

WCOC Grading Criteria – DOMESTIC GRADE 4

General Comments for Grade 4 Assessors:

- 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).
- No mats or blankets for stays.
- Stays (both sit and down) must be solid and for the entire test duration.
- Consultation with the training coordinator or fellow assessors is encouraged for any ambiguity in what is a pass level of obedience during assessments.

Grade 4 – Assessment Exercises

Compulsory

1. Heelwork on lead including straight lines, left and right turns, left and right about turns, and sit on halt.
2. Recall off lead from approximately 5 metres with finish.
3. Sit stay – off lead – 5m from dog facing dog (2 minutes) walk around dog on return with small level of distraction (e.g. examiner walking past).
4. Down stay – off lead – 5m from dog initially facing dog (1.5minutes) then 30 seconds with back to dog, walk around dog on return, with small level of distraction (e.g. examiner walking past).
5. Stand stay – drop lead but handler beside dog (30 seconds).

Assessor's choice of either 6 (a) or (b)

6. Food Manners (a) Dog to display good manners while person eating in front of it (and with food on their lap). (b) Dog to wait until directed to eat from its own bowl, and to allow handler to pat the dog and touch the bowl and move it a short distance while the dog is eating, without showing aggression.

Assessing Notes

1. Heelwork:

Assessor to call heel pattern provided with straight lines, right and left turns, right and left 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 no need for corrective tightening of lead.

Acceptable:

- Lead is consistently 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.
- 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 not remaining in heel position.
- Lunging towards any distraction
- Resentment or reluctance to walk, change directions, and halt with handler as one unit.

2. Recall off lead from approximately 5 metres with 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. On instruction the handler is to “finish”. Assessor to call exercise over. Handler to re attach lead.

Acceptable:

- One command to call the dog
- The dog should show enthusiasm in returning directly to 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 from a direct path to handler when called
- Ignoring the handler’s command to come.
- Jumping up on handler on its return
- Dog moving from the sit position in front of handler before instructed to finish.
- Anticipating a finish.
- Significantly wide finish.

3. Sit stay – off lead – approximately 5m from dog, handler facing dog (2 minutes) with small level of distraction (e.g. examiner walking past).

In a group setting of no less than three dogs, handler to have dog sitting at heel. Lead off. On instruction, Handler is to give dog “last command”, and leave the dog. That command would normally be “stay”. Handler to walk approximately five

metres from the dog, to halt and to turn and face the dog. Assessor or another provide a small level of distraction – such as calmly walking past the sitting dogs. 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 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 (.e.g adjusting to puppy sit or scratching)

Not Acceptable:

- Dog not sitting in straight heel position at commencement of exercise
- Dog moving from a sit to another position prior to exercise being over – eg going from sit to down.
- More than one command for each instruction.
- Dog breaking stay at any point prior to exercise over being called.

4. Down Stay – off lead – approximately 5 m from dog, handler facing away from dog (2 minutes) with small level of distraction.

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”, remove lead, give dog “last command” and leave the dog. That command would normally be “stay”. Handler to walk approximately five metres from the dog, to halt and remain facing the dog for one and a half minutes. Then on direction from Assessor handler to turn on the spot away from dog and complete the remainder of the time (30 seconds) facing away from the dog. Assessor or another provide a small level of distraction – such as calmly walking past the dogs. After time completed (2 minute total), handler is to be instructed to “face your dog” and then 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 to ensure dog does not break stay on handlers return.

Acceptable:

- Dog down in either a sphinx or Zen down
- One oral command or hand signal or combination of both at each instruction
- Dog shifting position but remaining in same spot (e.g. 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. Stand Stay (30 seconds) with dropped lead

In a group setting of no less than three dogs, handler to have dog standing at heel. On instruction, Handler is to instruct dog with “last command” going to the end of the lead and dropping the lead. That command would normally be “stay”. Handler to face the dog. After time completed (30 seconds), handler is to be instructed 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 to ensure dog does not break stay on handlers return.

Acceptable:

- Dog standing on right of handler rather than left

Not Acceptable:

- Dog not maintaining a stand on the same spot as it was left once commanded to stay.
- Dog not maintain that position when handler has returned to heel position before exercise called as over.

6. Food Manners

(i) Person Eating

Person sitting eating, with some uneaten food visible on lap. Handler to bring dog to within one and a half metres of person eating and command the dog to sit. The person is to continue eating while the dog sits calmly, until directed by the assessor to move away. Dog and handler to walk off in a controlled manner at least five metres.

Acceptable:

- Dog showing a mild interest in the food by drooling, sniffing, looking

Not acceptable:

- Any attempt to take the food
- Any significant begging behavior

(ii) Dog eating

Handler to put small portion of dog’s food in bowl. Dog is to sit, stand or down, while handler puts bowl on ground no closer than half a metre nor further than one metre from the dog. The dog is to be commanded to “wait” whilst the food is put on the ground. Handler to return to be standing beside dog. After a pause of approximately five seconds the handler to release dog to eat the food. Whilst dog is eating the handler is to pat the dog and then touch the food bowl and move it a short distance.

Acceptable:

- Dog showing a mild interest in the food by drooling, sniffing, looking

Not acceptable:

- Handler having to restrain dog during “wait period”
- Dog breaks to the food prior to being released to eat it
- Dog displays aggression when handler pats it or touches or moves the food bowl