



SACC COUNCIL OF CAT JUDGES

JUDGES TRAINING MANUAL

(Amended February 2025)

1. Selection of Candidates

1.1 Criteria for eligibility.

In order to eligible for candidacy a person must:

1.1.1 Be over the age of 21 years at commencement of course.

1.1.2 Be a paid up member of at least one of the recognised clubs affiliated to SACC.

1.1.3 Have completed at least 8 satisfactory stewarding assignments at recognised cat shows.

1.1.4 Have shown at least 1 cat at SACC Championship shows over a minimum period of 3 years.

1.2 A new judge should be a credit to the existing Panel and great care should be taken in the initial choice.

1.3 Candidates with breeding experience are preferable.

1.4 Promising stewards may be invited, open invitations may be extended requiring the submission of CV's or any suitable method of recruitment may be used. Although the system of choosing candidates is at the discretion of the training panel, it is mandatory that the panel inform JC of the candidates and the course/ module to be undertaken as soon as possible, so that this can be communicated to all panels.

2. The Interview

2.1 This constitutes an essential part of selection.

2.2 An interview with potential judges' student candidates is optional, depending on the Judges Panel.

2.3 A suggestion is that Panel appoints a suitable Selection Board of 3 members to conduct the interview.

2.4 The whole Panel may be present and question the candidates after the Selection Board has completed its questions.

2.5 The candidate's responses are discussed by the whole Panel and a two-thirds majority is needed for the candidate to be accepted.

2.6 Results of the interview to be given to the candidates within 24 hours.

2.7 The successful candidates must take and pass the Ishihara Test for colour-blindness. Cost of this test to be borne by the candidate.

3. Course convener and instructors.

3.1 Panel selects 2 or 3 judges to be chosen for their experience in breeding, ability to teach and a wide knowledge of the breed/s under discussion.

3.2 A Course Convener is chosen to co-ordinate the lectures; liaise with examiners for the written exam and co-ordinate the Practical Exam.

4. New trainee judges for SACC

An applicant who is in any way connected at breed group committee, committee or management level with an organization with similar purposes to those of SACC will be expected to furnish proof of severance from such within fifteen (15) days of his/her admission to the SACC Judges' Training Program. Henceforth he/she may not join any such organization while a part of the Judging Program.

5. Student judges training programme

Note: all the rules pertaining to judges are relevant to student judges

6. Student judges at shows

6.1 Student judges need to make use of every possible opportunity to handle cats,, observe the judging processes of as many judges as possible, and try be involved in the running and management of cat shows to develop and refine their understanding of judging and our show system in general.

6.1.1 Student judges should sit with judges and observe his/ her judging practice and handling of the breeds for at least **one** ring per show, and talk to as many breeders as possible.

6.1.2 Student judges should handle cats from the division they are studying, during Best in Show. Their handling skills will be evaluated by their tutors and recommendations made for improvement, if required.

6.1.3 Their tutor will keep a record of how the student fulfils the above requirements.

6.2 Tutors of student judges need to contact a Show manager at least two weeks before a show to

6.2.1 inform the show manager the Judge will have a student to observe with him/her while judging.

6.2.2 request probation opportunities for student judges

7. Cattery visits.

In order to increase their knowledge of breeds which they have neither bred nor exhibited, student judges are required to visit established catteries of as many of the breeds they are studying as possible and speak with the breeder about his /her cats.

7.1 Catteries visited will ideally be owned by SACC members who have at least five (5) years' experience in their current breeding program. Such catteries should have cats of varying ages.

7.2 The visit would provide an opportunity to see and compare cats which have attained the highest awards, (Grand and Supreme titles) to cats that would not fare as well in the judging ring.

7.3 The specifics of each cattery visit will be negotiated in advance between the student and his/ her tutor. The following is recommended:

7.3.1 **Persian/ Exotic/ Chinchilla Longhair or Siamese & related breeds:** A minimum of **three** cattery visits.

7.3.2 **Medium hair Breeds:** A minimum of **four** cattery visits.

7.3.3 **Foreign Breeds:** A minimum of **four** cattery visits per module where a practical exam is required.

Evaluation:

1. The student must write a brief summary of his/her visit, highlighting learning and providing a brief critique of at least five (5) cats seen and handled.

8. Judging household pets

8.1 A student needs to complete **two** Household Pet **judging assignments** with positive feedback received as part of his/ her training. It is recommended that a student does not attempt this at the

beginning of his/ her training, but towards the latter part of the course; once some development and training has been done and the test on the Household Pet standard has been passed.

8.2 Student judges should judge as household pet judges (for one ring only per show) to develop their handling and show report writing skills.

8.3 The tutor will appoint a judge from his/ her panel to observe the apprentice and evaluate his/her work in the Household Pet Class. They will consist of at least one Judge from the student's panel.

8.4 In evaluating the student judge's work, emphasis will be placed on:

8.4.1 Procedure (handling, mechanics and final presentation.)

8.4.2 Technique (washing hands and table between cats, marking HHP Judges' Book.

8.4.3 Having a method (notes, marks in judges' books, etc.) for noting cats that might be nominated for Best in Show.

8.4.4 Establishing a routine to evaluate the cat (starting with certain parts of the cat and ending with a specific part) the apprentice will:

i) check claws

ii) check for clean ears

iii) check the coat for cleanliness and grooming

iv) check the stomach for cleanliness and grooming

v) check for correct colour (as per the HHP Judges' Book)

vi) check eyes for cleanliness and health vii) check for overall balance and condition

viii) observe the disposition (must be amenable to handling.)

9. Course Structure

9.1 Except as otherwise provided, the phases and sequence of each judge's course shall be as follows:

9.1.1 Practical study and tests Written exams (includes supplementary exams, if required)

9.1.2 Practical training Practical exams (includes supplementary exams, if required)

9.1.3 Student judges may be required to submit assignments for the course under study, as may be decided by their relevant panels

9.1.4 Once the practical exam in each course or module has been successfully completed, the Panel must inform Judges Council, the SACR and all SACC Show Managers, as to which breeds the new judges are now qualified to judge.

9.2 **NB: A student must be accepted as a fully qualified judge in the section of study before being trained on another course and/or module** i.e. Written exam, full number of probation sessions at SACC Shows and practical exam and/or presentations must all be completed.

9.3 The entire judge's course covers the following sections:

9.3.1. Introduction to Judging, Colour Course, Show Rules, Glossary and Relevant to All Breeds

All new students need to successfully complete and pass theoretical examinations set by a Judges' Panel appointed by Judges' Council. Once this course has been passed, only then may the student train on the other modules. The course is made up of 2 modules: -

Module 1

- The complete glossary as per the Standard of Points.
- Relevant to all Breeds.
- Show Rules specifically related to Judges and Awards
- Household Pet Standard.

Module 2

- Colour Descriptions as per the Standard of Points – Self, Patched, Pointed-excluding colour descriptions that are relevant to specific breeds.
- Genetics

Module 3

- Colour Descriptions as per the Standard of Points – Silver, Shaded, Tabbies- excluding colour descriptions that are relevant to specific breeds.
- Genetics

9.3.2 Persians, Longhairs and Exotics

9.3.3 Medium Hair Breeds

Module One – Colour Breeds:

- Birman
- Ragdoll
- Turkish Van

Module Two – Other:

- Maine Coon
- Norwegian Forest Cat
- Siberian
- Turkish Angora

Practical training is done on all the breeds.

A practical exam follows once both sections' written exams have been passed.

9.3.4 Foreigns

This course is divided into four Modules.

- Each Panel will do an analysis to determine which foreign breeds are most often shown in their area.
- Based on the numbers of foreign breeds' cats shown, a training course is designed by the Panel's tutors.
- Each Panel shall inform Judges Council of the design of their Foreign Breeds Course and approximate time frames.
- Judge's Council to confirm that all is in order with the proposal submitted from the Panel's Foreign Course Design and thereafter give the go-ahead or request amendments. These decisions to be based on this document alone.

NOTE: Longhair versions of a breed are not counted as a separate breed.

9.3.4.1

Module One

- The first Module will be made up of the breeds which are shown in the greatest numbers in the particular region.
- Number of breeds for study: Break module down in smaller sections. Each section contains a minimum of 4 breeds. Maximum number of breeds to be decided by tutors.
- Repeat sections until all breeds in this module are covered.
- Practical training is done on all the selected breeds at the same time.
- A practical exam follows once both sections' written exams have been passed.

9.3.4.2

Module Two

- Made up of the remaining group of foreign breeds which are shown locally. This module may also include breeds regularly shown elsewhere in South Africa.
- In the event that fewer than 3 cats of a specific breed are shown in the region where the student resides, no practical examination or probation judging is required on these breeds, and these cats are accepted as fulfilling all requirement as per 9.2.4.3. Module Three.
- Number of breeds for study: Break module down in smaller sections. Each section contains a minimum of 4 breeds.
- Maximum number of breeds to be decided on by tutors.
- Repeat sections until all breeds in this module are covered.
- Practical training is done on all the selected breeds at the same time.
- A practical exam follows once both sections' written exams have been passed.
- In the event that fewer than 3 cats of a specific breed are shown in the region where the student resides, no practical examination or probation judging is required on these breeds, and these cats are accepted as fulfilling all requirement as per paragraph 9.2.4.3. Module Three.

9.3.4.3

Module Three

- Made up of breeds that are not found in the particular region, but elsewhere in South Africa.

Training to be as follows:

- Theory: learn the SOP and write the theoretical exam.
- Study of cats: via PowerPoint presentations and photographs.
- Tutors may ask students to write show reports on photographs of their breeds as part of the tests the tutors set.
- Tutors may require students to complete assignments based on one or more of these breeds.

- Practical workshop/ seminar: Students shall visit another region to attend a workshop where as many as possible of these breeds are present. The workshop may be arranged with the cooperation of the local judge's panel.
- Where possible a practical exam must be arranged for as many of these breeds as possible. Judge's Council to assist where required at the request of the Panel. For the balance of minimum cats required, examples of cats to be provided in the practical exam through photographic exams.

NOTE: This module is therefore excluded from the requirements of paragraph 9.1.4.

Once these requirements have been met, a student will be considered as having completed this Module successfully.

This would mean a student will be considered a fully qualified foreign breeds' judge.

9.3.4.4 Module Four

- Remaining breeds that are no longer being shown / bred in South Africa (as identified by SACCJ from time to time).
- No written exam or practical exam will be required.
- In the event that these breeds should re-appear, a workshop should be arranged to train/ refresh all panel members.

9.3.5 Siamese and Balinese, Orientals and Mediumhair Orientals.

9.3.6 Basic Genetics

This is to be done as an addendum in conjunction with the Colour and Pattern Course. This is to be an open book test (no written exams required). The genetics overview will be determined by each Panel.

10. Examinations

10.1 Examination Protocol

- 10.1.1 A minimum of four weeks' notice be given to examiners setting an exam.
- 10.1.2 Every exam paper be moderated and checked by another qualified member of the same panel.
- 10.1.3 A maximum turnaround time of three weeks is set from time of receiving to time of results being posted.

10.2 Written Examination

- 10.2.1 Consists of a paper to be set and marked by a Panel other than the Teaching Panel. The mark allocation of the paper is to be no less than 150 marks, and not more than 200 marks; and will be based on the content covered in the specific training course.
- 10.2.2 The paper shall be based on the Standard of Points and those Show Rules pertaining to Judges and Judging.

- 10.2.3 A pass mark of 75% is required and two attempts are permitted. Failure of both attempts precludes completion of this section of the course.
- 10.2.4 In the Colour, Pattern, Glossary and Show Rules examination, questions about colours not readily seen on the show bench or in South Africa, should be limited to 20% or less of the total marks.
- 10.2.5 Where a candidate fails the written exam twice, the training Panel may, at its discretion, allow one further attempt. In order to qualify for the third exam, the candidate must have attained at least 68% on the second attempt. This third attempt must be undertaken within a period of 6 months from the date of the last written exam.

10.3. Probation / Practical Training

- 10.3.1 Probation / Practical Training will be undertaken by successful candidates at a Championship show.
- 10.3.2 A minimum of 40 cats are to be assessed at a minimum of 3 SACC shows.
- 10.3.3 Practical training should be undertaken under as many judges as is practically possible.
- 10.3.4 The Candidate Judge will accompany the Official Judge assessing the cats as required, and will write a report on each cat assessed.
- 10.3.5 On completion of a judging assignment, the Officiating Judge must hand a report to the Course Convener assessing the candidate judge's performance.
- 10.3.6 On successful completion of the minimum requirement of practical training, the Candidate Judge may elect to do further practical training, or the Panel may require the Candidate Judge to continue the practical training until all parties are satisfied that the he/she is ready to take the practical exam.

10.4 Practical Examination

- 10.4.1 A minimum of 12 cats to be judged in various classes with nominated Specials according to the examiner/s instructions.
- 10.4.2 The examining judges will judge the cats, placing them in their classes and selecting a Best on Show. A full report is written on each cat. The Judges Report and placings are used to assess the candidates judging.
- 10.4.3 The candidates may not use their Standard of Points or any other notes during the practical examination.
- 10.4.4 If there are fewer than 3 candidates, the practical examination may be held at a Championship Show.
- 10.4.5 A pass mark of 80% is required.
- 10.4.6 Where a candidate fails the practical exam twice, the training Panel may, at its discretion, allow one further attempt. In order to qualify for the third practical exam, the candidate must have attained at least 75% on the second attempt. This third attempt must be undertaken within a period of six months from the date of the last practical exam.

11. Leave of Absence

- 11.1 A Judge may be granted a leave of absence from judging for a period of one year (12 calendar months) without penalty. The judge must submit a letter to his/ her panel explaining that he/ she will be taking a leave of absence. Once the panel has

accepted the leave request, the panel secretary must forward a copy of this letter to Judges Council secretary immediately. If the period involved is greater than one calendar year then probation must be done as set out from 11.2.1

11.2 A judge who has resigned from judging for a period longer than one calendar year, or who has taken leave of absence for a period of more than one calendar year, may apply for re-instatement subject to them completing a satisfactory probation judging assignment, according to the following stipulations:

11.2.1 A judge qualified to judge only one section of Siamese/Orientals, Persians/Exotics or Medium Hairs, shall be required to probation on at least 12 cats in the relevant section.

11.2.2 A judge qualified to judge only the Foreign Section shall be required to probation on at least 16 cats.

11.2.3 A judge qualified to judge a combination of any of these sections but not all breeds shall be required to probation on at least 16 cats.

11.2.4 A judge qualified to judge all breeds shall be required to probation on at least 20 cats.

12. Application for membership from another association

12.1 A judge from another judges' association applying for membership to any SACC judges panel, shall be subjected to the following minimum requirements before being accepted:

12.1.1 Written confirmation from the relevant judges' association that the applicant has qualified in the relevant sections.

12.1.2 A minimum 2 years' judging experience in the relevant sections that he/she is qualified to judge in.

12.1.3 If the applicant is an All Breeds judge, a minimum length of training 6 (six) years for All Breeds status plus 1 (one) year post qualification year of experience.

Where the above requirements have been not met, the applicant shall be required to probation on at least 12 cats across all the relevant sections he/she is qualified to judge before being accepted for membership.

12.2 Where a judge has not qualified in all the relevant breeds, the applicant will be required to complete his/her judge's training as per Sections 4 and 5 above, for the sections not qualified in, at the time of the application.

13. Recommendation for newly qualified judges

13.1 Once a student judge has passed a practical exam and been released to judge, he/ she may choose a mentor from his/ her panel.

- The mentor will provide support, advice and guidance with regards to further development, answer any questions the new judge may have with regards to judging assignments, cats judged and/ or how to continue as a judge in SACC for a period of one year from the first judging assignment.

- This will be a relationship of confidentiality.
- 13.2 It is recommended that a newly qualified judge should not judge for another Association, unless a period of at least one year has elapsed from the time that such judge has been released to judge that section.