



Do you want to become a Judge?

Welsh Pony & Cob Society of Australia Inc.

The WPCSA welcomes applications from members to begin the process towards becoming an accredited judge for the Society. The Society has a commitment to assisting applicants on their journey by encouraging and providing opportunities for education and experience. Reviews of the process towards judge accreditation are periodically made and amended as required.

Before commencing the journey to becoming a judge it is advised that you consider why you would like to undertake this task. Judges are often placed under considerable pressure by show societies and exhibitors and it is important that you are able to withstand these and continue to judge impartially and efficiently. The integrity of a judge must remain beyond reproach at all times.

In 2026 a major review was undertaken of the assessment process, to better cater for the needs of experienced as well as less experienced judges. The new system allows for greater flexibility but also may result in unprepared applicants having a higher rate of unsuccessful assessment.

The attached flowchart summarises the basic requirements but does not replace this more detailed explanation.

In summary, the criteria for application for Probationary Judge level is unchanged. Application for Tier 2 is basically unchanged except for the eligibility criteria based on breeding and producing experience. There are now two pathways towards attaining Tier 2 status and applicants are able to vary the pathway they have commenced at any time subject to COM approval should they wish to go straight to assessment. COM is hopeful that this may encourage more people to begin the judging journey but wishes to ensure that applicants are sufficiently prepared prior to undergoing the assessment process. Applicants are encouraged to gain judging, stewarding and probationary judging experience prior to undertaking an Assessment. Some Probationary Judges may feel that they are happy to stay at this level, there is no requirement to progress to Tier 2 unless desired.

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Before beginning the process towards the Judging panel or applying for assessment, applicants must:

- Be a minimum of 21 years of age (for Tier 2 you must be a minimum of 25 years of age)
- Have attended a WPCSA Judge seminar within the previous 2 years
- Be a WPCSA (or approved overseas Society) current Full financial member (or Associate member linked to a full membership) and nominee of that membership and have been a member for at least 5 years (consecutive membership for Tier 2, not necessarily consecutive for Probationary level).
- Have no convictions relating to animal cruelty or child abuse
- Complete and submit an Application Form with Resume

Judges may be appointed to different Tier levels for different disciplines. Judges will be held accountable should they accept judging appointments as a WPCSA judge that they are not eligible to judge according to their judge status (Probationary, Tier 2):

- First breach – an explanation will be required and the judge will receive a letter of reprimand
- Second breach – the judge will be automatically demoted from Tier 2 to probationary or Probationary to non-panel for 12 months after which time the original judge level will be reinstated.
- Third breach – the judge will be removed from the judge panel for 12 months after which time the judge will be reinstated.

Appointment as a Probationary Judge

Learning focus

- Breed type and Standard of Excellence
- Conformation and its relationship to soundness
- Rules & Regulations
- Code of Conduct
- Ring management and troubleshooting
- Gain confidence in judging and improve efficiency in the ring.

The Assessment process involves

- Successful completion of an Open Book Test gaining a pass mark of at least 80%
- Interview with 2 Assessors, this is usually conducted in person but can be arranged to be via Zoom if required. You will be asked to explain why you wish to judge, assessed on your understanding of type, conformation, Rules & Regulations and your opinions on certain aspects of the breed and judging.
- Outcome of Assessment - be admitted to the Probationary Judge Tier or be advised to gain further experience and mentoring and re-apply.

Ongoing development

- Attend Judge seminars/workshops at least once every 3 years, the more the better.
- Complete Probationary Judging assignments and steward with Tier 1 judges
- Judge non-medal events at shows, even non-Welsh classes will gain you valuable ring management experience.
- Assist/co-judge Futurity events
- Gain confidence judging and managing the ring and utilise the experience of senior judges to gain further knowledge.
- Review the Society Rules & Regulations regularly and always prior to commencing a judging appointment.

Limitations

As a Probationary Judge you are not eligible to judge:

- Welsh & Part Welsh in-hand Medal classes or in-hand events at Royal or Overseas shows or major breed shows.
- Welsh & Part Welsh performance medals or performance events at Royal or Overseas shows or major breed shows. (If you are on a performance judge panel for another Society permission may be given by the Society to judge these events as a panel judge for another Society)
- Advanced roles such as ARC in-hand events, Young Judges, Inspections for change of section or foundation stock.

Requirements for retaining Probationary Judge status

- You must remain a member of the Society and be the nominee of that membership (Membership level applicable is the same as for an applicant).
- You must attend a WPCSA judges seminar at least once every 3 years. It is strongly recommended that you attend as many as possible.
- You must adhere to the Judges Code of Conduct and all Society Codes of Conduct and Rules & Regulations.
- Successfully complete an Open Book Test and sign Code of Conduct & Appointment Documentation as sent by COM annually.

Probationary Judging and Progression to Tier 2

- Prior to being eligible to apply for assessment as a Tier 2 judge the member must have judged at least 5 shows. It can be expected that reviews may be submitted by other judges and/or the show organiser and these can be utilised to further education.
- Probationary Judging
 - Probationary judges are encouraged to seek Probationary Judging appointments with Tier 1 judges, in states where there are very few Tier 1 judges then some reports submitted by Tier 2 judges or Welsh breeders who are Federal Panel APSB judges may be accepted with prior approval by COM.
 - It is expected that unless the Probationary judge is already an experienced judge that 4 successful probationary Judge appointments will need to be completed with at least 3 in each Section/discipline of the Judge Panel the judge wishes to be appointed to. At least 2 of the probationary judging appointments must be with Mentor or Overseas judges and the Probation Reports must be submitted to the Society by the assessing judge and not by the judge candidate and the assessing judge must not be an immediate family member or in a business relationship with the probationary judge as defined by the Society showing regulations. One of these appointments may be replaced with a ringside Mentor session, a probation judge report completed by the mentor judge must be submitted to COM.
 - Where a judge is already on a recognised judge panel at National level for the performance discipline being applied for then this requirement shall not apply ie a National Panel EA Show Horse judge would not be required to complete the three probationary ridden assessments. Such judges may be advanced to Tier 1 for the Performance section upon submission of a suitable resume following successful completion of the Tier 2 Judge assessment.
- Prior to COM approving the probationary judge for approval to be assessed for Tier 2 it is expected that sufficient experience will have been gained to give a reasonable expectation of success at the assessment. Should a member feel that they have sufficient experience to by-pass the Probationary level or reduce the amount of Probationary appointments recommended they may apply for permission to be assessed for Tier 2, this will be at the discretion of COM subject to details provided on the Application.

Appointment as a Tier 2 Judge

- There are two potential pathways towards being appointed as a Tier 2 judge but both require the member to successfully complete a Judge Assessment which will involve a written test, practical examination and extensive interview. As a breed Society, it is essential that the assessors are confident that the judge has a thorough understanding of breed type. As a representative of the Society, the assessors will also consider how you

would interact with show organisers and exhibitors as well as how you would manage a ring and conduct yourself in potentially difficult situations under pressure. Two assessors will adjudicate and their decision will be final. Candidates will be scored and depending on the result may be asked to undergo further training prior to appointment, may be approved for immediate inclusion on the Tier 2 judge panel or may be required to be assessed again at a future date.

- A bond of \$100 will be required to secure a position at the Assessment and this will be returned to the candidate following attendance and forfeited should the candidate not present.
- It is recommended that potential Tier 2 judges complete the requirements detailed above (Progression to Tier 2) to ensure that they have the necessary training and skills for them to be successful when assessed. Should an experienced judge wish to bypass these steps, the person may complete the Judge Application and request that COM approves he/she to be assessed without completing the steps detailed previously. COM will need to be confident that the candidate has a working knowledge of the Welsh in-hand and ridden workouts and an expectation that there is sufficient experience and knowledge to enable a successful result.

Eligibility for Assessment

- The judge candidate must complete and submit an Application for Assessment, noting which disciplines are to be assessed. COM will review the application and determine whether the candidate is approved to attend an Assessment Day. It is recommended that the candidate have sufficient experience and knowledge to expect to be successful when assessed prior to applying. Candidates may apply to be assessed for one or multiple disciplines and sections and following the assessment may be appointed as Tier 2 judges for one or all sections/disciplines.
- In order to be eligible for appointment as a Tier 2 Welsh In-Hand judge, the candidate or his/her immediate family must have bred at least 5 Pure Welsh animals or bred &/or owned &/or produced and exhibited a minimum of 10 Pure Welsh animals over a minimum 5 year period where it can be determined by COM that the candidate has been directly involved in the breeding and/or production decisions made. Production is defined as "A person involved in the training, conditioning and/or exhibition of show or competition horses". This criteria does not apply for appointment to the Part Welsh In-Hand, Ridden or Harness panels. It must be remembered that as a Studbook Society it is paramount that judges are able to assess breeding stock.

The Assessment involves

- Successful completion of a closed book written test for each section applied for, gaining a pass mark of at least 80%
- Examination in a mock judging situation of two classes of ponies. You will be expected to be able to discuss your placings and reasoning for those decisions to the Assessor.
- An interview with 2 Assessors who will ensure that there is a detailed knowledge of the Standard of Excellence. You will be asked to explain why you wish to judge, assessed on your understanding of type, conformation, Rules & Regulations and your opinions on certain aspects of the breed and judging. You will need to explain your placings of the two classes judged as part of the assessment. A discussion pertaining to Part Welsh as well as any other Sections applied for can be expected to be extensive.
- Assessors will score the candidate as per the attached score sheet and depending on the results will either recommend that the candidate be appointed to Tier 2 for specific

disciplines, require further training and re-assessment at a future date or be appointed subject to completion of some probationary judging appointments.

- Where a candidate is already on a National judge panel for ridden or harness, he/she will be appointed to Tier 1 for that discipline upon successful assessment onto the Tier 2 Welsh In-Hand panel, completion of the relevant written test gaining a 80% pass mark and interview.

Ongoing development

- Attend Judge seminars/workshops at least once every 3 years, the more the better.
- Gain confidence judging and managing the ring and utilise the experience of senior judges to gain further knowledge.
- Review the Society Rules & Regulations regularly and always prior to commencing a judging appointment.

Limitations

- As a Tier 2 Judge you are eligible to judge Bronze medal and Futurity events.
- As a Tier 2 Judge you are **not eligible** to judge
 - Welsh & Part Welsh in-hand Gold or Silver Medal classes
 - Welsh & Part Welsh performance Gold or Silver Medal classes If you are on a National performance judge panel for another Society permission may be given by the Society to judge these events as a panel judge for another Society
 - Medal events overseas.

Requirements for retaining Tier 2 Judge status

- You must remain a full member of the Society and be the nominee of that membership (Membership level applicable is the same as for an applicant).
- You must attend a WPCSA judges seminar at least once every 3 years. It is strongly recommended that you attend as many as possible.
- You must adhere to the Judges Code of Conduct and all Society Codes of Conduct and Rules & Regulations.
- Successfully complete an Open Book Test and sign and return Code of Conduct & Appointment Documentation as sent by COM annually.

Appointment as a Tier 1 Judge

Eligibility to apply:

- Prior to 1st August each year, eligible Tier 2 judges wishing to be considered for inclusion as Tier 1 judges must submit the relevant Tier 1 application form to the Society for consideration.
- You must have been a Tier 2 judge of the WPCSA for a minimum of 5 years or be a Silver/Gold medal approved judge with the WPCS (UK) in order to be appointed to the Tier 1 Welsh In-Hand panel.
- You must have been a member of the WPCSA or an approved overseas Welsh Society for a minimum of 5 consecutive years and be the nominee of that membership. Membership must be a Full Membership unless the applicant is associated with a Full membership in which case being the nominee of a separate Associate membership is accepted.
- You must have bred at least 5 Pure Welsh animals to be appointed to the Welsh In-Hand panel. This does not apply for appointment to the Part Welsh In-Hand, Ridden or Harness panels. It must be remembered that as a Studbook Society it is paramount that judges are able to assess breeding stock.

- You must be able to declare that you have never had any conviction relating to animal cruelty or child abuse.
- You must have attended a WPCSA judges' seminar within the previous 2 years.
- You must have judged a minimum of 5 WPCS shows which should include 3 medal shows in the discipline to be applied for with details of the events and show organiser contact details supplied on the application form.
- Tier 2 judges who are on a National Judge Panel for performance (ridden and/or harness) with an approved Society will be eligible for inclusion as a Tier 1 judge for that discipline.

Requirements for retaining Tier 1 Judge status

- You must remain a member of the Society and be the nominee of that membership. (Membership level applicable is the same as for an applicant).
- You must attend a WPCSA judges seminar at least once every 3 years. It is strongly recommended that you attend as many as possible. Speciality performance judges who are only on the panel for a performance discipline must attend a seminar relevant to the section they are appointed to judge at least once every 3 years and confirm attendance with COM. Tier 1 judges who have been on the Society judge panel for a minimum of 10 years and who have judged at least 10 Welsh shows since their appointment will only be required to attend a WPCSA seminar at least once every 5 years upon submission of documentation confirming such eligibility.
- You must adhere to the Judges Code of Conduct and all Society Codes of Conduct and Rules & Regulations.
- You must successfully complete an Open Book Test and sign and return Code of Conduct & Appointment Documentation as sent by COM annually.

Appointment as a Guest Judge

Tier 1 judges who due to age, illness or infirmity or personal reasons, no longer wish to judge for long periods of time but are prepared to judge in a reduced capacity and/or assist with judge training may apply to be transferred to the Guest Judge category.

Eligibility:

- You must have been a Tier 1 judge of the WPCSA Inc.
- You must have been a member of the WPCSA or an approved overseas Welsh Society for a minimum of 5 consecutive years and be the nominee of that membership. Membership must be a Full Membership unless the applicant is associated with a Full membership in which case being the nominee of a separate Associate membership is accepted. If the judge is no longer breeding, then Associate membership will suffice.

In order to maintain the Guest Judge status

- You must remain a member of the Society and be the nominee of that membership as per eligibility criteria.
- It is recommended that Guest judges attend a WPCSA judges' seminar at least once every three years.
- You must adhere to the Judges Code of Conduct and all Society Codes of Conduct and Rules & Regulations and complete an Open Book Test and sign and return the Code Conduct & Appointment Documentation as sent by COM annually.

SUMMARY FLOWCHART OF THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A WPCSA PANEL JUDGE
 refer to the "Do You Want to Become a Judge" document for more detail

