

DRESSAGE

EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Education System for FEI Dressage Officials

General principles

The Education System for FEI Dressage Officials provides a series of learning experiences that are based on the FEI Rules and Regulations and their application at international equestrian events. It aims at ensuring that all accredited Officials apply a consistent approach to Dressage matters at all FEI events, keeping the welfare of the Horse at the heart of their practice at all times.

The career pathway offered to FEI Dressage Officials is gradual. It starts with a common core and follows with a progressive specialisation towards the various official functions and their associated levels. FEI Dressage Officials are first listed as Level 1 Officials, (Judge and Steward) and may then complete the requisite training and seek transfer-up to higher-level functions.

National Federations are responsible for the number of Dressage Officials needed in the country to develop the discipline of Dressage. National Federations should designate a Judge and a Steward to oversee the respective National Education Systems.

The National Federation has to submit a written application for a National Official to enter the FEI Education Pathway; this is also valid for National Federations with an Equivalency. The written application has to confirm that the applicant has fulfilled the requirements as set forth in this document. In the Transfer-Up process a National Federation has the right to object to an applicant, with valid reason.

The FEI Dressage Department normally accepts the applicants put forward by the National Federations provided that the requisite criteria are met, and/or unless exceptional circumstances warrant otherwise. Should such a situation arise, the FEI Dressage Department will communicate its concerns directly to the relevant National Federation(s), and consult with them to reach a consensus.

FEI Dressage Officials must maintain up-to-date knowledge of relevant FEI Rules, Regulations and horse welfare matters.

FEI Dressage Officials' competence and performance are regularly evaluated, and their status is reviewed annually by the FEI Dressage Department.

Minimum Requirements for Eligibility to become an FEI Official

For their application to be considered, FEI Dressage Officials must:

- ✓ have an appropriate level of English, both written and spoken
- ✓ be minimum 18 years of age
- ✓ be in good standing with their National Federation
- ✓ be familiar with the FEI General Regulations, FEI Dressage Rules, FEI Veterinary Regulations, and Dressage Handbook
- ✓ accept the applicable Codes and Code of Conduct
- ✓ be formally recommended by their National Federation

National Federations are responsible for informing the FEI Dressage Department of any Official who is not in good standing with the National Federation.

Event Participation

Lists of FEI Dressage Officials are available on the FEI website for the use of Organising Committees and other interested Stakeholders, and are updated on a daily basis. Only FEI Dressage Officials who are current with their status maintenance and report submission obligations will be listed, and may officiate at, or be appointed to FEI events.

FEI Dressage Officials must abide by the applicable Code of Conduct and commit to act according to the principles, Rules and Regulations of the FEI.

FEI Dressage Officials' duties are outlined in their relative job descriptions. However, these documents do not substitute FEI Rules and Regulations.

Level 1 Dressage Judges

Requirements

For National Judges:

- ✓ Be formally recommended by their National Federation
- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of A2 or higher
- ✓ Complete the online Foundation Course for Dressage Officials
- ✓ Have proven experience as an Athlete - Minimum PSG Level
- ✓ Be listed as a National PSG Judge, provide proof of judging at nine (9) national competitions on PSG/Inter I level within the last three (3) years

Education

For National Judges:

- ✓ Complete three (3) Sit-Ins with 3 positive recommendations of min. two (2) different FEI approved MJs. At least two (2) different CDIs. Level PSG/Inter I, min. eight (8) horses each Sit-In
- ✓ Pass two (2) Shadow Judging examinations with different FEI approved MJs in PSG/Inter I; min. eight (8) horses each SJ. Shadow Judgings must be done in the first class on the respective level at the CDI
- ✓ Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins may be done at the same event but the Shadow Judging must be done before any Sit-In. The required Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins have to be completed before the application deadline of the Transfer-up Course
- ✓ Pass a Young Horse Course of 2-3 days
- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up Course of 2-3 days for Level 1 Judges

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

To re-attempt a Transfer-up Course with examination all preceding education activities must be retaken.

For National Judges from NFs with an Equivalency System:

- ✓ Pass a Young Horse Course of 2-3 days
- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up Course for Level 1 Judges

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

To re-attempt a Transfer-up Course with examination all preceding education activities must be retaken.

Status

- ✓ On passing the Level 1 examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 1 Judges in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 1 Judges may take on the following roles at FEI CDI events:

- ✓ Ground Jury Member (Small Tour, Young Rider, Junior, Pony, Children and Young Horses)

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 1 Judges must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course every 3 years (CES) within the previous three (3) years*
- ✓ Have judged as a Level 1 Judge at least at six (6) PSG/Inter I within the previous three (3) years*¹
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 1 Judge at least at three (3) international events** or FEI Challenges (PSG) within the previous three (3) years*¹

*condition not applicable for the initial 3 years of officiating at Level 1.

** one (1) international event can be replaced by a Virtual Judging Seminar

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 1 Judges who fail to officiate at the minimum number of FEI events over a rolling three-year cycle will be required to pass a Maintenance Course within the following year. If not the function will be closed¹. The complete L1 education and course/exam has to be retaken to return to the list.

The function of a Level 1 Judge who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Level 2 Dressage Judges

Requirements

For Level 1 Judges:

- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of A2 or higher*
- ✓ Have been an FEI Level 1 Dressage Judge for at least one (1) year and must have judged a minimum of six (6) CDIs 1*/2* with at least twelve (12) competitions on PSG / Inter I Level

For National Dressage Judges from NFs with an Equivalency:

- ✓ Be formally recommended by their National Federation
- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of A2 or higher*
- ✓ Complete the online Foundation Course for Dressage Officials
- ✓ Pass a Young Horse Course of 2-3 days
- ✓ Have proven experience as an Athlete, provided by the NF - Minimum PSG Level, national or international
- ✓ Be listed as a GP level national Dressage Judge, provide proof of judging at nine (9) national competitions on GP Level within the last three (3) years

Education

For FEI Level 1 Dressage Judges:

- ✓ Complete seven (7) Sit-Ins with positive recommendations with min. five (5) different MJs. Level Inter A/B and or higher; min. eight (8) horses each Sit-In
- ✓ Complete two (2) additional Sit-Ins with positive recommendations, to be done with different MJs in GPFS; min. eight (8) Horses each Sit-In
- ✓ Pass three (3) Shadow Judging examinations with different MJs in GP; min. eight (8) Horses each SJ. Shadow Judgings must be done in the first class on the respective level at the event

Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins may be done at the same event but the Shadow Judging must be done before any Sit-In. The required Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins have to be completed before the application deadline of the Transfer-up Course.

- ✓ pass a Transfer-up course (3 days) for Level 2 Judges

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

To re-attempt a Transfer-up Course with examination all preceding education activities must be retaken.

For National Judges from NFs with an Equivalency System:

- ✓ Complete three (3) Sit-Ins with positive recommendations with three (3) different MJs. Level Inter A/B and or higher; min. eight (8) horses each Sit-In
- ✓ Complete one (1) additional Sit-In with positive recommendation, to be done with an MJ in GPFS; min. eight (8) horses
- ✓ Pass two (2) Shadow Judging examinations with different MJs in GP; min. eight (8) horses each SJ. Shadow Judgings must be done in the first class on the respective level at the event

Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins may be done at the same event but the Shadow Judging must be done before any Sit-In. The required Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins have to be completed before the application deadline of the Transfer-up Course.

- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up course (3 days) for Level 2 Judges

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

To re-attempt a Transfer-up Course with examination all preceding education activities must be retaken.

Status

- ✓ On passing the Level 2 examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 2 Judges in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 2 Judges may take on the following roles at FEI events:

- ✓ Ground Jury Member

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 2 Judges must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course every 3 years (CES)
- ✓ Have judged as a Level 2 Judge at least at six (6) Inter A/B and or higher within the previous three (3) years¹
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 2 Judge at least at six (6) international events** within the previous three (3) years¹

* condition non applicable to Equivalency Officials for the initial 3 years of officiating

** one (1) international event can be replaced by a Virtual Judging Seminar

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 2 Judges who fail to officiate at the minimum number of events over a rolling three-year cycle will be required to attend a Maintenance Course within the following year.¹

The function of a Level 2 Judge who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Level 3 Dressage Judges

Requirements

For Level 2 Judges:

- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of B1 or higher*
- ✓ Have been listed as a FEI Level 2 Judge for a minimum of two (2) years
- ✓ Have acted as a Member of Ground Jury at a minimum of 8 CDI2* and/or above including 12 GP level competitions within the last 3 years prior to application

Education

- ✓ Complete three (3) Sit-Ins with positive recommendations with three (3) different FEI MJs. At least two (2) different CDI events. Levels Inter II, GP U25, GP, GPS; min. eight (8) horses each Sit-In
- ✓ Complete one (1) additional Sit-In with positive recommendation, to be done with an FEI MJ in GPFS; min. eight (8) horses
- ✓ Pass two (2) Shadow Judging examinations with two (2) different FEI MJs in GP; min. eight (8) horses each SJ. Shadow Judgings must be done in the first class on the respective level at the show

Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins may be done at the same event but the Shadow Judging must be done before any Sit-In. The required Shadow Judgings and Sit-Ins have to be completed before the application deadline of the Transfer-up Course.
- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up course (3 days) for Level 3 Judges

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

To re-attempt a Transfer-up Course with examination all preceding education activities must be retaken.

Status

- ✓ On passing the Level 3 examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 3 Judges in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 3 Judges may take on the following roles at FEI CDI events:

- ✓ Ground Jury Member
- ✓ President of the Ground Jury
- ✓ Foreign Judge

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 3 Judges must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course every three (3) years (CES)
- ✓ Have judged as a Level 3 Judge at least at twelve (12) INT A/B and or higher within the previous (3) years¹
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 3 Judge at least at eight (8) international events** within the previous (3) years¹

** two (2) international events can be replaced by two (2) Virtual Judging Seminars

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 3 Judges who fail to officiate at the minimum number of events will be automatically transferred down to Level 2.¹

The function of a Level 3 Judge who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Level 4 Dressage Judges

Requirements

The JSP will propose appropriate prospective Level 4 Judges following an objective evaluation and analysis of the performance and conduct as Level 3 Judges to ensure that the Level 3 Judges who are considered for Transfer-up to Level 4 are judging accurately, are generally consistent with the other Judges' scoring and that there is no indication of nationalistic judging. Judges considered appropriate for proposal to Level 4 will have previously demonstrated professional integrity, honesty and good communication skills to date.

The FEI Level 3 Judges have to:

- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of B2 or higher*
- ✓ Have been listed as an FEI Level 3 Judge for a minimum of three (3) years
- ✓ Be in good standing with the FEI

The following officiating experience has to be achieved within the last 10 years:

- ✓ have officiated at a minimum of 30 competitions at Grand Prix Level at CDIs 4* or above
- ✓ have officiated as PGJ or FJ at a minimum of six (6) CDIs 3* or above
- ✓ two (2) Championships on different levels (World Cup Finals, Young Horse World Breeding Championships, U25 Continental CH, Youth Continental CHs)

Education

- ✓ Pass the Level 4 Judges blended learning programme:
 - the online Level 4 Judges examination(s)
 - an In-Person Course of three (3) days for those who have passed the Level 4 Judges online examination(s)

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

The objective of this interactive course is to enhance the participants' communication and interpersonal skills. This will allow them to officiate at international events more effectively, while ensuring rule compliance and technical requirements at the highest level.

Through theory and action learning, participants will enhance their abilities to look, act and sound calm and confident, achieve greater credibility and project a commanding presence.

Participants will acquire the awareness, motivation and skills to improve their decision-making process and obtain the desired outcomes with less conflict.

Status

On passing the Level 4 final blended learning programme with examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 4 Judges in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 4 Judges may take on the following roles at all FEI Dressage events:

- ✓ Ground Jury Member
- ✓ President of the Ground Jury
- ✓ Foreign Judge

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 4 Judges must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course Level 4 every three (3) years
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 4 Judge at least at fifteen (15) international Grand Prix level competitions within the previous 3 years¹
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 4 Judge at a minimum of eight (8) CDIs 3* and/or above within the previous 3 years¹

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 4 Judges who fail to officiate at the minimum number of events will be automatically transferred down to Level 3¹. The complete Level 4 Requirements and Education have to be retaken to be transferred-up to Level 4.

The function of a Level 4 Judge who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Level 1 Dressage Stewards

Requirements

For National Stewards:

- ✓ Be formally recommended by their National Federation
- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of A2 or higher
- ✓ Complete the online Foundation Course for Dressage Officials

Education

For National Stewards:

- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up Course for Level 1 Stewards

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

For National Stewards from NFs with an Equivalency:

- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up Course for Level 1 Stewards

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

Status

- ✓ On passing the Level 1 examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 1 Stewards in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 1 Stewards may take on the following roles at FEI events:

- ✓ Member of the Stewarding Team

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 1 Stewards must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course every 3 years (CES)
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 1 Steward at least at one (1) international event within three (3) years*¹

*condition not applicable for the initial three (3) years of officiating at Level 1.

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 1 Stewards who fail to officiate at the minimum number of events over a rolling three-year cycle will be required to attend a Maintenance Course within the following year¹.

The function of a Level 1 Steward who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Level 2 Dressage Stewards

Requirements

For Level 1 Stewards:

- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of A2 or higher*
- ✓ Have held the Level 1 status for a minimum of 1 year
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 1 Steward at least at three (3) international events within three (3) years

For National Stewards from NFs with an Equivalency:

- ✓ Be formally recommended by their National Federation
- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of A2 or higher*
- ✓ Complete the online Foundation Course for Dressage Officials
- ✓ Pass the Level 1 Stewards Equivalency Examination

Education

For Level 1 Stewards and National Stewards from NFs with an Equivalency:

- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up Course of three (3) days for Level 2 Stewards

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

Status

- ✓ On passing the Level 2 examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 2 Stewards in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 2 Stewards may take on the following roles at FEI events:

- ✓ Member of the Stewarding Team

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 2 Stewards must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course every 3 years (CES)
- ✓ Have officiated as Level 2 Steward at international Dressage events minimum three (3) times within three (3) years*¹

*condition not applicable to Equivalency Officials for the initial 3 years of officiating.

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 2 Stewards who fail to officiate at the minimum number of events over a rolling three-year cycle will be required to attend a Maintenance Course within the following year¹.

The function of a Level 2 Steward who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Level 3 Dressage Stewards

Requirements

For Level 2 Stewards:

- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of B1 or higher*
- ✓ Have been listed as a FEI Level 2 Dressage Steward for a minimum of three (3) years
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 2 Steward at a minimum of three (3) international Dressage events within the last 3 years

Education

- ✓ Pass a Transfer-up Course for Level 3 Stewards

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

Status

- ✓ On passing the Level 3 examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 3 Stewards in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 3 Stewards may take on the following roles at FEI events:

- ✓ Member of the Stewarding Team
- ✓ Chief Steward at all CDIs/CDIOs/CDI-W qualifiers

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 3 Stewards must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course every three (3) years (CES)
- ✓ Have officiated as a Level 3 Steward at least at three (3) international Dressage events within three (3) years¹

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 3 Stewards who fail to officiate at the minimum number of events will be automatically transferred down to Level 2¹.

The function of a Level 3 Steward who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Level 4 Dressage Stewards

Requirements

For Level 3 Stewards:

- ✓ Achieve an English proficiency grade of B2 or higher*
- ✓ Have been listed as a FEI Level 3 Steward for a minimum of four (4) years
- ✓ Be in good standing with the FEI

The following officiating experience has to be achieved within 10 years of the application:

- ✓ Have officiated as a Chief Steward at a minimum of six (6) CDI3*/CDIO3* or above
- ✓ Have officiated as a Member of the Stewarding Team at a minimum of two (2) Championships.

Education

- ✓ Pass the Level 4 Stewards blended learning programme:
 - the online Level 4 Steward examination(s)
 - an In-Person Course of 3 days for those who have passed the Level 4 Stewards online examination(s)

If an examination is not passed, the Official is given the opportunity of a re-attempt after one year.

The objective of this interactive course is to enhance the participants' communication and interpersonal skills. This will allow them to officiate at international events more effectively, while ensuring rule compliance and technical requirements at the highest level.

Through theory and action learning, participants will enhance their abilities to look, act and sound calm and confident, achieve greater credibility and project a commanding presence.

Participants will acquire the awareness, motivation and skills to improve their decision-making process and obtain the desired outcomes with less conflict.

Status

On passing the Level 4 final blended learning programme with examination(s) and fulfilling all requirements, participants are listed as Level 4 Stewards in the FEI Database

Roles at FEI Events

According to FEI Dressage Rules, Level 4 Stewards may take on the following roles at FEI events:

- ✓ Chief Steward and Overall Chief Steward at all levels of International Competition

Maintenance

To maintain status, Level 4 Stewards must:

- ✓ Pass an Online Assessment every year (CES)
- ✓ Pass a Maintenance Course every three (3) years (CES)
- ✓ Have officiated as a Steward at least at six (6) international events within the last three (3) years¹

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Level 4 Stewards who fail to officiate at the minimum number of events will be automatically transferred down to Level 3¹.

The function of a Level 4 Steward who has not taken the yearly Online Assessment (CES) by 15 December will be closed.

Competency-based Evaluation System (CES)

The Competency-based Evaluation System addresses the following areas:

- ✓ Knowledge of FEI Rules and Regulations (CES)
- ✓ Soft skills in order to interact effectively and harmoniously (CES)
- ✓ Fitness level required to correctly perform all duties relevant to the role (CES)
- ✓ English language proficiency

FEI Officials are required to take an annual Online Assessment (CES) on FEI Campus. Dressage Officials are assessed on their knowledge of FEI Dressage Rules and other relevant Rules and Regulations.

Maintenance

After 15 December of each year, the FEI Dressage Department will review the status of all FEI Dressage Officials to ascertain their compliance with Maintenance requirements. Depending on their level, failure to fulfil the Maintenance requirements will result in either attending a Maintenance Course, a transfer down to one level lower, or a closure of the function.¹

¹ The CES Officiating Review will not be applied, by decision of the FEI Board on 5 June 2024.

Equivalency

The highest national education can be made equivalent to the FEI entry level education. National Federations have the opportunity to apply for Equivalency to the FEI.

The application process for equivalency is as follows:

In order for the FEI Education & Officials department to consider an Equivalency request, National Federations shall provide:

1. their national education system (with a detailed description), including the different levels, entry requirements, criteria to remain listed, practical experience, exit criteria etc.
2. a description of the standard career pathway (national and national to international)
3. an outline of the education contents (curriculum, syllabi, examination types and evaluation criteria, with examples of the standardised education material/content

National Federations need to ensure that their highest level Officials are familiar with the FEI Rules and Regulations, FEI Code of Ethics, FEI Conflict of Interest Policy, FEI Officials' Code of Conduct, FEI Safeguarding Policy against Harassment and Abuse and the FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse.

* English proficiency levels have been adjusted by decision of the FEI Board on 24 September 2024

Annex FEI Education Terminology

The Annex FEI Education Terminology is published [HERE](#).

Annex FEI Education Processes

The Annex FEI Education Processes is published [HERE](#)