The Kennel Club Judges Education Programme

Eye For a Dog Guidance Document

Introduction

The aims of the Eye for a Dog Assessment is to assess the candidate's knowledge and competence in conformation and movement in a non-breed specific manner, and to assess the candidate's ability to describe proportions, and to identify 'balance' in dogs.

The Code of Best Practice outlines how the assessment will be run, and all candidates will receive a briefing at the start of the assessment that helps to inform candidates what is required.

This guidance note should be read in conjunction with the code of best practice and particular notice should be paid to the section about what should be avoided. It is advised that candidates should watch the conformation and movement video on The Kennel Club Academy before attending the assessment, even if they are an experienced group level judge.

You are not writing a critique; you need to describe what you see in front of you. If all the dogs are square and move with reach and drive then say so, do not worry about repeating yourself for each dog if it is appropriate to do so. It is advisable to use bullet points as time is limited for each dog. Please write at least 5 bullet points for each section.

Identification of breeds

There will be 1 dog from each of the 7 groups and you will need to correctly identify 6 out of the 7 breeds of dog. We do not use the imported register breeds or very rare breeds that may not be familiar to many people. You are not allowed to ask the handlers for advice on the breed.

Movement

The first part of the assessment looks at the movement, carriage and outline/topline of each of the 7 dogs, time will be given between dogs to swap paperwork over and it is advised that when one dogs movement has been observed and notes made that you place that sheet of paper on the floor so not to mix it up with another dog.

This is an important part of the assessment and for each dog you should try and write at least 5 correct bullet points about its movement. Phrases such as the following may be used:

- Straight movement
- Short striding
- Crabbing to one side
- Narrow in front
- Has moderate reach and drive
- Has more drive behind than reach in front
- Unsound on front left shoulder
- Out at elbow on the move
- Holds a level topline
- Topline rises to rear on move
- Topline dips behind withers on move
- Carries head high/low on the move

Overall Appearance

The next section looks at the overall appearance of the dog, including its proportions, balance, coat and colour. You will have had your hands on the dog as well as looked at it from a distance so please do **say what you can see and feel**.

If you had this dog in the assessment you might say:

- Black with a white collar, white front legs, white blaze on head, white rear feet and white tip to tail
- Medium long coat
- Medium size
- Longer than tall
- Depth of body slightly more than half the height of the dog

Head

This section wants you to describe the head of the dog, including the bite (it is acceptable to ask the handler to show the bite), eyes, ears and head proportions.

If this dog was one of the assessment dogs you could say:

- Slightly rounded skull
- Muzzle approximately equal in length to skull
- Moderate stop
- Dark nose
- Dark almond shaped eye
- Scissor bite
- Medium size triangular drop ears set high on head

Forequarters

This section wants you to describe the neck and forequarters of the dog, you will need to describe the layback of the shoulder, the length of the upper arm, the length of the neck and the bone and front legs. You might use phrases such as:

- Long/medium length/short neck
- Upright/moderately laid back/well laid-back shoulder
- Upper arm shorter than shoulder blade
- Elbows tucked closely into ribcage
- Round bone
- Large well-padded feet
- Upright in pastern

Body

This section wants you to describe the body of the dog including the proportions of ribbing to loin, the topline when stacked, ribbing and tuck-up. If presented with this dog, you may say:

- Ribbing longer than length of loin
- Moderate tuck up
- Body slightly longer than tall
- Fairly level topline
- Fairly lean with some ribs visible

Hindquarters

This last section wants you to describe the hindquarters of the dog including the tail. You should describe the rear angulation, set and length of the tail and shape of the croup. If presented with this dog, you might say:

- Tightly curled tail set moderately high
- Tail carried on back/croup
- Straight hind legs from the rear with moderate turn of stifle
- Second thigh shorter than upper thigh
- Low set hocks
- Rear pasterns parallel
- Small oval feet

Key things to remember

- You are not judging the dogs so **do not** use phrases such as "good", "correct", "would like more of", "adequate" or "lacks" for any part of the dog.
- Do not write a critique of the dog, it is irrelevant if the dog is a good or poor example of the breed
- The timing should be adequate for you to write enough for each section, brief bullet points are all that is needed. The KC staff will let you know how long you have left in for each dog.
- Remember to take with you a clipboard and pens.
- Remember to dress how you would if you were judging.
- You will be observed whilst you are going over one or two dogs, you should go over them thoroughly in a methodical manner that is appropriate for the breed. Once you have gone over the dog you are not allowed to go back over the dog so make sure you feel everything you need and then write your notes, the dog will remain in front of you while you are writing.
- **SAY WHAT YOU SEE!**