

Rally Review (2022, updated 2025)

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Proposal to adopt a new Framework from Foundation Level to Level 7, preparing RKC Rally for future Championship Status.

Summary

Rally is now in its 13th year as a Royal Kennel Club activity. The following changes are suggested to ensure that Rally continues to remain valid, support the Royal Kennel Club's strategic objectives and to facilitate growth in both competitor numbers and competitor experience with an end goal of achieving Championship Status for Rally.

Background

The Kennel Club adopted Rally in October 2012 and at this time the exercise signs were redrawn with the Kennel Club logo and some of the exercise descriptions were reworded to both anglicise them and bring them in line with Kennel Club policy. Initially KC Rally closely resembled the APDT version that it came from, albeit with visually different signs and the first attempt at translating the exercise descriptions into British English.

In 2015 the structure was changed from 3 Levels, with an A and B stream for each, into the 6 Levels we have now. Further ad-hoc regulation changes were implemented as required.

After 5 years the Rally Working Party conducted a review, with opinions sought from competitors across the country. The review was split into three sub-groups with one responsible for the Exercise Set, one for Scoring and the third group with a more general remit to review other aspects of Rally such as performance, course design and judging progression. The opinions and suggestions from competitors were collated and used during this process. The signs and exercise descriptions were redrawn to simplify the designs and make them more cohesive with the same symbols and layout used. The exercise set was updated with both retirements and new additions. The review attempted to ensure that the new exercise set was valid, exercises were appropriate to the level they were assigned to, that their building blocks could be progressed through the levels and that they helped introduce concepts for other KC activities. At this time the anglicisation of the descriptions was completed, although some Rally specific phrases were retained. These changes were introduced from January 2019.

The 2019 review was a major undertaking, and it was hoped would see Rally well into the future. However, although it was a huge step forward in improving both judging and performance levels, time has shown that it was only a partial solution and did not fully address the issues facing the discipline.

Where is Rally now? (2022-2025)

Although Rally has grown into an established activity within the Royal Kennel Club, it has not yet reached the stage where it is ready to be considered for Championship Status. Performance expectations are not of a similar standard to other Royal Kennel Club activities, meaning that competitors often progress quickly through the classes without gaining the experience and skills required for the next Level. Competitors are reaching the highest level within a couple of years, and we then lose a high proportion of them as they move on to fresh challenges. This has a knock-on impact throughout the sport as we lose trainers, scribes, helpers and show managers as well as judges and competitors. It is important that any changes to KC Rally encourage the retention of these assets by providing a framework that motivates and rewards participants at all levels.

In recent years Covid and cost of living pressures have had an impact on numbers.

The Review

This 5-year review grew out of concerns regarding retention of competitors and experience and the need for a further level beyond Level 6, that could grow Rally towards Championship status. However, as we started this review it became apparent that a more cohesive approach was required to produce a framework that was sustainable, robust, and with the longevity to take Rally forward for at least a full decade after implementation.

This review was started with the establishment of a small Working Sub-Group in 2022 made up of Julie Barrett, Rachel Bradley and Sally Sanford. Kathleen Daly joined in 2023 when Julie had to step away for personal reasons. The remit was redefined in light of financial and budgetary constraints and then further redefined after consultation with the Rally community.

As part of the 2019 review a 5-year embargo was placed on changes to the Level 1-6 exercise set. This was a two-fold decision, it gave the changes time to become established within the Rally community and provided competitors, trainers, judges and show organisers with the confidence to invest in equipment without concerns regarding obsolescence. This approach has been successful and has proven to be a realistic timeframe.

This review aimed to establish a 10-year framework to develop a more definitive version of KC Rally. It is recommended that a similar 5-year embargo is placed upon the resulting exercise set. However, it is recognised that changing circumstances may necessitate minor adjustments in the future and the inclusion of a regular review process would be advantageous to ensure that the timescales for this framework remain valid.

Consultation

In 2024 the RWP ran a survey on the future of RKC, building on general feedback received by RWP members out and about with the Rally Community. The survey was well supported with 230 responses. Those responding displayed clear majority support for a greater variety of skills within Rally exercises, more moving exercises and an increase in handler choice exercises. There was room for suggestions in the survey and significant support was shown for adding the ability to train/reward in the ring, the introduction of new levels, keeping Rally's accessibility for pet dog handlers, introducing new exercises, improving judges training and standards, and support for Championship status. This feedback was welcomed by the RWP and incorporated into this review. Some suggestions have already been implemented as detailed below.

Suggested Courses of Action

The Working Subgroup identified key actions towards this goal:

- Provide a clear path towards Championship status by defining the full structure of Rally
- Display a clear skill progression throughout the Levels. This is to be achieved by reviewing and developing the exercise set to provide a framework through the levels towards the ultimate goal of a Champion class.
- Enable establishment of core skills at the start of a team's Rally career with the introduction of a Foundation class as a starting level before Level 1 to ensure all competitors demonstrate their understanding of these skills at the lowest level with a positive impact on standards throughout.
- Improve retention and performance within Rally with the introduction of a Level 7 class to provide a route through to a future Championship class.
- Remove inequality so that all competitors have two standard classes to enter with competitors not qualifying out of either Level 6 or 7.
- Improve performance expectations by tightening definitions within the S regulations.
- Drive up standards with a review of the Judging programme to give aspiring judges more relevant experience as they progress; and to improve the standard of judging with more emphasis on recognising

and rewarding performance. An advanced judging practical will also be introduced to assist with the additional skills required to design courses for the higher levels.

- Review the S Regulations to improve clarity and consistency. We should aim for the regulations to be robust, self-explanatory and to fully support the proposed framework.

The following have already been implemented after being identified and proposed as part of this process:

- Use of polls to communicate with the Rally community broadening the reach of the consultation process
- Introduction of a Veteran class, titles and Warrant to broaden the appeal of KC Rally and assist with the retention of experienced participants of all types i.e., competitors, judges, organisers, trainers.
- Production of an Exercise Video Library to address regional variation in interpretation of exercise descriptions and to drive up standards with a consistent approach across the UK.
- Improving the variety and flow of courses by enabling more exercises to be reused within a course:
 - 2024 – Ex 9 270 Right Turn, Ex 25 270 Left Turn were added to the exercises which could be repeated without limit within a course.
 - 2026 - the ability to use the Angled Recall exercises, 46 Sit Leave Dog - Angled Recall Finish R/L and 66 Sit Leave Dog - Angled Recall Over Jump Finish R/L, once from each direction was added, enabling their use twice within any course.
- Improvement of the consistency and clarity of the S Regs:
 - Removal of irrelevant historical information.
 - Change of the proportion of exercises within Levels 2 and 3 to a set number rather than a ratio removing confusion.
 - Clarifying how jump measurements should be taken to ensure consistency and safety in laying out these exercises
 - Simplification and clarification of where signs should be placed and how judges should advise handlers where the sign is not placed as expected.
 - Simplification and clarification of Linked exercises including establishing custom and practice within the regulations
 - Removal of the definition of a static exercise to remove the confusion with the number of static positions permitted within a course.
 - Addition of a minimum number of static positions within a standard course together with clarification that judges should showcase a wide range of skills within their courses
- Introduction of the Hoop option for jump exercises based on a community suggestion. This not only enables jump exercises to be used on surfaces which would previously have excluded them but also increases the variety of skills for judges to use within their courses.
- Expansion of the awarding of places to non-qualifying scores where the handler has not received a non-qualifying score for any of the reasons listed in the non-qualifying scoring regulations. As standards improve there will be a gap between current performance and desired performance, which may increase the number of handlers not qualifying; enabling them still to place should motivate them to continue and improve their performance towards qualification standard.
- Retirement of the mat exercises, Bonus Exercise 9 Send To Mat and Bonus Exercise 14 Directed Send to Mat, on health and safety concerns.

The following were actioned in response to feedback from the 2024 Future of KC Rally survey.

- Expansion of the minimum distance between exercises from 2m to 2.5m with a note encouraging judges to make good use of the ring size available to them. To encourage flow and give sufficient space for handlers with larger/longer dogs as well as reducing the need for handlers requiring more space on turns to have to submit an EMR. (This was also requested in the 2024 survey)
- Promotion of Special Reward Classes and training rings at shows to help transition to full rounds building on feedback from the community regarding training and rewarding opportunities.

- Overhaul of placings so that handlers tied on points run off with a Bonus Exercise rather than timing following feedback from the Rally Community supporting inclusivity.

It should be noted that separate to the work of the RWP Working Sub-Group, the Rally Accredited Trainers have introduced Online Reaccreditation for existing judges, which should also combat regional variations in interpretation as well as addressing the problem of regional accessibility to seminars.

Appendices

Appendix A - Overview & Rationale for exercise/level framework

Appendix B – Identification of Key Skills and Allocation of Exercises to Ensure Progression Through the Exercise Set

Appendix C – The Proposed New Exercise Set - S(C)

Appendix D - Proposed Changes to S(A) to add Foundation and Level 7

Appendix E - Proposed Changes to S(B)2 Course Design to add Foundation and Level 7

Appendix F – Judging Progression for New Framework

Appendix G – Other supporting regulation changes identified to date

Appendix H – Draft Timeline

Appendix A

Overview & Rationale for exercise/level framework

The initial review of the exercises identified 5 exercises to be retired as either they could be recreated using linked exercises or that they did not provide an appropriate skill challenge, however, when the budgetary restrictions became apparent the approach was changed to retain exercises where possible. Subsequently Bonus Exercises 9 & 14 were retired owing to health and safety concerns regarding their use. Please note that the exercise set was renumbered at this time, the subsequent confusion has been recognised and moving forward it is proposed that exercises should have a unique lifetime identification number.

Therefore 68 exercises and 13 bonuses from the 2019 sign set have been largely retained, although some have been amended for consistency or to provide a more appropriate skill level.

The proposed framework is designed to be robust and future proofed – with significant skill development within the level set. Performance and judging criteria progression are also built in.

The Foundation Class, combined with the new Veteran Rally titles and warrants and Level 7, will help retain experience within Rally, assist in driving up standards prior to introducing Championship status. This is the ultimate method of retaining interest and experience at the top end of Rally as an activity.

By introducing a foundation class, we will be encouraging handlers with skill identification at the beginning of their Rally journey. These core skills are not the same as in other activities. It should be open to every team to enable (current) higher level teams to revisit and establish their skill set with their new dog. The number of exercises will be limited and rewards will be permitted to enable dogs and handlers to build the level of concentration and confidence required for progression.

Introducing a Level 7 means that handlers have 2 standard levels available to them and removes the anomaly in the 2019 classification where the top teams have only one standard level. Teams will not qualify out of Level 6 or Level 7. The new Level 7 should showcase the highest standard, quality and variety in Rally, it will be the level from where Championship qualification is earned in due course. As such it is important that the exercises are well designed to showcase skills developed through the levels.

The number of bonus exercises at each level will be standardised with 2 bonus exercises at all levels.

We want to introduce manageable increments into each level, with extra exercises into the middle levels where teams are still skill building. In the higher levels there is not as great a need for new exercises as challenges will come from course design and incremental performance standards as well as having a greater catalogue of exercises from the lower levels to draw on. The proposed new exercise set has been designed to progress the skills currently within RKC Rally, there are also proposed changes to course design to expand the skill and

This contrasts to the current situation where particularly in the middle levels there are too few new exercises, and those that are available are static heavy. This has resulted in predictability in too many courses.

Some existing exercises have been moved between levels to better reflect their difficulty and skill level. For example exercise 40 (left about turn) has been moved from Level 3 to Level 1 (as it is easily achieved on lead and is a similar skill set as a “right forward”) and Exercise 63 (Stand leave dog, down, sit, recall – finish) has been moved to Level 7 owing to the complex skills required. Bonus Exercise 11, Down On The Move – Return, and Bonus Exercise 13, Send Around Pole, have been moved into the level exercises.

As a result of these deliberations, the following framework was presented to and approved by the Rally Working Party.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Foundation Class | 14 exercises (of which 4 are new, plus 1 new bonus exercise) |
| Level 1 | 20 exercises (of which 3 are new) |
| Level 2 | 18 exercises (of which 6 are new) |
| Level 3 | 16 exercises (of which 6 are new, plus 1 amended bonus exercise) |
| Level 4 | 14 exercises (of which 3 are new & 1 amended) |
| Level 5 | 10 exercises (of which 3 are new & 3 amended, plus 1 new bonus exercise) |
| Level 6 | 9 exercises (of which 6 are new, plus 1 new bonus exercise) |
| Level 7 | 6 exercises (of which are 5 new, plus 2 new bonus exercises) |

Our initial suggestions for a Championship Class have previously been submitted via the RWP and can be finalised at the appropriate time.

Appendix B
Identification of Key Skills and Allocation of Exercises
to Ensure Progression Through the Exercise Set

Skill Progression

The new framework looks to build the duration of concentration required during a round for dog and handler with a progression in complexity of course design as well as the skills required for each exercise through the levels.

The key skills required with the rally exercise set were identified as:

- Heelwork
 - This is fundamental to rally with markable heelwork between all exercises as well as the furtherance of heelwork skills within all exercises. So the progression has not been specifically outlined, expectations are that consistency and accuracy improve as handler and dog teams progress up the levels.
- Waits
 - Waits are also fundamental to rally whether it is holding a static position before moving off at Foundation Level, waiting while the handler walks around them, waiting while the handler walks away then performing a different behaviour, or waiting for the handler to return at a higher level.
- Handler choice
 - Introduced at Foundation with the choice to Twist R/L at Heel and expanded in Level 1, with the choice to go left or right in the bonuses, the concept of handler choice runs through the Levels.
 - In Level 3 and above the choice to finish right or left after a recall is introduced with the Sit Leave Dog – Recall Through Distractions Finish R/L bonus exercise.
 - At Level 5 the Stand Leave Dog – Turn Call To Heel gives the handler two options – 1 whether to recall to their left and their right and 2 whether to complete the exercise with a forward or to finish their dog to heel.
 - In Level 7 the Send Over Jump Stop Dog Recall Over Jump To Heel While Moving allows the handler to choose the position to stop their dog in and in the Level 7 bonus – Double Retrieve, it is the handler's choice whether to send their dog to the right or left hand article first.
- Turns (Moving, no equipment)
 - Existing simple turns are allocated across the first 3 levels - F, L1 and L2.
 - Left About Turn is moved to Level 2
 - Send Around Handler Turns Left is introduced at Level 3
 - Send Around Handler Turns Right and Double Left About Turn are introduced at Level 4
 - Right/Left Turn Heel Back exercises are moved to Level 5 and amended to allow for 2-3 steps backwards.
 - 270 Right/Left Heel Back exercises are introduced at Level 6 also allowing for 2-3 steps backwards.
- Static positions, including transitions between these positions
 - Sit, Stand and Down exercises moved to Foundation as core skills
 - The Foundation Bonus Call Front Stand adds a sit to stand transition in front which builds towards transitions at a distance as well as backup skills
 - Sit Transitions at heel are added at L1, Stand at L2 and Down at L3.
 - More complex exercises from a Sit, Stand and Down are added through the levels following the same progression of Sit, Stand and Down.
 - Leave Dog exercises also follow a different convention starting with the Level 2 Bonuses; Down Leave Dog is introduced with the Angled Recall in Level 4 and then Stand Leave Dog at Level 5. This reflects that dogs are more likely to break a stand.

- Stopping the dog at a distance is introduced with the Sit Leave Dog - Down On Recall exercise retained at Level 4, progressed through the Stand Leave Dog - Down on Recall Return retained at Level 6, to the handler's choice of position in the new Send Over Jump Stop Dog Recall Over Jump To Heel While Moving exercise at Level 7
- Transitions at a distance are introduced with the Sit Leave Dog - Turn Down Return and Sit Leave Dog - Turn Stand bonus exercises retained at Levels 3 and 4 respectively
- Transitions at a distance are progressed in Level 7 with the Stand Leave Dog - Down, Sit, Recall Finish R/L and Send Over Jump Stop Dog Recall Over Jump to Heel While Moving exercises
- Static positions on the move are introduced from Level 5 with the new Stand on the Move – Return Pickup and the amended Down on the Move – Return Pickup exercises
- These are expanded with the introduction of the Stand On The Move – Call To Heel Send Around Forward and retention of the Down On the Move – Call To Heel Send Around Forward exercises at Level 6
- At Level 7 the Sit On The Move is introduced with Sit On the Move – Return Pickup
- Turns including Static Positions
 - 90 degree static turns remain at Level 1 with the existing Sit Right/Left Turn Forward exercises retained and the Stand Right/Left Turn Forward exercises added.
 - These are expanded to Pivots at Level 2 with both Sit and Stand versions. (Stand pivots are not progressed beyond 90 degrees.)
 - The Sit Turn Right/Left 1 Step Sit exercises are moved to Level 3
 - 180 degree sit turns remain at Level 3 with the Sit About Turn Right/Left Forward exercises
 - 180 Pivot Sit exercises remain at Level 4.
 - Right/Left Turn 1-2 Steps Down exercises remain at Level 5
 - The complex exercises About Turn Right Down About Turn Left Forward and Stand 180 Pivot Right Down 180 Pivot Left Stand are introduced at Level 7
- Recalls, starting with the Call Front
 - Call Front Forward Right/Left moved to Foundation to encourage handler to heelwork skill of moving forwards together
 - Call Front Handler Finish added at Foundation to introduce a wait and as a differential to current Ex 62
 - Call Front Stand is introduced as a Foundation Bonus providing the first steps towards backup away from the handler
 - Call Front Finish Right/Left exercises remain at Level 1 where they better suit the increased static positions as well as building on the Forward variants in Foundation.
 - The Call Front Side Step R/L and Call Front Turn R/: bonuses remain at Level 1
 - Call Front About Turn Right Forward (Current Ex 62) moves to Level 2 to better reflect its skill level. The new Foundation exercise Call Front Handler Finish provides a differential which should reduce confusion in its performance.
 - Level 2 bonuses remain Sit Leave Dog – Call To Heel and Sit Leave Dog – Recall Handler Finish (now to be performed fully off lead) providing a progression in wait and towards other rejoin handler and recall exercises.
 - Sit Leave Dog – Recall Finish Right/Left exercises remain at Level 3, the amended Bonus exercise Sit Leave Dog – Recall Through Distractions Finish R/L extends the wait time and length of recall as well as adding distractions.
 - At Level 4 the static and angle are varied with the amended exercise Down Leave Dog – Angled Recall Finish R/L
 - Recall to heel is introduced at Level 2 and expanded throughout - this is explored more under the development of the return/rejoin to heel behaviour
- Differentiation between Finish and Forward
 - A Forward is a handler timing skill and a Finish is a cued sit at heel, there is no expectation of an auto-sit in Rally.
 - Forward variants are always introduced before variants ending in a static position, this combined with the variety in static positions enables the handler to build this differential as they progress:

- Call Front Forward Right/Left are Foundation Exercises, Call Front Finish Right/Left are Level 1 exercises
 - Sit Send Around Forward and Stand Send Around Forward are Level 1 exercises
 - Sit Send Around Sit and Stand Send Around Stand are Level 2 exercises
 - Forward is based on handler timing relative to dog's positioning, this is progressed from Foundation through the Level 7, whether it is timing when your dog has completed its "twist", to when to when to call your dog to ensure its return to heel before passing the next exercise sign.
- Pace changes
 - Slow, Fast and Normal Pace exercises remain at Level 1
 - Sit Slow Forward is introduced at Level 3 to join Sit Fast Forward
 - Course design changes to enable judges to move handler straight from slow to fast pace and fast to slow pace are proposed
 - Course design change to enable stretches of exercises at slow or fast pace at the higher levels are also proposed
- Return to/rejoin at heel
 - The simplest version of this is the dog moving from a sit, stand or down to resume heelwork at Foundation Level - Forward, Finish and Send Around exercises also build this behaviour.
 - The retained Level 2 bonus Sit Leave Dog – Call To Heel establishes the dog being called from a distance to move into heel from behind the handler.
 - The new Level 3 exercises Send Marker Right/Left Turn Catch Up introduce the dog accelerating its pace from moving to "catch up" and rejoin the handler, and this is expanded in the new Level 6 and 7 Send Marker exercises.
 - The Sit Leave Dog - Call To Heel While Moving exercise moves to Level 3 and the new Down Leave Dog, Turn Left/Right Call To Heel While Moving exercises are introduced at Levels 5 and 6 respectively.
- Cone and distraction exercises
 - Walking around a single cone or empty distraction cover is introduced in Foundation with the Loop Distraction Right/Left exercises (from Level 1 the cover is placed over an empty bowl or toy).
 - The Serpentine and Figure 8 are retained at Level 1
 - The Weave Around Distractions exercise is moved to Level 1
 - The Spiral exercises are retained at Level 2
 - The Loop Around Distractions exercise is moved to Level 2
 - The Sit Leave Dog – Recall Through Distractions Finish R/L Bonus exercise is amended and retained at Level 3
 - Shared marker definitions are clarified
 - Equipment definitions are introduced to enable cones to be used for Distraction exercises and distraction covers to be used for cone exercises in the higher levels, also enabling these exercises to share equipment.
 - Shared marker regulations are redefined to remove the word marker (as it now refers to a different piece of equipment) and their use clarified
 - Equipment definitions may be relaxed to allow the use of different equipment at higher levels; this is still under consideration as all equipment needs to be easily distinguished from other ring equipment.
- Sideways work
 - Call Front Side Step R/L is retained as a Level 1 bonus exercise
 - A new Side Step 1-2 Steps Right exercise is introduced at level 1 to introduce sidestep at heel
 - The diagonal side step exercise Moving Side Step Right is moved to Level 3 to build from the Level 1 exercise and to place it at a more appropriate level for the skill set required.
 - Sit Side Step Right Sit is retained at Level 4
 - The concept is expanded in Level 5 with the new exercise Stand Side Track Right Stand requiring the handler and dog to move sideways for approximately 1.5m
 - In Level 6 this is progressed in the new exercise Side Track Right exercise

- Backwards work
 - A distinction is made between backing up in front of the handler – back up and backing up in heel – heel back.
 - The first building block towards both is the Call Front Stand exercise in Foundation
 - The Call Front Backup 3 paces is retained as a Level 3 bonus.
 - This is progressed in the Level 5 bonus Call Front Back Away From Handler to the Level 7 Bonus exercise Stand Leave Dog – Back Up At A Distance
 - The new Stand Heel Back 1-2 Steps exercise is introduced at Level 2
 - The Moving Heel Back 3 Steps has its name simplified and is moved to Level 4, extending both the number of handler steps backwards and the number of body lengths the dog moves backwards.
 - Right/Left Turn Heel Back exercises are moved to Level 5 and amended to allow for 2-3 steps backwards.
 - 270 Right/Left Heel Back exercises are introduced at Level 6 and also allow for 2-3 steps backwards.
- Handler and dog working independently of each other
 - The skill is introduced in Foundation with the dog performing a twist at heel, or a send to heel (either left or right) and is expanded in Level 1, with the move of the Sit Send Around Forward and Stand Send Around forward exercises, and Level 2 with the move of the Left About Turn and retention of the Level 2 bonuses.
 - The Send Marker exercises replace the Send To Mat exercises and build on the current Bonus Exercise 13, Send Around Pole. The dog has to clearly demonstrate its ability to move away from the handler and take direction. The advantages over the mat are that the equipment is the same for every dog, reducing time expended in the ring and removing the need for judges/stewards to handle soiled mats.
 - The Send Marker exercises are introduced at Level 3 with the new Send Marker Right/Left Turn Catch Up exercises they progress as follows:
 - Level 4
 - New Double Send Marker Alongside Handler exercise
 - BE13 becomes Sit Send Marker – Call To Heel Right – About Turn Right Forward within the level exercise set
 - Level 6
 - New Bonus exercise Send Marker Right & Left – About Turn Right Catch Up
 - Level 7
 - New Double Send Marker Catch Up exercise
 - The existing jump exercises are retained at their 2019 levels with the Hoop option.
 - An advanced jump exercise where the dog is sent over the jump, stopped and then recalled back over the jump is introduced at Level 7, Send Over Jump Stop Dog Recall Over Jump to Heel While Moving, also with a Hoop option.
- Retrieve
 - The existing retrieve bonus exercises are retained at Levels 5 and 6 respectively
 - A new Double Retrieve bonus exercise where the handler places 2 similar articles is added at Level 7, introducing the concepts of memory, distraction and direction to this exercise.

The multiple skills required for most Rally Exercises mean that the above list is not exhaustive.

For example - if we take the new Level 7 Bonus Exercise Stand Leave Dog – Back Up At A Distance, the handler and dog heel into the exercise, the dog then establishes a stand, performs a wait, takes direction at a distance, backs up in a straight line, establishes a new stand and then waits again for the handler to walk past and return to heel and release them. However, it has not been specifically mentioned as a progression for heelwork, static positions or waits as the main focus of the exercise is the back up behaviour.

Appendix C

The Proposed New Exercise Set

The Exercise set and Sign Designs were approved by the Rally Working Party at their 18th February 2025 meeting, please refer to the latest version of “S(C) 2027 Proposed New Exercise Set” for sign designs and descriptions.

Please follow the link against the new exercises for a demonstration of its performance

FOUNDATION LEVEL

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|---------------------------|---|
| F-10 | CALL FRONT HANDLER FINISH | https://youtu.be/799as_big5o |
| F-11 | TWIST R/L AT HEEL | https://youtu.be/FtFY9VH66aA |
| F-12 | LOOP DISTRACTION RIGHT | https://youtu.be/Lq9dcPNdOgo |
| F-14 | LOOP DISTRACTION LEFT | https://youtu.be/qhHwlixDkcU |

Foundation Level Bonuses

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|------------------|---|
| F-B1 | CALL FRONT STAND | https://youtu.be/iAqZwoxfh_0 |

LEVEL ONE

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|--------------------------|---|
| L1-15 | STAND RIGHT TURN FORWARD | https://youtu.be/1M3_Bhzu5eg |
| L1-16 | STAND LEFT TURN FORWARD | https://youtu.be/_0w273oslPM |
| L1-17 | SIDESTEP 1-2 STEPS RIGHT | https://youtu.be/nczSAjDRv9A |

LEVEL TWO

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---|
| L2-01 | STAND SIT | https://youtu.be/LHSU5AR_MCI |
| L2-02 | STAND DOWN | https://youtu.be/4C2VPajltCk |
| L2-09 | STAND SEND AROUND STAND | https://youtu.be/4k5vV1AlJw4 |
| L2-10 | STAND HEELBACK 1-2 STEPS | https://youtu.be/uQOYxqnK0nU |
| L2-13 | STAND 90 DEGREE PIVOT RIGHT STAND | https://youtu.be/ihv77YvgrII |
| L2-14 | STAND 90 DEGREE PIVOT LEFT STAND | https://youtu.be/HIAyQNoGNoc |

LEVEL THREE

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---|
| L3-01 | DOWN SIT | https://youtu.be/VhWVAMUGG-Q |
| L3-02 | DOWN STAND | https://youtu.be/jZCj7KOYZbY |
| L3-03 | SEND AROUND - HANDLER TURNS LEFT | https://youtu.be/txAIJ6JVQko |
| L3-06 | SIT SLOW FORWARD | https://youtu.be/dh5qi5zW_Cg |
| L3-15 | SEND MARKER - RIGHT TURN CATCH UP | https://youtu.be/nNHP2lmifrM |
| L3-16 | SEND MARKER - LEFT TURN CATCH UP | https://youtu.be/gO21wD57rYI |

Level Three Bonuses

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|--|---|
| L3-B2 | RECALL THROUGH DISTRACTIONS FINISH R/L | https://youtu.be/79X9pPvrxFM |

LEVEL FOUR

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|---------------------------------|---|
| L4-01 | SEND AROUND HANDLER TURNS RIGHT | https://youtu.be/ddHQ6bHHzY |
| L4-02 | DOUBLE LEFT ABOUT TURN | https://youtu.be/wXQCifa1Vkw |

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|---|---|
| L4-04 | DOWN LEAVE DOG - ANGLED RECALL - FINISH R/L | https://youtu.be/AN6f1-6FesI |
| L4-12 | DOUBLE SEND MARKER ALONGSIDE HANDLER | https://youtu.be/VDYB6-wWgok |
| L4-13 | SIT SEND MARKER - CALL TO HEEL RIGHT - ABOUT TURN RIGHT FORWARD | https://youtu.be/zJcQIsa9Tz0 |

LEVEL FIVE

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|--|---|
| L5-03 | RIGHT TURN HEELBACK 2-3 STEPS | <i>No demo – varies number of steps</i> |
| L5-04 | LEFT TURN HEELBACK 2-3 STEPS | <i>No demo – varies number of steps</i> |
| L5-06 | DOWN LEAVE DOG - LEFT TURN - CALL TO HEEL WHILE MOVING | https://youtu.be/Yxq47x7uU8c |
| L5-07 | STAND ON THE MOVE - RETURN PICKUP | https://youtu.be/uu7SotbBaT4 |
| L5-08 | DOWN ON THE MOVE - RETURN PICKUP | <i>No demo – down variant of L5-07</i> |
| L5-10 | STAND - SIDETRACK RIGHT - STAND | https://youtu.be/2gPEQVe20rQ |

Level Five Bonuses

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---|
| L5-B2 | CALL FRONT BACK AWAY FROM HANDLER | https://youtu.be/oe8SlwNi938 |

LEVEL SIX

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|--|---|
| L6-01 | 270 RIGHT HEELBACK 2-3 STEPS | https://youtu.be/EEKpZK6Nlqc |
| L6-02 | 270 LEFT HEELBACK 2-3 STEPS | https://youtu.be/3bfodyCiNis |
| L6-03 | SIDETRACK RIGHT | https://youtu.be/XXYzrlq-1JQ |
| L6-06 | STAND ON THE MOVE - RECALL TO HEEL - SEND AROUND FORWARD | https://youtu.be/pBBW6iEUynw |
| L6-07 | LATERAL RECALL | https://youtu.be/vfJ2z9AZ3IE |
| L6-09 | DOWN LEAVE DOG - RIGHT TURN - CALL TO HEEL WHILE MOVING | https://youtu.be/Zyfn5LGZM5c |

Level Six Bonuses

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---|
| L6-B2 | SEND MARKER RIGHT & LEFT CATCH UP | https://youtu.be/Byas9twgb7g |

LEVEL SEVEN

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|---|--|
| L7-02 | ABOUT TURN RIGHT - DOWN - ABOUT TURN LEFT FORWARD | https://youtu.be/Kil00lx7sIU |
| L7-03 | STAND 180 PIVOT RIGHT – DOWN - 180 PIVOT LEFT - STAND | https://youtu.be/8kLUpSka9gA |
| L7-04 | SIT ON THE MOVE - RETURN PICKUP | https://youtu.be/aXg_Flq4G4o |
| L7-05 | DOUBLE SEND MARKER CATCH UP | https://youtu.be/_5FT-tpHuc |
| L7-06 | SEND OVER JUMP - STOP DOG - RECALL OVER JUMP TO HEEL WHILE MOVING | https://youtu.be/J173_P-pTNs <i>(Note stop position is handler's choice)</i> |

Level Seven Bonuses

| Ex.No. | Exercise | Video Example |
|--------|--|---|
| L7-B1 | DOUBLE RETRIEVE | https://youtu.be/OMp1HpgQJqM |
| L7-B2 | STAND LEAVE DOG - BACK UP AT A DISTANCE. | https://youtu.be/MEvJWMS_uQM |

With thanks to all the outgoing members of the Rally Working Party and the 2022-2025 Rally Accredited Trainers for their assistance in preparing these demonstration videos.

APPENDIX D
Proposed Changes to S(A) Levels, Classes and Eligibility to add
Foundation Level and Level 7

It was agreed that Rally dogs should continue to compete in their lowest eligible class and be allowed to compete at the subsequent level, with an exception proposed for Level 6. Dogs never qualify out of Level 6 and it was considered fairer to allow handlers of dogs who have earned a Level 6 or Level 6 Excellent title to choose whether to compete in Level 6 and/or Level 7 when entering any show. We did not want to introduce a new anomaly where handlers of dogs at the highest level now had to enter two levels in order to fix the current anomaly where they only have one level that they can enter.

Some changes have been made for clarification purposes and to remove repetition.

Towards the end of the RWP's final term multiple requests were received from the Rally community that handlers earning a Rally Level title should be able to stay in that level until they had gained more experience to enable them to improve with higher scores before they progressed to the next level. The RWP produced a survey where a clear majority of the community were in favour of this, with the preferred approach that dog/handler teams may choose to move up on gaining their Rally Level title but must move up when they gain their Rally Level Excellent title – this has been reflected in S(A)4 – Eligibility.

The introduction of a Foundation Level as the lowest class raises the question of what happens to existing Level 1 competitors. The RLC members are in favour of competitors remaining at their current level but permitting those who have not yet earned a qualifier at Level 2 to declare Foundation as their lowest class.

APPENDIX E**Proposed Changes to S(B) Performance and Scoring Guidelines and Competition Management to support the addition of Foundation Level and Level 7**

Some changes have been made for clarification purposes and to remove repetition.

S(B)1 Performance has been expanded to better define competitor expectations. Where possible definitions have been combined for clarity including the course, whether a level or class is performed on or off lead, heelwork, static positions, independent movement and Exercise Modification requests. The section of rewards has been expanded to include the use of food and/or toys in Foundation Level and clarified their use in Special classes.

The performance expectations for Exercises performed within Slow or Fast Pace and Linked Exercises have been added to support their inclusion within Course Design.

S(B)2 Course Design. Following a positive reception from the Rally Community through the RWP Survey in 2024 the ability for judges to place exercises within sections of fast or slow pace and for a greater variety of linked exercises have been added to course design, with their performance expectations detailed under S(B)1. In order to maximise flexibility for judges, guidance has been added that where an exercise states a range of distances the shorter distance is used at the lowest level. The guidance on integrity of exercises has been simplified and also a statement has been added about ensuring that the exercises are suitable for the venue and surface.

The Course Design guidance is detailed for Foundation Level and Level 7 as well as changes to the other Levels and Veteran to support the new framework

S(B)3 Ring Management. The placing of equipment and exercise signs is clarified. The reuse of equipment has been clearly defined bringing the regulations in line with the accepted practice of reusing a jump/hoop. The guidance on Linked Exercises is moved to S(B)1 and a section has been added on ring management where classes permit the use of food and/or toys.

S(B)4 Scoring Guidelines. Minimal changes have been made here to support the new framework, there are also some consistency and clarification changes. It is recognised that a review of scoring should be undertaken once the new exercise set has bedded in.

Appendix F

Discussion on Judging Progression for New Framework

Judging Progression with Level 7 and Foundation

The current standardised approach for judges training across the activities is for there to be a film on the KC Academy, an online examination and then 2 days of in-person practical seminars which have an assessment component.

Rally currently does not have a KC Academy film and a discussion item was put forward to the October 2025 Activities Judges Sub-group to review how judges training can move forward without one. Unfortunately the Rally Representative was unable to attend so this will now move forward to their April meeting. This is included as a discussion and will come back as a proposal to the July meeting of the RLC to enable feedback from the AJSG to be incorporated

Suggested Progression for Rally Judges within the new framework.

Please note that this approach, of moving the rules and regulations online and splitting the Practical seminar into two assessed days, was favourably received by the RWP and RLC. It aims to extend the practical experience of new and existing judges to drive up judging standards

Existing Judges – would retain their existing Judging qualifications but would need to meet the new criteria if they wished to progress to judge a higher level.

New Judges - would need to demonstrate a higher level of experience within Rally .

| New Judges | Current | Proposed¹ |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Competitive Experience | Level 1 or 2 title | Level 2 or 3 title |
| Seminar & Exam requirements | Attend In-Person Rules & Regs Pass Rules & Regs Exam Attend Practical Judging | Watch Academy Film ² Pass online Rules & Regs Exam Pass Practical Judging L1-3 |
| Scribing requirements | Scribed twice | Scribed twice |
| Initial Appointments | 3 at Levels 1 or 2 | 3 at Level 2 |

AIM – judges would start their judging journey with competitors who were more experienced but not beyond the level they had themselves titled at.

Progression

Stage 1 - Levels 1 & 3 - once judges have completed their initial 3 appointments at Level 2 they may choose to extend their judging experience and progress to judge Levels 1 and/or 3. They would still need to have scribed the Level they wished to judge .

AIM – judges would build experience at the lower levels and amass more experience before progressing to the higher levels

Stage 2 – Progressing to Foundation, Level 4 & Veteran - once a judge has judged a minimum of 4 times at Levels 1 and 3 including at least once at Level 1 and at least once at Level 3 they may choose to further extend their judging experience and progress to judge Foundation, Level 4 and Veteran. They would need to have scribed the level they wish to judge and pass the higher level Practical assessment

¹ Please note that this is currently a discussion item to provide a full picture of the new framework.

² As there is not currently an Academy film for Rally this will have to be an alternative agreed between the RLC and AJSG

AIM – provide additional guidance and support for judges wishing to progress to judge the higher levels. The current Practical seminar only gives practical experience at Levels 1 & 2.

Stage 3 – Progressing to judge Levels 5 and above - Judges wishing to progress to judge a higher level³ would have to have previously passed the higher level Practical and scribed at the level they wish to judge at least once and twice for Level 7.

AIM – by asking current judges to pass the higher level Practical assessment it will provide up to date guidance and support for the higher levels. Although judges will not have to take this assessment to continue judging their existing levels Rally judges have historically embraced education and are likely to attend even though it is not a requirement

The criteria for a Championship Rally Judge - this will need to be defined prior to Championship status but is better deferred until this time when there will be a clearer picture of the standard required.

Notes:

1. Guidance for the Foundation class should be covered in the Level 1-3 practical seminar as, although this class is for more experienced judges, new judges will need to know the criteria for the Foundation exercises.
2. The Guide for Judges to be updated to support the new framework and judging criteria.
3. The sub-group discussed whether the scribing requirement should be increased to twice at every level. Our initial thoughts were that this adds too great a burden for judges wishing to progress when the number of judging appointments and the requirement for an additional seminar are considered.
4. This assumes that existing Level 4 and above judges will need to pass the new Level 4 plus Practical Seminar before they progress to judge further levels.
5. A move towards more online presentations to promote consistency of approach across the UK.

³ Scribing requirements will have to be relaxed for the first year that the Foundation and Level 7 class are introduced.

Appendix G
Other supporting regulation changes

General changes have been made to reflect that Foundation Level will become the lowest class and Level 7 the highest, as well as for consistency and clarity.

S5 – guidance regarding the running of classes allowing food and/or toys has been moved to S(B)3 Ring Management.

S16 - To reduce duplication it is proposed that the definitions for the types of cones, distractions and markers are taken out of the individual exercise descriptions and added to S16 Facilities and Equipment, these have also been updated in line with the new exercise requirements. The paperwork and equipment requirements for show organisers has been clarified with the responsibility for providing stop watches and clipboards moving from the show organiser to the judge (see S20 Judging).

S20 – Judging. The majority of this is being brought forward as a discussion item as it still needs to be presented to the AJSG. The proposed approach has already been received favourably by the RWP and AJSG. Proposals are submitted to clarify that judges provide their own scribe sheets (removing the confusion caused by the reference to score sheets) and to provide their own stopwatch and clipboard .

S22 – Competing. Changes are proposed to support the introduction of rewarding opportunities in Foundation Level and clarify their use in Special classes.

S34 – a change to wording is proposed for consistency.

Appendix H
10 Year Timeline

NB: Community engagement and annual review are recurring annual items so are not detailed in this timeline.

| | | |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Year 0 (2022) | Undertake review and identify issues | Complete |
| Year 1-3 (2023-2025) | Supporting actions for immediate benefit 1. Submit as discussion items 2. Formulate feedback into proposals 3. Submit proposals for approval 4. Desired implementation 1 st January 2024 | Complete |
| | Feedback on Championship Framework 1. Submit as discussion item 2. Incorporate resulting feedback 3. Outline 10-year plan | Complete |
| | Obtain Agreement in Principle for Championship Framework and Stage 1 - new Levels Structure prior to year end | Complete |
| | Seek feedback and suggestions from grass roots Rally Community - competitors - helpers - trainers/show organisers - judges and officials - societies and listed status clubs | Complete |
| | Incorporate feedback | Complete |
| | Design of any new exercise signs | Complete |
| | Secure Funding for supporting Video Library | Complete (volunteer) |
| | <i>Rally Accredited Trainers to create new judging seminars</i> | Deferred |
| <i>Please note implementation delays imposed by adaptation to new budgetary constraints and closure of Rally Working Party and start of Rally Liaison Council</i> | | |
| End Year 3 | Produce updated documentation to bring RLC members up to date | Complete |
| | Produce temporary demonstration videos of new exercises ready for consultation period | Complete |
| | Produce relevant agenda items for first RLC meeting | Complete |
| | Publicise new exercise set and changes after Agenda is published | |
| Year 4 (2026) | Obtain Approval of new 8 Level Framework at first RLC meeting for implementation 2027 | |
| | Produce update to Rally and Judging Record Books | |
| | Ensure Guide for Judges is updated – Rally Accredited Trainers | |
| | Update Video Exercise Library – produce exercise videos for new exercises and update existing exercises | |
| | Provide education for regulation changes | |
| | Ensure online judging seminar and assessed practical seminars are in place – Rally Accredited Trainers | |
| Year 5 (2027) | Implement new Foundation-Level 7 framework with 5-year significant changes embargo | |
| | Crufts 2027 will be first major test | |
| Years 6-7 (2028-29) | Bedding in time | |
| | Restricted to minimal incremental regulation changes | |
| | Review Rally Warrant to adopt Bronze, Silver and Gold Levels in line with Veteran Warrant | |

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Year 8 (2030) | Conduct survey with participant feedback | |
| | Identify any remedial action required | |
| | Utilise survey feedback to assess whether Rally is on track to be considered for Championship status | |
| | Undertake review of Scoring with competitors, judges and show organisers | |
| Year 8/9 (2030/31) | RLC decision – is Rally robust enough to push forward? | |
| | If yes, formulate regulations for Championship status | |
| | Devise new 5-year plan to implement Championship status or for remedial action with further review in 2-3 years' time | |

Key indicators that Rally is ready to be considered for Championship status:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Competitors | Healthy entry numbers at Level 6 and Level 7 |
| | Healthy entry numbers at the lower levels <i>(top-heavy entries would imply that Rally is waning in popularity)</i> |
| | High standard of performance |
| Judging | Adequate pool of Level 6 and Level 7 Judges |
| | Clear progressive route with numbers coming through |
| | High standards of judging and course design |
| Helpers | Healthy pool of scribes, scorers etc. |
| Shows | 5 – 10 shows of the size and standard to be granted Rally Challenge Certificates |
| | Sufficient Open Shows to enable competitors to qualify for, and gain experience for, a Championship class |
| | Geographical spread |
| CRS | Healthy pool of experienced Chief Rally Stewards |
| Levels | Robust framework with clear performance criteria |