



Do I want to be a judge?



Listed are a series of questions that are most commonly asked by those considering making application for the WPCS Panel of Judges. Please consider before completing application form.

Introduction

It is not uncommon, after a period of owning & breeding Welsh ponies and cobs, for members to become interested in becoming a judge. However judging is a very demanding position and with it goes immense responsibilities. It goes without saying that anyone considering applying to become a judge should have a depth of experience of the breed, have sound knowledge of breed type and a thorough understanding of basic conformation and movement. Added to this, judges must at all times be fair, show no bias and be objective in their judgement.

Who are the Assessors that make the decision?

The panel of assessors was formed from the WPCS Panel of Judges and all are experienced judges having judged major shows at Silver Medal level and above. For each assessment, the WPCS Judging and Showing Committee appoint three assessors for each of the panels; a reserve is also appointed should for whatever reason a replacement is required either before or on the actual day of the assessment.

What are the assessors looking for when assessing candidates?

Candidates will have to demonstrate to the assessing panel their:

Extensive knowledge and understanding of breed type including the variation within it.

Extensive knowledge and understanding of basic conformation and related conformation weaknesses.

Extensive knowledge of correct movement and its relationship to soundness.

AND if applying for ridden panel

Extensive knowledge and application to correct way of going.

It is important that candidates are able to discuss, identify and relate the above to the animals forward for the assessment on the day. Candidates will also be expected to describe and compare the animals present and give clear concise reasons for their placing of the animals. They must be able to justify their preferences and not simply say, "..... I liked it" or "..... it was the best one" or "... it is a good type" or "... I didn't like its hind leg". To be successful, candidates must be prepared to give reasons to support their choice.

Are you ready?

Are you ready for the responsibility, honour and integrity of becoming a judge?

Basically, provided an applicant satisfies the criteria of membership, minimum age, breeding & owning experience they can apply.

However, sadly many of the recent assessment days have revealed that a majority of the applicants coming forward were both not sufficiently experienced and therefore lacking in knowledge or were poorly prepared on what to expect on the assessment day. This has resulted in high failure rate which reflects poorly on both the Society and the candidates. The decision to apply should only be taken when the candidate firmly believes they have the required level of knowledge and experience and have prepared to a level that will allow them to give of their best at the assessment and that they meet the set criteria.

Candidates considering making application for assessment are strongly encouraged to take part in the WPCS Mentoring Scheme as this will provide opportunity to have experience in the ring with a senior judge.

Criteria to be met

- You have been a WPCS member for a minimum of 10 consecutive years.
- You have attained the age of 25 years at time of assessment.
- You have bred, owned and produced a minimum of 10 animals within the same classification you are applying for.
- You have judged a minimum of 3 shows in your own right and 2 probationary shows along with completed reports.

How can I prepare?

Completing the Application Form

All sections must be completed in full. Remember the panel will only take into consideration what you write, so don't assume anything. You may belong to the same Association as one of the assessors or be known to them but don't omit to write something down because you think they already know you have been successful. The assessors will only take into account what you have recorded on your form. Most importantly be truthful at all times; don't exaggerate and don't record anything which is not 100% true. Don't take credit for something that was achieved by a family member and not directly by you.

Knowledge of Rules

The WPCS Judging and Showing Handbook is published annually; it is also available on WPCS website. These rules form the basis of the written paper on the Assessment Day. This written paper is usually completed before the practical assessment but this will be confirmed when the timetable is finalised for the Assessment Day.

Candidates will sit a written paper of 15 questions. A typical question is as follows and candidates would be asked to underline or circle the correct answer.

How many WPCS Bronze Medals are judges allowed to award in any one calendar year?

- a) 5; b) 3; c) 2 ; d) 1.

Please note: Special arrangements for the reading of the questions will be available for any candidate in need of this type of support.

Resources

There are several WPCS publications which make excellent reference material for anyone preparing for assessment.

WPCS Judging Welsh Ponies and Cobs Conference 2008 DVD

WPCS Judging and Showing Handbook 2019

WPCS Conformation of Welsh Breeds.

Also, *An Introduction to Welsh Ponies and Cobs – Wynne Davies* has two relevant chapters (*Chapters 1 and 7*)

The Interview

Many candidates find the interview a very daunting task and are conscious of not giving their best on the day due to a variety of reasons. Mock interviews are recognised as probably the best preparation. Remember the assessors are not trying to catch candidates out but are simply carrying out the task

which will allow them to make informed decisions which in their honest opinion reflects the candidates ability in terms of what will be the best for the Society.

I don't think I am ready – what can I do next?

Candidates have found that stewarding has provided a stepping stone in their preparation. The WPCS Mentoring Scheme provides opportunity to attend affiliated shows with a panel judge. However at some unaffiliated shows, it may also be possible to attend with a judge provided it has been previously agreed with judge and show. Association programs have been invaluable for not only young judges but also others allowing them to visit studs increasing their knowledge of the variation in type across the sections. From time to time, the WPCS runs seminars and remember other Societies/Associations run seminars that are open and although not specifically with a Welsh focus these days usually provide good information allowing one to expand their knowledge and experience base.

WPCS Judging and Showing Committee
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