

Grading Criteria – DOMESTIC GRADE 5

General Comments for Grade 5 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. Controlled walking/heelwork **on and off** lead including straight lines, left and right turns, left and right about turns, and sit on halt.
2. Recall off lead from more than 5 metres with finish.
3. Sit stay off lead handler approximately 5 metres from dog facing away with moderate level of distraction (3 minutes)
4. Down stay off lead handler approximately 5 metres from dog facing away with moderate level of distraction (3 minutes)
5. Pre retrieve – dog to hold and give dumbbell or toy on command while sitting facing handler

Optional Assessment Exercises (2 from below)

1. Recall off lead from more than 5 metres with wait (down) at least 2 metres from handler showing distance control.
2. Stay calmly with a person not well known to them while handler goes out of sight for 2 minutes.
3. Stand stay with dropped lead and handler approximately 3 metres from dog (1 minute)

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 dog 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 even with changes of pace.

- 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 at all times.
- Lunging towards any distraction
- Resentment or reluctance to walk, change directions, alter pace or halt with handler as one unit.

2. Recall off lead from more than 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 more than 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 (e.g. 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.
- Not doing a close finish around handler’s legs and coming into a correct heel position.

3. Sit stay – off lead – approximately 5m from dog, handler facing away from dog (3 minutes) with moderate level of distraction.

In a group setting of no less than three dogs, handler to have dog sitting at heel. Lead off. Upon 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 remain facing away from the dog. Assessor or others to provide a moderate level of distraction – such as a person walking through (with scuffing or stomping of feet), another dog weaving through dogs in stay line up. After time completed (3 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 – e.g. 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 (3 minutes) with moderate 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 away from the dog. Assessor or others to provide a moderate level of distraction – such as a person walking through (with scuffing or stomping of feet), another dog weaving through dogs in stay line up. After time completed (3 minutes), 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. Pre retrieve – dog to hold and give dumbbell or toy on command while sitting facing handler.

Handler to have dog sit in front of them. Handler to present dumbbell or toy to dog with command that the dog is to hold the dumbbell or toy. Dog is to hold toy for at least five seconds, before handler commands dog to give the toy to their out stretched hands.

Acceptable:

Dog mouthing but maintaining a hold on the dumbbell or toy.

Dog drooling

Not Acceptable:

Dog not holding the dumbbell or toy during the hold period

Dog snatching dumbbell or toy from handler

Dog not maintaining its sit position

Dog not giving the dumbbell or toy up voluntarily

6. Recall off lead from approximately 10 metres with wait/down at least three metres from handler, showing distance control.

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 10 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, once dog is mobile and prior to a point (indicated by assessor as being at least 3 m from handler) the dog is to be commanded to stop. The dog is to remain at that point for at least 15 seconds. The dog is then to be called by the handler and to come directly to the owner and sit in front of the owner. Assessor to call exercise over. Handler to re attach lead

Acceptable:

- The position the dog takes on stop may be sit, down or stand
- Handler may give verbal praise at the dog stopping or command the dog to wait at that point to maintain its position for the time.
- Dog may change posture once stationary – e.g. go from a stand to a down or sit, but not change position

Not Acceptable:

- Dog does not stop at least 3 m from handler
- Dog does not remain in the stopped position for the 15 seconds
- Failure to respond to stay or wait after two commands

7. Stand Stay (1 minute) with dropped lead and handler approximately 3 m from dog

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”. That command would

normally be “stay”. Dropping the lead and moving approximately 3 metres from dog. Handler to face the dog. After time completed (1 minute), 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.

8. Stay calmly with a person not well known to them while handler goes out of sight for two minutes

Handler to approach a person, settle their dog, and hand leash over and then walk out of sight of the dog. The person holding the dog will remain standing in the same spot. Calming signals and words may be given to dog but person holding dog is not to engage in any other way with the dog. Handler to return after two minutes. They are to thank the person holding their dog and take the leash back. Handler and dog to walk away in a controlled manner.

Acceptable:

- Mild anxiety when handler leaves or is absent but responds to calming
- Mild greeting when handler returns. No jumping up.

Not Acceptable:

- Dog obviously upset or agitated by absence of handler
- Significant reluctance to remain with person
- Lunging or jumping up on handlers return
- Displaying aggression, or panic
- Excessive barking, whining or howling