



**MEETING OF THE OBEDIENCE LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD VIA  
MICROSOFT TEAMS AT 10.30 AM ON THURSDAY 21 JANUARY  
2021 – AGENDA**

**ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020 (copies previously distributed).

**ITEM 3. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a. The Council is invited to note that the Board, at its meeting on 7 April 2020 and 6 October 2020, approved the following amendments to G Regulations:

Regulation G31.

**TO:**

- b. On **application for** a person's first appointment to judge Championship Class C the minimum conditions which apply are:

A person must:-

- (1) ~~judges must~~ have at least eight years judging experience which must include 30 championship and/or premier and/or open show appointments of which at least 15 must be Open Class C and two each of Beginners, Novice, Class A and Class B-,  
**and**
- c. ~~(2) At the time of judging a first Championship appointment the Judge must have attended a Kennel Club Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure Seminar and passed the Regulations and Judging Procedure examination.~~ **have completed and passed an Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure examination on the Kennel Club Academy prior to attending a Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar.**
- c. ~~Qualifications for judges at premier and open shows and for the non-certificate classes at Championship Shows-~~  
On first appointment judges must satisfy the show committee that they:
- (1) have judged a minimum of four appointments within at least two years at a lower level including limited/companion obedience shows and matches/club or fun competitions.
- (2) have won out of Beginners at a licensed championship, premier or open obedience show as a handler, and have acted as a caller, scribe or marker steward on six occasions at licensed shows; and
- (3) ~~have attended a Kennel Club Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure Seminar and passed the Regulations and Judging Procedure examination.~~ **completed and passed an Obedience Regulations and Judging Procedure examination on the Kennel Club Academy prior to attending a Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar.**



- (4) have attended an ~~Obedience Test Design and the Practice of Judging Seminar~~. a **Kennel Club Obedience Test Design and Practice of Judging seminar and passed the assessment.**

(Insertions in bold. Deletions struck through)

(Subsequent sub-paragraphs to be renumbered)

(Effective 1 January 2021)

**Note:** the wording for Regulation G31 as shown above is slightly different to that recommended by the Council as it also incorporates changes recommended for approval by the Activities Committee in order to clarify that judges must have fulfilled all criteria prior to applying for approval to judge at championship level.

Regulation G29.f(3)

**TO:**

Where a draw for the complete running order of classes other than Championship Class C is not made, show managements must conduct a ballot to determine a running order for at least the first ~~10~~ **6** competitors/dogs in these classes: ~~this may be reduced to 6 at shows with less than 200 dogs entered or where there are less than 25 dogs entered in a specific class.~~

Sub paragraph (3) does not apply to limited shows.

(Deletions struck through. Insertions in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2021)

Regulation G(C)4.h. – Stays in ALL classes

**TO:**

The judge or steward will direct handlers to positions in the ring. The command 'last command' will be given and handlers should then instantly give their final command to their dogs. Any further commands or signals to the dogs after this 'last command' will be penalised. Handlers will then be instructed to leave their dogs and walk to positions indicated until ordered to return to them. These are group tests and all dogs must compete together, but where this is impracticable at ~~an indoor~~ **any** show, the class may be equally divided but the judging for the groups must be consecutive. **The stay ring shall be large enough to cater for the largest expected attendance for each class.**

(Deletions struck through. Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2021)

b. Stay exercises

At its February meeting, the Council wished to recommend that out of sight stays be discontinued as soon as possible, and removed from the list of exercises. With regard to other stay exercises where the dog remained in sight of the handler, it recommended that with immediate effect all handlers should be required to stand sideways on to their dogs, not with their backs to them, so that they would be in view of the handler at all times.

In view of the seriousness of the issue, the Council was unanimous in recommending that the matter be considered by the Activities Committee and/or the Board as a matter of priority. It is invited to note that the Committee, at its meeting on 19 March 2020, had noted that the Council was in the process of formulating the necessary Regulation amendments to support its recommendations, and that these would be considered at the Council's meeting in July (although this meeting was subsequently cancelled due to Covid-19). The urgency of the issue was lessened in view of the current situation in which no shows were taking place due to the coronavirus pandemic, and it was agreed that no further action was required until the Council's further recommendations were available.

The Council had also acknowledged that there were also issues in respect of stay exercises in general, which were not popular with some competitors, particularly those competing in the lower classes. It appeared that some handlers were discouraged from competing because of



the requirement for stays. It was agreed that the stay exercise should be reviewed at the Council's next meeting, and that suitable proposals would be formulated by Mrs Allen, Mr Luckock, Mrs Patrick and Mr Wakelin.

These proposals appear on the agenda under item 8 together with a further three proposals relating to stays.

c. Training for commentators

At its previous meeting, the Council was advised that subsequent to its request, the Board had approved the principle of practical training for commentators but with the stipulation that such training should be available company-wide, as appropriate. It was informed that the scheduling of a Commentators Seminar (to encompass all disciplines) was currently on hold due to resourcing. It had noted that work on the business case, to be submitted on the Council's behalf, would commence shortly.

It is invited to note that a business case has been prepared and is being submitted to the Finance Committee for consideration.

A further update will be provided at the meeting.

d. Height classified classes

This issue is on the agenda as part of Item 7.a relating to the Obedience Working Party.

e. Capping on number of wins

At its last meeting, the Council discussed a suggestion that a cap be placed on the number of wins in each class, except Open Class 'C' and Championship Class 'C', in order to allow more competitors to progress through the classes, while handlers having reached the cap could compete in the class until such time as the relevant closing dates have passed, but may not accept a win.

A suggestion was made that a '21 day rule' be introduced whereby all wins up to and including 21 days before the start of the competition would be counted when entering for any class. Should a dog become eligible for the next class at a particular show, after the entry for that show had been sent, it would be the competitor's responsibility to notify the show secretary so that the dogs may be moved into the appropriate class.

The Council had noted that a similar issue had been discussed by a social media group for UK obedience show secretaries and it was agreed that the views of the social media group should be sought in order to inform further consideration of the suggestion. Mr Harlow undertook to contact the group administrator to seek further information, however the Council is invited to note that it had not been possible to obtain details of the views of the social media group.

The Council is invited to discuss the matter further.

f. Progression on points

The issue of progression on points was referred to the Working Party for further discussion and is noted on the agenda under item 7.a.

g. Obedience Excellent award

At its February meeting, the Council noted that it was necessary to make an amendment to the number of points required to claim the Obedience Excellent award in Pre-Beginners in light of an amendment to Regulation G(A)6.a. which stated that to compete in Pre-Beginners a handler or dog must not have won two (previously one) first places in either Pre-Beginners or Beginners



nor gained a third place or above in any other Obedience class (Introductory Class excepted). Currently, 10 points were awarded for a first place.

It is invited to consider the following proposal submitted by Mrs Allen for an amendment to the claim form for the award:

**CLAIM FOR AN OBEDIENCE EXCELLENT QUALIFICATION**

The required points to achieve each qualification are as follows:

...~~4~~ **20** points required for Pre-Beginners  
(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold)

**ITEM 4. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP**

The Council is invited to note that the Sub-Group's meeting due to take place on 22 April 2020 was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic, however it is invited to note a written report from Mr Rutter following the Sub-Group's meeting held on 18 November 2020.

**(Annex A refers)**

**ITEM 5. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP**

The Council is invited to note a written report from Mrs Patrick following the Sub-Group's meeting which took place on 14 September 2020.

**(Annex B refers – to follow)**

**ITEM 6. YOUNG KENNEL CLUB**

The Council is requested to note a written report from Mrs Lavender relating to YKC Obedience.

**(Annex C refers)**

**ITEM 7. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OBEDIENCE WORKING PARTY**

a. Height Classified Classes

The Council is invited to discuss the Working Party's recommendations relating to height classified classes and to consider how the matter should be progressed.

**(Annex D refers)**

b. Progression on points

At its meeting on 6 February 2020, the Council expressed its support of a discussion item relating to progression on points, noting that it would support progression through the classes and would therefore be of benefit to competitors. Accordingly it was agreed that the matter would be referred to the Working Party for further discussion and formulation of a proposal to be submitted to the Council for consideration.

At its meeting on 11 February 2020, the Working Party discussed the matter further and agreed that a proposal for progression on points should be submitted to the Council at its July meeting. However, no proposal has been submitted.



The Council is requested to reconsider the following proposal which was originally discussed at its meeting in February 2020. The relevant extract from the minutes is provided for information. **(Annex E refers)**

Winchester City Dog Training Club and Mr D Moxon  
Progression on points

The Council is requested to discuss the possibility for an option for progression on points. There is precedent for this in Agility where progression on wins is mandatory, but competitors may elect to progress on points. The recommendation is to utilise the Obedience Excellent points scheme, rather than adopt something new, for the number of points required to progress.

The scale of the points would be as follows:

1. 10 points for a first prize.
2. 4 points for second prize.
3. 2 points for a third prize.
4. 1 point for a fourth prize.

The required points to achieve an excellent qualification are as follows:

1. 10 points required for Introductory
2. 10 points required for Pre-Beginners.
3. 20 points required for Beginners.
4. 20 points required for Novice.
5. 30 points required for Class A.
6. 30 points required for Class B.

In summary, for Beginners and Novice competitors must have a first and three places (two seconds and at least a third) or five second places.

For A and B that becomes a combination of two firsts and three places, one first and five places, or at least eight places. Five second places to replace two firsts or eight for three seems a reasonable amount of activity to allow progression.

The objective is to allow competitors to progress and compete at the higher levels allowing more variety, rather remaining indefinitely in Novice, albeit continually in the places.

The intention would be to leave Championship Class C progression such that an excellent achievement is not a qualification for this class. For information currently 40 points are required for an Obedience Excellence award in Class C.

Obedience Warrant - Handlers would need to be careful on progression from Novice without the wins as that would stop them gaining an Obedience Warrant. Currently two wins are required. Likewise, two wins are required at A and B. If the points system is introduced it would be the intention to recommend that for the Obedience Warrant, it only has to be one win from Novice. Dogs would still need to progress and taking a Novice win out of the equation (at the front end) is not going to change the end standard for the Obedience Warrant title.

## **ITEM 8. REVIEW OF STAY EXERCISES**

**Note:** the Council is requested to consider the following proposals together as they contain different approaches to addressing the issue of stays. It is also requested to consider issues relating to out of sight stays in light of specialist advice received from Mr Trevor Cooper.  
**(Annex F refers – to be provided to Council representatives only)**



a. Review of all stay exercises and amendments to G Regulations

Mrs Allen, Mr Luckock, Mrs Patrick and Mr Wakelin

The Council had agreed at its previous meeting that all aspects of the stay exercise should be reviewed. It is requested to consider options and proposals which have been submitted by Mrs Allen, Mr Luckock, Mrs Patrick and Mr Wakelin.

- The Council's views are sought in respect of stay exercises relating to individual classes (two options are provided)
- It is invited to consider proposed amendments to Regulation G(C)4.h. The proposal includes the following provisions:
  - In classes where the stay is at the judge's discretion, this must be notified before the start of judging. In classes where the stay is at the handler's choice this must be confirmed to the stay steward prior to the start of the exercise (when the number is taken).
  - Handlers must be able to observe their dog/s for the duration of the exercise.
  - On lead stays, lead to be between 1 and 2 metres in length and must be held by the handler throughout the test. The lead should be slack at all times.

**(Annex G refers)**

b. Proposal to remove all stay exercises

Mr R Wakelin

Mr Wakelin wishes to propose that all stay exercises be removed from obedience classes.

Rationale

Mr Wakelin wishes to draw the attention of the Council to the following reasons for the proposal, which have been drawn from his own experiences in carrying out the role of Chief Stay Steward on numerous occasions:

- Difficulties in one stay steward accurately watching 6-8 dogs
- Marks may be allocated against the wrong dog
- Dogs may urinate in the stay ring which is not fair for competitors in the next class
- Adverse weather conditions may be problematic for dogs
- Concerns regarding leaving dogs unattended next to an unknown dog
- Potential for incidents to occur in the stay ring
- Potential for dogs to bolt out of the stay ring
- Most venues are at public places and visiting families often stop at the side of the stay ring to watch with their own dogs, which can interfere with a competitor's dog

c. Out of sight stays - proposed amendments to Regulations G(A)9, G(A)10, G(A)11, and G(C)4.h.

Mr S Rutter

Mr Rutter wishes to propose the following amendments to the G Regulations under the terms of which all stays should be carried out within the handler's sight.

Regulation G(A)9. Class A

**TO:**

(5) Down 3 minutes, handler ~~out of~~ **in** sight - 30 points.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold)

Regulation G(A)10. Class B

**TO:**

(4) Sit 2 minutes, handler ~~out of~~ **in** sight 20 points

(5) Down 4 minutes, handler ~~out of~~ **in** sight 30 points

(Deletions struck through. Insertion in bold)



Regulation G(A) 11. Class C

**TO:**

- (5) Sit 2 minutes, handler ~~out of~~ **in** sight 20 points
  - (6) Down 5 minutes, handler ~~out of~~ **in** sight 50 points
- (Deletions struck through. Insertion in bold)

Regulation G(C)4.h. DESCRIPTIONS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES FOR OBEDIENCE TESTS CLASSES

**TO:**

h. Stays in ALL classes - The judge or steward will direct handlers to positions in the ring. The command 'last command' will be given and handlers should then instantly give their final command to their dogs. Any further commands or signals to the dogs after this 'last command' will be penalised. Handlers will then be instructed to leave their dogs and walk to positions indicated until ordered to return to them. **Handlers must observe their dogs for the duration of the test.** These are group tests and all dogs must compete together, but where this is impracticable at an indoor show, the class may be equally divided but the judging for the groups must be consecutive.  
(Insertion in bold)

#### Rationale

Mr Rutter considers that it is sensible to leave the stay exercises as they are now, but all done in sight, with the instruction to handlers that they must be able to observe their dogs at all times for the duration of the stay. This would satisfy the need to remove out of sight stays and would also allow for a more considered modernisation in future. This measure would also be simple to implement, with only minor changes to the G Regulations, as the points, scoreboards and stay marks matrix would remain the same.

Further, Mr Rutter is of the view that the sit stay should be a maximum of 2 minutes in duration. This goes back to the inception of Obedience when it was decided that because the sit stay is not a natural position for the dog that any sit stay should be limited to a maximum of 2 minutes.

Mr Rutter is not of the view that it would be appropriate for the judge to be given the authority to select either the sit or the down position for the given class, as this could mean that there were two 'C' Classes where one class does the sit & the other does the down, resulting in two completely different tests.

#### d. Proposal for amendments to G Regulations

##### Mr R Harlow

The Council is invited to consider proposals submitted by Mr Harlow with a view to the removal of out of sight stays, and in order to increase safety for the lower classes. The proposal includes the following provisions:

- Stays in Pre-Beginners and Beginners to be carried out on lead
- Stays in all classes to be in sight of the handler
- The proposal also includes detailed instructions as to the way in which stays should be carried out

**(Annex H refers)**

## **ITEM 9. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

No further proposals have been received.



### **ITEM 10. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

No discussion items have been received.

### **ITEM 11. FIVE YEAR STRATEGY**

Representatives are invited to propose further items to the Council's Five Year Strategic Plan.  
**(Annex I refers)**

### **ITEM 12. CRUFTS 2021**

The Council is invited to note a verbal update in respect of plans for obedience competitions at Crufts 2021.

### **ITEM 13. OBEDIENCE INFORMATION STAND**

The Council is invited to note a written report on the Obedience Information Stand at Crufts.  
**(Annex J refers)**

### **ITEM 14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Please give at least two weeks' advance notice of matters to be raised under 'Any Other Business' as this assists the office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Chairman.

### **ITEM 15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Council will take place on 22 July 2021.

### **NOTES:**

1. The Kennel Club will reimburse standard rail fares to all representatives attending the meeting, from their addresses as recorded at the Kennel Club. Claim forms will be available at the meeting.
2. Those resident in Northern Ireland or Scotland may apply in advance for authority to substitute shuttle air travel for standard rail fare, although it is requested that tickets are booked well in advance to take advantage of any reduction in fares.
3. Please give advance notice of matters to be raised under Any Other Business. This assists the Office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Council Chairman.
4. Kennel Club Liaison Council Regulations state that the Kennel Club will bear the cost of all reasonable and externally incurred costs connected with a Council, if agreed in advance. Therefore, representatives should apply to the Kennel Club for approval of any costs they may wish to claim prior to the expense being incurred.