

Guidelines for Examination Candidates

NZDJA is responsible for administering the examination process for candidates applying for promotion to the NZKC conformation judges panel. This document is intended as a guide for those candidates, especially those sitting for the first time. It is recommended that candidates also read the NZDJA protocols relating to examinations which are on the NZDJA website.

The study process is your responsibility, but we suggest you utilise your local NZDJA branch for guidance and support. The following information is designed as guide for what you may expect at the time of sitting the theory and practical exams. The NZDJA Regulations Appendix I details the National Training Guide. There is also other useful information available on the NZDJA website under Member Resources.

The examinations are held in two parts. The theory and the practical. The theory must be passed first and you then have 2 years to pass the practical. If you do not pass the practical having sat it twice (or the 2 year period has passed) you must re-sit the theory examination.

Applications for examination must be completed on the official application form from the NZDJA website and accompanied by the appropriate fee and the appropriate credit record card. Candidates must be financial members of NZDJA at the time of application. The NZDJA Board will not consider applications for non-financial members, applications not accompanied by the appropriate fee, applicants who have insufficient credits or applications received after the closing date. It is recommended that you make sure that your application is sent well ahead of closing date and that NZDJA receives the fee on time and your financial status with the association is current. All applications will be considered firstly by the NZDJA board and secondly by Dogs NZ Executive Council for approval to sit the exam.

Theory Examinations

- All candidates will have questions on Anatomy, Glossary of Terms and Rules and Regulations. For group candidates this comprises the 20 questions of the group paper, plus 100 questions on the breeds in the group. For open show and specialist candidates who are not currently on the open show panel or higher, this will comprise 60 questions. These are all multichoice and a 70% mark is required to pass.
- The Canine Glossary of Terms document was updated in 2020 and is available from both the Dogs NZ and NZDJA websites. This is now a “stand alone” document and is far more comprehensive than the one that was previously located at the back of the breed standards so make sure you are using the current version for your study.
- Rules and Regulations questions will be sourced from NZKC rules and show regulations plus NZDJA regulations and constitution. The current versions are available from the relevant websites. These do change, sometimes annually, so make sure you have the current version.
- An understanding of canine anatomy is expected from all judges. As well as the material included in the Canine Glossary of Terms, Harry Spira’s Canine Anatomy is an excellent source of study information. There are now apps that can be downloaded onto digital devices as well, 3D Dog Anatomy being a particularly good example.
- Questions for Group and specialist candidates will be taken from the breed standards current at the 31st August the year preceding the examination. Candidates need to ensure they are using

the correct breed standard and it is recommended that these be downloaded soon after this date. All standards include the effective date at the bottom of the page.

- Breed standards can be downloaded from the NZDJA website or by going direct to the Judges or Breeds Tabs on the Dogs NZ website. Please ensure you download the “Official Breed Standards”, this is particularly important.
- Group candidates need to study every breed in the group they are aspiring to. There will be at least one question on every breed and up to 6 questions on the more common breeds. These can come from any part of the standard but questions for rarer breeds will more likely focus on identifying characteristics and general appearance.
- In recent years, new questions have been written for all papers. Previous papers are a great learning tool to assess your progress and get an understanding of the format of the papers but do not expect that you will get the same questions in subsequent years.
- NZDJA will set a date for the theory exams well in advance and this will be published on the NZDJA website, the NZDJA page in the Dog World and the NZDJA facebook page. It is recommended that as soon as this date is published you record it in your calendar as the board is unable to approve requests for candidates to sit at alternative times or whilst overseas.
- The NZDJA board will set a venue and supervisor(s) for the theory exams within reasonable travel distance from your home.
- Supervisors are responsible for ensuring the NZDJA protocols for the Conduct of Written Examinations are followed.
- It is recommended you plan to arrive at the venue at least 15 minutes prior to the proposed start time to allow sufficient time to settle.
- Papers are usually marked quite quickly, and you can normally expect to receive your results within 2 weeks from the exam.

Practical Examinations

- NZDJA will set the date and venue for practical examinations. These will be published well in advance. Typically these are Auckland and Christchurch and sometimes Wellington.
- You are expected to make your own travel arrangements at your own expense. The only exception to this is where the NZDJA Board requests you sit your exam at one of the alternative venues. This is sometimes done to balance the number of candidates with groups and time available.
- The practical examinations are usually run as an open show. There will be a steward who will assist you and you are expected to judge it in the same manner as you would any other open show. However, the Senior Examiner will instruct you to judge as if you were judging 250 dogs in a day. This is done to assess your ability to cope with a large entry at a championship show.
- As with any open show, you will be sent a reporting sheet prior to the day detailing the reporting time and the breeds entered.
- On arrival at the venue you will be required to report to the NZDJA representative who will take you to a room that is not in view of the ring. It is recommended that you arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the reporting time to allow yourself time to settle.

- There may be multiple candidates sitting the same group at the same time however, only one candidate will be in the ring being examined at any one time.
- There will be 3 examiners and one of these will have been appointed as the Senior Examiner. You will be introduced to them just before you start judging. They will be in the ring with you and will observe your judging and ring craft.
- There may also be a trainee examiner observing the proceedings and completing a marking sheet but they will not engage with you at any stage and their marks are not seen by the examiners nor do they form any part of the decision.
- Each candidate is required to judge at least 6 different breeds with a minimum of 15 dogs. Depending on the number of entries and the number of candidates, some breeds may be required to be judged more than once by different candidates but the results from the first candidate for that breed are the official results.
- Once you have judged several breeds the Senior Examiner will indicate to the steward to return some of the dogs to the ring, usually your best and reserve dog and best and reserve bitch. The examiners will then question you on your placings, your observations of the dogs you judged, your knowledge of the history and development and how this affects the form and function of each breed. You will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the breed standard and how that applies to the dogs in front of you. Where possible, use of breed specific terminology as well as demonstrating an understanding of canine anatomy is recommended. You will also be asked if you would award those dogs a challenge if you were judging at a championship show.
- The examiners will also assess you on your ring craft, your manner and attitude, the physical examination of the dogs and the application of knowledge. See the attached sample assessment sheet for further details.
- You will also be expected to verbally critique at least one dog.
- Once all the judging for the group has been completed and at a suitable time, the examiners will meet with you in a private area and present you with your examination results. Note – these are done independently and placed in a sealed envelope. The examiners do not discuss your performance with each other prior to marking the sheets. You are welcome to discuss your results with the examiners.

SAMPLE EXAMINATION SHEET. NOTE: THIS IS INTENDED AS AN EXAMPLE ONLY.

PRACTICAL EXAMINER'S ASSESSMENT SHEET:									
DATE:					CANDIDATE:				
EXAMINER:					SIGNED:			GROUP:	
Personal Grooming: Yes/No.					Suitable Dress Yes/No.				MARKS
Suitable Shoes Yes/No									
RINGCRAFT:									
Setting up Ring									
Communication with Steward									
Position of Table & Exhibits									
Clarity of Directions									
Efficiency of Judge's Movements									
Speed of Judging									
Minimum Pass Mark 5, if less Circle									/10
COMMENTS:									
MANNER/ATTITUDE:									
Appropriate Demeanor									
Friendly									
Helpful									
Considerate									
Minimum Pass Mark 5, if less Circle									/10
COMMENTS:									
PHYSICAL EXAMINATION:									
Approach to Exhibits									
Appropriate Tabling/Ramping									
Breed Specific Examination									
Confident Handling									
Consistency of Movement									
Clarity of Placements									
Minimum Pass Mark 20, if less Circle									/30
COMMENTS:									
APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE:									
Knowledge of Breed Standards									
Application of Breed Knowledge									
Breed Origins/Function									
Use of Terminology									
Assessment of Movement									
Justification of Placings									
Verbal Critique									
Written Critique - Spec only.									
Minimum Pass Mark 30, if less Circle									/50
COMMENTS:									
Total Minimum Pass Mark is 70% .									/100
A MINIMUM PASS MARK MUST BE ACHIEVED IN ALL CATEGORIES AS WELL AS ACHIEVING 70% OVERALL								Pass: Yes / No	