

Grading Criteria – DOMESTIC GRADE 3

General Comments for Grade 3 Assessors:

- (a) Food in the hand is not allowed during the assessment (food can be rubbed on hand and fist closed to trick dog into believing food is there).
- (b) No mats or blankets for stays.
- (c) Stays (both sit and down) must be solid and for the entire test duration.
- (d) Consultation with the training coordinator or fellow assessors is encouraged for any ambiguity in what is a pass level of obedience during assessments.

Required Assessment Exercises

1. Heel work on lead including straight lines, right turns, about turns, left turns and sit on halt.
2. Recall off lead of approximately 5 meters – no finish.
3. Sit Stay – handler short distance from dog (approx. 3 metres) – dropped lead (1 minute).
4. Down Stay – handler short distance from dog (approx. 3 metres) – dropped lead (2 minutes).

Optional Assessment Exercises (2 from below)

1. Meet a stranger and dog. Sit or down while handler and stranger have short conversation (30 seconds).
2. Socialisation and Temperament – allow examination by examiner.
3. Gate manners – enter and leave arena through gate in a controlled manner.
4. Dog calmly tied up with handler five metres away not facing dog for 2 minutes.

Assessing Notes

1. Heelwork:

Assessor to call heel pattern provided with straight lines, right turns, left turns, about turns and halts (where do is to sit).

Assessor is looking for a dog that is responsive and attentive to handler in a consistent way with minimal need for corrective tightening of lead.

Acceptable:

- Lead is loose – forming a “J” between dog and handler.
- Dog is consistently on the side of the handler in the “heel” position and following the handler’s course. Not significantly behind, in front or wide.
- The dog stops and sits on halt in the heel position. Dog remains in that position until given another command to move. Dog going into a down if commanded to halt is also acceptable.

- While walking the handler may talk to and encourage the dog

Not Acceptable:

- Need for lead correction from handler. Assessor may require handler to lengthen lead or relax hand position to demonstrate loose lead is being maintained.
- Need for repeated commands from handler.
- Dog deviating from the side of the handler (be that right or left) showing dog is not engaged and under verbal control of owner.
- Lunging towards any distraction
- Resentment or reluctance to walk, change directions, and halt with handler as one unit.

2. Recall off lead of approximately 5 metres – no finish

The handler is to begin the exercise with the dog at heel (either in a sit or down). Lead is to be removed. On instruction handler is asked to give the dog “last command” which will normally be a “wait” command. Handler then to be instructed to “leave the dog” and walk away from the dog approximately five metres. On instruction the handler is to stop. On instruction the handler is to turn to face the dog. On instruction the handler is to call the dog. The dog is to come directly to the owner and sit in front of the owner. Assessor to call exercise over. No finish required. Handler to re attach lead.

Acceptable:

- Two commands to call the dog
- The dog hesitating to come to the handler or slow in returning to the handler provided the dog does not deviate from a straight path to the handler.

Not Acceptable:

- Dog not sitting or being down at heel at beginning of exercise or the dog changing position when waiting (eg from being left in a sit and going to a down).
- The dog anticipating being recalled
- The dog deviating in a significant way from returning directly to handler when called
- Ignoring the handler’s command to come more than once.
- Jumping up on handler on its return
- Dog moving from the sit position in front of handler before exercise is called as completed by assessor

3. Sit Stay – handler short distance from dog (approx. 3 metres) – dropped lead (1 minute).

In a group setting of no less than three dogs, handler to have dog sitting at heel. On instruction, Handler is to give dog “last command”, drop the lead and leave the dog. That command would normally be “stay”. Handler to walk approximately three metres from the dog, to halt and to turn and face the dog. After time completed (1 minute), handler is to return to the dog, walk around the dog to return to the heel position and stand beside the dog. Assessor to announce exercise is over having waited a short period to ensure dog does not break stay on handlers return.

Acceptable:

- Dog sitting at heel on right
- One oral command or hand signal or combination of both at each instruction
- Dog shifting position but remaining in same spot (eg. adjusting to puppy sit or scratching)

Not Acceptable:

- Dog moving from a sit to another position prior to exercise being over – e.g going from sit to down or stand.
- More than one command for each instruction.
- Dog breaking stay at any point prior to exercise over being called.

4. Down Stay – handler short distance from dog (approx. 3 metres) – dropped lead (2 minutes).

In a group setting of no less than three dogs, handler to have dog sitting at heel. On instruction, Handler is to instruct dog to go “down” and give dog “last command”, drop the lead and leave the dog. That command would normally be “stay”. Handler to walk approximately three metres from the dog, to halt and to turn and face the dog. After time completed (2 minutes), handler is to return to the dog, walk around the dog to return to the heel position and stand beside the dog. Assessor to announce exercise is over having waited a short period to ensure dog does not break stay on handler's return.

Acceptable:

- Dog down in either a sphinx/brisket or Zen down
- One oral command or hand signal or combination of both at each instruction
- Dog shifting position but remaining in same spot (eg. adjusting from a sphinx to a Zen down).

Not Acceptable:

- Dog coming out of the down position once commanded prior to exercise finishing
- More than one command for each instruction
- Dog breaking stay at any point prior to exercise over being called.

5. Meet a stranger and dog

Handler and dog to walk in a controlled manner towards another person and their dog, that will also be under control. This person and their owner will not be well known to the dog being tested. The two handlers will stop near each other, and exchange a short conversation of not less than 30 seconds. Dogs may be in a sit, down or stand but must remain beside the handler and not engage in any overt way with the other dog. Handlers to then walk on, on their original course passed each other with dogs under control for at least 5 metres.

Acceptable:

- Occasional extra commands for the dog to remain at the handler's side
- Mild interest by dog in other dog – eg looking, tail wagging
- Change in position e.g. from sit to down, provided dog remains at handler's side

Not Acceptable:

- Any aggressive behavior
- A constant tight lead
- Excessive barking or howling
- Lunging at another dog or stranger
- Displaying fear or strong avoidance
- More than one lead correction

6. Socialisation and Temperament – allow examination by handler.

Handler to show assessor that they can examine the dog's :

- Mouth
- Teeth
- Ears
- Front and hind feet
- Tail/ hind quarters

All with dog remaining calm.

Acceptable:

- Handler holding dog's collar during examination
- Dog need not remain in a static position but should remain calm and show nothing more than mild avoidance but eventual acceptance.
- Dog may be standing, sitting or lying down and change position during examination

Not acceptable:

- Constant refusal to allow examination
- Aggressive or threatening behavior, fear or overt avoidance
- Jumping

7. Gate manners – enter and leave arena through gate in a controlled manner.

The handler and dog are to approach a closed gate. The handler opens the gate while the dog waits (either in a sit down or stay). The handler goes through the gate and pauses with the gate open before proceeding through. Handler then invites dog to follow. Handler then closes gate and walks a short distance away with dog under control.

Acceptable:

- Dog changing position while waiting but not moving forward
- Walking beside or just behind the handler when walking through the gate

Not Acceptable:

- Interfering with handler's progress through gate
- Rushing ahead of handler through gate
- Not walking off in a controlled manner

8. Dog calmly tied up with handler five metres away not facing dog for 2 minutes.

Dog to be tied to an immovable object at a reasonable distance from other dogs. Handler to leave the dog in any position (sit, down, stand) and walk at least five metres away and remain facing away from the dog for a period of two minutes. If done in a group situation, handlers may talk to each other but remain in sight of their dog for the entire time.

Upon expiration of time handler to return to dog and untie the dog and walk the dog away for approximately five paces.

Acceptable:

- Dog changes body position but remains calm in place where left
- Dog requires more than two commands to settle.

Not Acceptable:

- Resistance to being tied up
- Not settling after two commands – ie barking resisting restraint
- Jumping up or lunging when handler returns
- Does not walk away in a controlled manner with handler