

The Lower Height Option

For some time now there has been a call for the introduction of an additional jump height of 55cm and creation of an additional dog height between the current Medium and Large, (This has been popularly referred to within the agility fraternity as the 4th height).

There has also been a request to consider a further height to be introduced below the current 35cm Small dog height as well. Considering these specific options raised the opportunity to address issues for ALL heights of dog.

Whilst considering this it is also imperative to retain the ability for show organisers to still have choice over what they schedule, and, that competitors still have choice of jump height they perceive to be suitable for their dog.

Therefore, with all of this in mind the Lower Height Option is to be introduced from 1st July 2016 which satisfies all the above.

Lower Height Information

Full Height Jump heights: Small – 35cm, Medium – 45cm, Large – 65cm

Lower Height Jump heights: Small – 25cm, Medium – 35cm, Large – 55cm

When the Lower Height Option is listed on the schedule a dog may only be entered at either the Full height or at the Lower Height and cannot compete at a different height in any class at that show.

The Lower Height option detailed here is only applicable to Standard Classes as it is already possible to reduce hurdle heights for Special classes within the current regulations.

General

1. **Question:** Why has it been decided to do this now?
Answer: In order to provide professional advice regarding the jump height debate, the Kennel Club has commissioned research to fully understand the impact of jump heights on dogs. However, this research is likely to take some considerable time before it is concluded and the findings made available to inform the debate.

2. **Question:** When will this become effective?
Answer: This will become effective for any shows from 1 July 2016

Show Organisers

3. **Question:** Can you give me an example of what a schedule will look like?
Answer: The class listing on the show schedule will need to identify which classes will have the Lower Height Option available such as:

Class 15 Large Agility Graded 3,4,5 *
Class 16 KC Olympia Large Novice Agility Stakes Combined 3-5
Class 17 Small Agility Graded 3,4,5 *
Class 18 Special Small Steeplechase Combined 4-7
(* with Lower Height Option)

4. **Question:** How will this be accommodated on the entry form? Will they have a box to tick that they will be entering all the lower height classes?
Answer: Yes, there will be a tick box on the entry form to indicate which dogs are entered at the lower height.

5. **Question:** Will the class numbers be the same?
Answer: Yes, it will be one class.

6. **Question:** Do shows have to schedule lower height options as small shows might find it hard to fit them in?
Answer: No, we have tried to make it as flexible as possible for societies. There is no requirement to offer lower height classes.

7. **Question:** Can clubs run the lower height classes without offering the full height as well?
Answer: No.

8. **Question:** Can clubs run a mixture of some lower height classes with full height classes? For example run full height large, medium and small classes, but only run the lower height class for medium and small, not large?
Answer: Yes, as long as they are running the full height class, this won't be a problem.
9. **Question:** Can the club charge a different entry fee for the lower height classes and the full height ones?
Answer: No, all the dogs will be entered in the same class and the entry fee must be the same.
10. **Question:** What benefits are there for clubs running the lower height classes?
Answer: It is anticipated that entries will increase as dogs that have not previously been able to jump Kennel Club heights will now be able to compete. It is also expected that some dogs may be able to compete for longer in standard classes as they could be dropped to the Lower height instead of to veterans / any size classes.
11. **Question:** If lower height is offered for a class, do both winners of the full height and lower height count towards progression?
Answer: Only if the show organisers are offering separate awards for the two heights which must be detailed on the schedule.

Competitors

12. **Question:** I have a small border collie that competes in Large, does it have to jump the lower height?
Answer: No, every class must have jumps at full height, even if the society is offering the lower height option. Therefore you can continue to compete your dog at 65cm.
13. **Question:** If even taller dogs can jump at the lower height, what's to stop everyone from running at the lower height to increase their speed?
Answer: This will come down to personal choice. Some handlers won't choose to change their dogs to the lower height as it will change their timing, stride pattern etc. Additionally it is often the taller, heavier dogs that will benefit more from not having to jump so high, so it is more likely to be these dogs you will find at the lower height. Finally, all the Kennel Club qualifiers will be held at the full height so there is an advantage to competing at the full height.

- 14. Question:** Will it be easy for the running orders to be printed off to reflect those who are running the lower height class and those who aren't?
Answer: Yes, this will be done by the show processor in a similar way to how they are done for Any Size type classes.
- 15. Question:** Can you enter lower height classes at some shows and then full height classes at others?
Answer: Yes. You can compete at either full height or lower height for the duration of the show covered by a specific schedule. Therefore if a show is over two weekends and during the week with different schedules it would be possible to compete in lower height for one weekend and then full height for the rest of the show if it's under a different schedule.
- 16. Question:** Is the lower height just for hurdles? What about the other obstacles?
Answer: It is just for the hurdles (which includes the wall). All the other obstacles will remain at full height as detailed in the Regulations.
- 17. Question:** If a lower height class includes the tyre how will that work if it is higher than the hurdles?
Answer: The measurement for the tyre is taken at the centre of the tyre. Therefore the dog could still jump the same height through the tyre as it is jumping over the hurdles.
- 18. Question:** What are Kennel Club Prestige Events?
Answer: Kennel Club Prestige Events are those held at Premier Shows; these are heats for Crufts, Olympia, Discover Dogs, such as Crufts Singles, Crufts ABC etc
- 19. Question:** Why can't Prestige Events be at the lower height?
Answer: There is a high value of the awards at these events, they have extra importance than standard classes and therefore a lower height is not applicable.
- 20. Question:** I don't understand what I have to do to qualify for Championship classes? Has it changed?
Answer: If your wins from Grade 6 to Grade 7 were all at full height then you can automatically enter Championship classes. However if you have progressed to Grade 7 in the lower height then the qualification requirements have changed. If your wins to Grade 7 were at a lower height then you will need additional wins at full height. You will need a total of 4 wins at full height in either Grade 6 or 7, at least 2 of which must be agility.

21. **Question:** Would my dog have to be measured to enter the lower height classes?
Answer: The lower height classes are not separate classes so measuring is required as normal for dogs entered in to Small and Medium classes
22. **Question:** If I have entered the lower height for a class and have missed my run and the jumps have been lowered/raised can I still run in the class?
Answer: No, it is the competitors' responsibility to be at the ring when required. It is recommended that Shows indicate on their ring plan whether a class is starting with the lower height or full height.
23. **Question:** If lower height is offered for a class, do both winners of the full height and lower height count towards progression?
Answer: Only if the show organisers are offering separate awards for the two heights which must be detailed on the schedule.