because the safety of the dog is always paramount and, in this position, allows the handler to clearly see and manoeuvre the dog.

Judges should be aware that competitors competing with assistance dogs have the right to use the dog to assist them without being disadvantaged by adverse marking or disqualification but still in line with the overall requirements for heelwork to music routines.

To maximise the inclusivity of the discipline in relation to handlers with disabilities, competition organisers and judges should be encouraged to maintain a good general awareness of issues faced by disabled competitors and should take all possible steps to address them.

3.45 Use of Incident Book

3.45.1 All Royal Kennel Club Licensed Competitions must maintain and have available an Incident Book. Royal Kennel Club Regulations require that any alleged fraudulent or discreditable conduct or any default, omission or incident at or in connection with the competition (even if the parties concerned have indicated that they intend taking no action) should be reported in writing to the Royal Kennel Club, preferably by including details of incidents in the Incident Book. It is important that a record of the incident is made as soon as possible while the incident is fresh in everyone's minds.

3.45.2 All biting incidents must be reported, regardless of how minor they may appear.

Chapter 4. After the Competition

Records

- 4.1 It is important for all judges that they keep records of all their judging appointments
- 4.2 It is worth noting that the Royal Kennel Club produces an inexpensive Judges Record Book that can be obtained from the Royal Kennel Club Publications Department.

Chapter 5. Judges Reports

- 5.1 All judges are encouraged to write a brief class report for 1st to 4th placed winners in order to give feedback to those class participants. At the beginning of each class, decide which judge may take on this task or, indeed, if a joint report could be achieved. Such information in a report should include the name of the hosting competition society, date of the competition, how many handlers competed within the class, name of class i.e. Starters Freestyle and any additional information which may be considered helpful such as choice of music and whether it suited the team, use of props, or highlight a particularly excellent move.
- 5.2 All reports should be honest but encouraging and should never be used to humiliate competitors.
- 5.3 All competition reports should be sent for inclusion on various Heelwork to Music publications and websites via contact details supplied by the HTM Liaison Council.

Chapter 6. Overseas Judges and British Judges Officiating Overseas

- 6.1 Judges from overseas officiating in this country must judge in all respects in the same general manner as is expected of judges resident in the UK. Overseas judges judging at Royal Kennel Club licensed competitions should note that they must judge in accordance with the Royal Kennel Club Heelwork to Music Regulations (L) and not those of any overseas Kennel Club.
- 6.2 The suitability of overseas judges to judge at Royal Kennel Club licensed competitions will be assessed in the same way as for judges resident in the UK. To assist judges from overseas, inviting societies are required to supply them with a copy of the relevant Royal Kennel Club Regulations and a copy of this guide.
- 6.3 By the same token, British judges are reminded when judging overseas that they must conform to the Rules, Regulations and conventions of the host country. Judging must be undertaken on the basis of the Regulations that are recognised in that country.
- 6.4 Overseas judges who are not endorsed by the relevant Kennel Club of their own country will not normally be approved to judge in the UK.