



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **KENNEL CLUB ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO THE WAY JUDGES ARE EDUCATED, APPROVED AND LISTED**

### **Quality learning based upon competency**

The Kennel Club is announcing a new system for the education, approval and listing of every level of judge, from those who aspire to judge, right through to open show judges and those who go on to award Challenge Certificates and judge championship show groups, and Best in Show.

The Judges Competency Framework will be launched in January 2019, run alongside the current system for a three-year transition period, and be fully operational from January 2022. This education will involve mentoring and ringside observation by breed experts and be supported by a network of Breed Education Coordinators who will help facilitate learning.

For some time now the Kennel Club has indicated that the way dog show judges are educated needs to change. It is generally accepted that change is necessary due to a range of deficiencies in the current process – problems for show societies identifying available and competent judges, open shows being poorly supported, and lack of seminar opportunities and transparency in the approval processes.

The Framework will provide a logical sequence of learning, practising, peer observation and examination and will cater for all judges at every level – it outlines a judge's career path providing clear criteria for each stage. Each level will also confirm judging privileges, again making it clear to the judge and the show society who is eligible to judge which breed, and the number and the type of classes which may be judged.

The Kennel Club's established online Find A Judge facility will be extended to provide lists of all eligible judges across all breeds and for all types of show.

The Framework will be administered through the Kennel Club's modern online education platform – The Kennel Club Academy. The Academy is easy to access, available 24 hours a day and requires only a small annual subscription. As far as possible this provides for an efficient and 'paperless' way for judges to record their experience on their personal KC Academy page whether this be judging appointments or details of seminars attended, breed assessments passed and other education undertaken.

All judges will be required to remain up to date with their general dog show knowledge with a mandatory online exam to be passed every five years.

Breed clubs will remain responsible for providing breed-specific education, and the Framework will also require judges to undergo mentoring and ringside observation. Breed clubs will be required to support this activity and to work with the Kennel Club to facilitate organising breed-specific assessments.

A small pilot scheme involving clubs from all seven groups and all five Stud Book bands will run from the summer of 2017, which will enable the Kennel Club to make any refinements to its proposals before the Framework comes fully into force.

Breed clubs will no longer be required to maintain judging lists as the Kennel Club will be publishing lists of judges, across all breeds and all levels of show, via its online Find A Judge facility.

The Framework starts at entry level, before a person steps into the ring for their very first appointment, and goes all the way through to the rare position of an all-breeds judge – seven levels in all. Judges can remain at any one of the levels if they so wish and can also be at different levels dependent on their knowledge and experience of a range of different breeds at any given time.

The requirement for judges to wait to be nominated to award CCs will no longer be applicable, as they will be listed as a championship show judge as soon as they have undertaken all the required education and assessment. This will open up what

many see as a bottleneck preventing many suitably knowledgeable judges from awarding CCs.

Simon Luxmoore, Kennel Club Chairman, said: “These changes to the judges education and approval system are all about raising standards of judging across all levels, starting with the person who is thinking of taking their first few tentative steps towards becoming a judge of their own breed at open shows, right through to the vastly experienced breeder who has attained the status of an all-breeds judge at championship show level.

“Society is changing and these changes reflect this situation. The dog show scene has changed dramatically over the last 40 years or so. Whereas in the ‘60s and ‘70s, it was relatively easy for aspiring judges to accumulate numbers as a part of learning their craft at open shows where entries were plentiful, the reality is this is no longer the case, which has made learning more difficult.

“The Kennel Club was very mindful of this fact when it developed this new system, as it was keen to take modern lifestyles into account – dog shows these days compete with so many other pastimes for our attention and people work longer hours. A system which promotes efficiency while at the same time encouraging quality learning – based not on the number of dogs judged but on the judge demonstrating their competency to their peers – has to be very good news indeed for anyone who wishes either to become a dog judge or to progress further up the judging ladder.”

**ENDS**

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