KUSA
Kennel Union of Southern Africa

KENNEL UNION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

KUSA BREED JUDGES LEARNING PROGRAMME

STUDY GUIDE #1: PRE-APPLICATION

HOW TO APPLY TO BECOME A BREED JUDGE

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MAKING THE BIG DECISION

It starts as a glimmer of an idea, a murmur of a suggestion, a realisation that evaluating dogs comes relatively easy to you. You start to wonder if you have the elusive "eye for a dog" and you begin exploring the possibility of becoming a breed judge.

Behind you, you have several years of dedicated and intensive experience and you have indulged in extensive research within your area of interest. Is it time to expand your knowledge base and extend your experiential level? Are you ready to become a judge?

Hopefully, your motivation for becoming a judge is healthy and sound. If you're embarking on this life-changing new role, are you wanting to "go out there and prove a point", or do you, perhaps, feel that you can do a far better job than the judges already in the ring? Are you starting to judge because you no longer want to run around the ring as an exhibitor, or do you feel there's nothing else interesting in dogdom to keep you occupied? Are you doing it in order to feed your ego, or do you see it as a ticket to overseas trips? Moving into the role of breed judge with any of these motivations would be a huge mistake – best you abandon the notion before you spend too much time and money proving to yourself and your exhibitors that this role would not be suitable for you.

Not everyone is suited to becoming a breed judge. It usually is, but is not necessarily, a natural progression from exhibiting and breeding, coupled with a desire to give back to the sport in order to guide others. A sincere interest in dogs, together with the desire to build a reputation for integrity and ability, are the motivating forces behind truly successful judges. There is enormous satisfaction in working with a ring full of beautiful dogs and it is at that time that a dedicated judge realises judging is a priviledge to be valued, never taken lightly.

When you apply to the KUSA Breed Judges Learning Programme, you will need to give full motivation for wanting to become a breed judge. *Think about this carefully and in detail.* You'll find there's no single reason for wanting to do this – make a note of them all, and be prepared to discuss your emotional readiness for this task in detail.

Broadening your experience base

It's not just about stepping out of the ring as an exhibitor and back into it as a judge. Experience is built in layers added over time. Become involved in as many aspects of the dog game as you can – there's a wealth of activities that may interest you. You will be serving the community and you will be adding to your experiential base.

How about a bit of Ring Stewarding? Most Clubs are in dire need of people willing to serve as Ring Stewards, so volunteer your services at an Open show, get some experience in this field and move on towards serving at Championship shows. You will be doing compulsory Ring Stewardship modules during the course of your judging studies, but the experience you gain at this level will put you in good stead for your judging studies ahead.

How about serving on a Club committee to experience what it takes to organise a show? Are you a member of a Club, specifically a Specialist or Group Club? Connecting with like-minded enthusiasts is a valuable source of learning and experience.

Read a lot. Buy books and magazines. Get your hands on anything at all related to the breed(s) in which you are interested and any other canine-related topic. You can never do too much reading.

Perhaps you are or were a Child or Junior Handler. As such, you already have a wealth of experience in correct handling procedures and the way in which dogs are presented to their best. Graduating from the handling classes to judging the handling classes and later, the breed classes, is a natural progression for many young handlers.

A very important aspect of developing your 'eye' for a dog lies in breeding quality dogs. Have you bred a litter? From matching pedigrees, considering genetic issues, understanding genotypes and phenotypes, planning and supervising the mating, have you assisted a whelping, raised a litter, selected the potentially

good specimens, followed through to training, preparation, and campaigning; and finished at least one home-bred Champion? Have you had the opportunity to observe and learn which helpless neonate will grow and develop into a fine example of the breed? Have you explored the thrill of improving on the breeding stock? Do you know what makes a Champion?

Being active in the dog community shows that you are interested and committed. It develops your confidence and your knowledge and it improves your credibility.

If you've latched onto the dog game with a fly-by-night winner and you're in it for the glory the dog(s) will bring you; if you believe you're on the edge of fame and fortune and a lot of overseas trips; if you "just want to give judging a go", you've chosen the wrong field for your selfish motivation and its best you leave the game now.

If you've taken the time to develop your interest and involvement in dogs and dog matters; if you are passionate about dogs and see them as an important part of your life; if you want to give service to the community and the sport; if you thirst for more knowledge; if your heart is in the right place and you're 'in it for the duration', you have what it takes to be a judge and, with hard work and dedication, you will likely make a huge success of your endeavours.

Coping with what lies ahead

If done well, judging is hard work – it demands knowledge, stamina and intense concentration. Before you commit yourself to the long road ahead, you ought to consider the following:

Are you **physically** able to cope with:

- standing, bending, walking for hours on end with little, if any, rest
- awkward conditions in the ring such as insufficient shade or poor ground surface
- working for hours without sustenance or refreshment
- being exposed to all weather elements – blazing sun, driving rain, blasting wind
- feeling ill, tired, or in pain
- finishing your assignment within a reasonable time
- travelling great distances, if necessary

Are you **emotionally** able to cope with:

- the responsibility of your decisions and the effect thereof
- the knowledge that everyone at ringside will be watching your every move
- the likelihood that you will be fiercely criticised
- taking control of your ring in a decisive manner
- the reality that you can't please everyone

Are you **socially** able to cope with:

- making completely impartial decisions in the ring
- maintaining dignified behaviour, poise, and self-control during your role as a judge and during unexpected situations
- the need for self-confidence and the courage of your convictions
- avoiding the temptation to indulge in reciprocal arrangements
- earning and maintaining respect in your position as judge
- maintaining mutual respect with every other role-player
- the need to divorce friendships and personal grudges from the task at hand

Are you **cognitively** able to cope with:

- comprehensive study of breed standards and support material
- concentrating carefully for several hours at a stretch
- needing to make decisions quickly and decisively
- supporting your decisions with clearly-presented reasoning
- the need to continue life-long learning

Are you **financially** able to cope with:

- registration and examination fees
- travel and accommodation costs
- additional expenses such as kennelling for your dogs while away, and other household arrangements
- support and research material
- attendance at seminars – perhaps in another city

Reality check

Becoming a breed judge will not secure you an elevation in status and it will not earn you free tickets to a game or a promotion at work. A breed judge is just an ordinary person – not a little god. A judging assignment comprising several hundred exhibits is not a glorious task – it's very hard work.

At a dog show, there are a number of elements that need to be in place = first and foremost are the dogs, followed closely by the exhibitor who paid for your opinion and will present their dogs in anticipation of your learned decisions. After the administrators of the show and the ring stewards who keep the proceedings flowing smoothly, is the judge who is expected to be an expert on the breed(s) and deliver unbiased opinions. A judge is, therefore, just one element in a cohesive event – a sport – a hobby. While the responsibility of serving as a breed judge is enormous, the role is not equivalent to a CEO of a major company, so best you pack away any emerging egos.

The purpose of judging

The core purpose of judging is to participate in the enhancement of breeding pure-bred dogs.

Breed judges, therefore, carry a huge responsibility and need to bear serious intent of purpose and careful preparation and study. What judges do in the ring can have important and long-lasting consequences on the quality of dogs in the future.

Integrity is as important to a judge as is knowledge and experience. A judge must never say or do anything that could raise a question about his or her integrity and impartiality. Judges who lack these essential qualities should not be in the ring.

What do exhibitors expect from dog judges?

Judges should:

- have a thorough understanding of canine conformation and movement
- know and understand breed standards thoroughly
- have a thorough knowledge of KUSA rules and regulations
- behave within the boundaries of good judging etiquette and impartiality
- possess accurate observation skills
- be able to recognise characteristics and identify qualities and shortcomings
- have a clearly-defined silhouette/blueprint in mind understand the elements of type, temperament, balance and soundness
- be able to make a logical analysis
- make value judgments
- describe and synthesise the outcome of judging
- hold the courage of convictions
- possess integrity and a strong ethical base
- practice life-long learning and research

Do you have the courage of your convictions?

Sitting at ringside under your gazebo, with friends and family at hand, it's the easiest thing to participate in a little 'ringside judging' while watching someone else do the judging.

Now, imagine yourself standing alone in the centre of the ring in the role of judge. Your support system is gone and everyone ringside is watching you. It remains a scary realisation no matter how many times you enter the ring! Your comfort zone is going to take a huge knock and there's only one way to prepare yourself – with knowledge. And that's what the Breed Judges Learning Programme is all about.

Your support base

If breed judging is what you want to do, and you feel you have what it takes to follow through and make a success of your endeavours, we welcome you and wish you well in your studies.

At all times, be aware that you will have a strong support system to guide you and help you whenever you need assistance.

Please contact the National Education Council Administrator should you require assistance:

National Education Council - Administrator		
Miss N. Redtenbacher	Email: shnicks@lantic.net	Tel: 083 651 1133

PREPARING TO APPLY

The Kennel Union of Southern Africa has set the following criteria to qualify for entry as a Candidate Judge:

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

An applicant wishing to apply to join the KUSA Breed Judges Learning Programme must meet the following criteria:

a) must be at least 18 years of age
b) must be a permanent resident of South Africa or Namibia
c) must be a member in good standing of the Kennel Union
d) must have a minimum of five (5) years' demonstrated involvement which must include experience in as many of the following as possible:
   - ownership within the immediate family unit or co-ownership of a Kennel Union-registered dog
   - exhibition of a Kennel Union-registered dog to breed Championship
   - exhibition of a Kennel Union-registered dog at Championship level
   - breeding within the immediate family unit or co-breeding of a Kennel Union-registered litter
   - ring stewardship at Championship and/or non-Championship shows
   - membership of a Kennel Union-affiliated breed or group club
   - ringcraft and/or socialisation training
   - club administration, committee work, etc
   - show organisation
   - any other Kennel Union-approved canine activity

Here follows a detailed explanation of these criteria.

a) **must be at least 18 years of age**
In order to apply to become a breed judge, you need to be at least 18 years – self-explanatory.

b) **must be a permanent resident of South Africa or Namibia**
This is self-explanatory for South African or Namibian citizens. This also applies to applicants who have immigrated to South Africa or Namibia who wish to join the KUSA Breed Judges Learning Programme as a first-time judge.

Foreign judges now residing in the KUSA area of jurisdiction who already have judging qualification(s) will be approved as follows.

- He/she will be required to pass Paper 1: Rules and Regulations
- CCs, (CACs) or CACIBs that have been awarded for breeds/groups in their previous country of residence will automatically be accepted in South Africa.
- He/she will be required to register for the KUSA Breed Judges Learning Programme for any other breeds/groups not covered by b) above.

c) **must be a member in good standing of KUSA**
If you've been found guilty of a misdemeanor at a disciplinary hearing, you're in trouble and you can put aside your application until you have served your sentence.

All judges must remain members of KUSA and it is very important that you remain up to date with your annual subscriptions, otherwise you will not be allowed to judge.

d) **must have a minimum of 5 years' demonstrated involvement**
The onus is on you to prove and summarise your experience, which should total at least 5 full years. You need to demonstrate experience is as many of the criteria as possible – this in order to prove that you have a full-rounded grounding in canine-related activities. After all, you cannot expect exhibitors to take your judgement seriously if you've only been involved for a very short time!

- **ownership within the immediate family unit or co-ownership of a Kennel Union-registered dog** You should own or co-own at least one KUSA-registered dog. The dog may be in your name as owner or co-owner, or the dog may be registered to a member or members of your immediate family unit (definition: father, mother, brother, sister, spouse, long-term partner)

- **exhibition of a Kennel Union-registered dog to breed Championship** You should show at least one KUSA-registered dog to its breed Championship, which implies exhibition from the dog's first entry into the ring until the award of the final CC. You must own or co-own the dog within the immediate family unit as defined above. The exhibition of a dog once or twice during its succession to Championship as a part-time handler will not count.

- **exhibition of a Kennel Union-registered dog at Championship level** If you own and exhibit a popular breed where making the dog up as a Champion is a long and difficult process, you will be considered if you can prove sufficient involvement in showing at Championship level with moderate success.

- **breeding within the immediate family unit or co-breeding of a Kennel Union-registered litter** It is strongly advised that a judge needs to have served as a breeder or co-breeder within the immediate family unit (see definition above) of at least one litter in order to experience selection of breeding partners, the animal husbandry involved, and observation of the development from neonate to full-grown adult/Champion.

- **ring stewardship at Championship and/or non-Championship shows** Over and above the ring-stewardship modules you will be expected to complete during the learning programme, it is highly recommended that you also add this type of experience in support of your application.

- **participation in Child, Junior or Open Showmanship competition** Although not a prerequisite, Showmanship competition is a valuable experience. If you would also like to become a Junior Showmanship Judge, this experience will prove invaluable.

- **membership of a KUSA-affiliated breed or group Club** Membership of a breed or group Club and involvement in its activities proves your dedication and interest in show-holding Clubs and their activities, which is recommended.

- **ringcraft and/or socialisation training** Whether you attend these classes as a handler or a trainer, this kind of experience is very valuable, especially in terms of observing how dogs at different maturity and behaviour levels conduct themselves in the ring. It also teaches the learner judge how to spot clever handling tricks that may be used to hide faults.

- **Club administration, committee work, etc** Becoming involved in Club committee work proves your commitment and dedication to dog sport and is a highly recommended contribution to the community.

- **show organisation** Experience gained in organising shows in invaluable and offers insight and understanding in your role as judge when things fall apart.

- **any other Kennel Union-approved canine activity** Experience in any other dog-related activity may also be noted in support of your application.

If you are satisfied that you comfortably meet all the qualifying criteria, you are ready to prepare your application.

APPLICATION

The applicant must gather the following material in support of his/her application:

a) a comprehensive **curriculum vitae** recording the following:

- motivation for wanting to judge
- a summary of involvement in canine activities and achievements

b) a **sponsorship letter** on a club letterhead by the Club Chairman of a KUSA-affiliated breed or group club in support of the applicant's application

c) the completed **application form**

This application, together with all supporting documents must be forwarded to the KUSA Judge's Department.

Here follows a detailed explanation of this procedure.

a) **a comprehensive curriculum vitae recording the following:**
Please avoid the temptation to pad your CV with information irrelevant to your application to become a judge. The interviewers would like to know about all your dog-related experience, but are not interested in more than a brief mention of your personal or work-related matters. You may mention a few of your dogs' major successes, but it is unnecessary and too cumbersome to list every single award.

- **motivation for wanting to judge**
  It is important that you give this requirement plenty of thought. You must know why you want to become a judge and you are likely to have several reasons. Take care to present these clearly and objectively.

- **a summary of involvement in canine activities and achievements**
  Record all dog-related experiences – an important consideration for your eligibility as a breed judge.

b) **a sponsorship letter on a Club letterhead by the Club Chairman of a KUSA-affiliated breed or group Club in support of the applicant's application**
You must obtain a letter of support from a breed or group Club in your area or, if there are no group or breed Clubs in your area, an all-breeds Club. Club secretaries usually know what is required, but you may simply request the Club's approval of your intention to apply to join the learning programme. It must be on a Club letterhead and signed by the Club Chairman.

c) **the completed application form**
If you have not already received the application form, you can download one from the KUSA website, or you may contact the Judges Department at KUSA on (021) 423 9027. Take care to fill in all details properly.

Closing date for the submission of new applications is as follows:

For studies to commence in the first semester of the following year: 15 January

For studies to commence in the second semester: 15 June

AFTER YOUR APPLICATION

The Provincial Breed Judges' Sub-Committee (PBJSC) will receive your application from the KUSA Judge's Department, then the PBJSC will arrange an interview with you.

There is nothing to fear that the interview will resemble a job interview. Instead, it will be relaxed and friendly. The main purpose of the interview is to discuss your dog-related experience and plot out what you can expect in the learning programme.

If your dog-related experience does not meet the stated qualifying criteria, you may be advised to reapply later after you have gained sufficient experience, but if you were careful to meet all requirements before making the application, the interview is most likely to go very smoothly.

An important part of the interview will be your motivation for wanting to become a breed judge, so take care to prepare yourself thoroughly. It's a good idea to make a list of questions about the programme to which you may need further explanation and feel free to indulge in open discussion with the PBJSC members.

Acceptance and registration

If the PBJSC is content that you meet all qualifying criteria, they are likely to approve your application and they will notify the Judges Dept. at the KUSA Office. On the rare occasion that an applicant is not approved, it will come with the advice to gain sufficient experience if still lacking, in which case, you may reapply as soon as all criteria are met.

If your application is successful, the registration fee to KUSA will be due at this point. You can find a current fee list on the KUSA website. On receipt of payment, the application will be confirmed by the KUSA office and the candidate will be allocated a personal number and forwarded all necessary learning material and guidelines.

WHAT LIES AHEAD?

Studies begin

When you have downloaded your study materials from the KUSA site (members portal) you are advised to come to terms with the content as soon as possible. This is also a good time to start building up your reference library with acquisitions of breed-specific and judging books and articles.

Practical Training and Assessment

You will be called upon by the PBJSC to attend a specially-arranged training and assessment workshop. The content of this workshop will include the subject matter that will be tested in the first exam: KUSA Rules and Regulations; Anatomy, Conformation & Movement of Dogs; and Judges Etiquette.

There will be a handler and a dog in attendance, and you will be shown how to approach the dog and how to go over it and observe its movement.

On completion of the workshop, you will be assessed on the subject matter just demonstrated to gauge your readiness to proceed further. This will be a simple quiz where you identify anatomical and parts of the dog and demonstrate how to judge it.

Examination

On the successful completion of the Practical Training and Assessment, you will be allowed to register to sit your first examination, Paper 1, normally held in June or November. To register for the examination, your application form and fee must be submitted to KUSA by the closing dates.

Closing date for registration to write Paper 1:
To write the examination in June: 1 May
To write the examination in November: 1 October

The format of the examination is multiple choice questions in the following three sections:

- KUSA Rules and Regulations (40 marks)
- Anatomy, Conformation & Movement of Dogs (120 marks)
- Ring Management and Etiquette (40 marks)

Paper 1, in total, is worth 200 marks, with a duration of 2 hours. Questions follow a multiple choice format. You will be given comprehensive guidance on how to prepare for this examination to ensure success.

The pass mark for Paper 1 is 70% in each section. If you are successful, you may nominate one breed or one group to study and may register for Level 2 studies in that group/breed. If you are unsuccessful you may register to rewrite the examination. No further correspondence will be entered into once the candidates have been advised of their examination results.

As amended 6 October 2017