

1. All Judges that are on the current SPSBS Panel must be fully paid up Members of the Shetland Pony Stud-Book Society. Subscriptions must be paid in advance by the 1st of December each year. This applies equally to Trainee Judges, Intermediate and Senior Judges. Membership may be Annual, Life, Honorary or Associate, Joint or Family.
2. A judge should remember that it is a great honour to be invited to judge at a show. He/she should reply promptly to the invitation and, having made the commitment, **should honour it.**
3. A judge who feels unable to judge any class in the schedule must inform the show secretary well in advance of the show.
4. A judge should report to the secretary of the show at least half an hour before judging is due to begin.
5. A judge should be neatly and appropriately dressed. A suitable hat must be worn at all affiliated shows.
6. The use of mobile phones is not permitted in the ring while judging is in progress, either by judge, steward or competitor.
7. A judge should avoid meeting exhibitors, their helpers and ponies on the day of the show prior to entering the show ring in which he/she is to judge.
8. Judges must not touch ponies' mouths. During inspection, judges must ask the handler to show the pony's bite.
9. It should be remembered that each competitor pays the same entry fee and therefore merits the courtesy of having his/her pony inspected and placed.
10. No contact should be made between the judge and the spectators during the period when judging begins and ends.
11. A judge must not call any exhibitor by his/her name in the ring and must always remain completely impartial. No social conversation should take place prior to showing or in the ring. Judges must not accept any hospitality from an exhibitor and should avoid staying with a potential exhibitor at shows where they will be judging.
12. Instructions to exhibitors generally should be relayed through the steward of the ring.
13. The SPS-BS seeks to ensure that all its competitions are judged fairly and that there is no bias or favouritism. This is only achievable if owners, exhibitors, riders, handlers and judges observe the following rules, in the spirit in which they are intended.
A judge may not:
 - place in a class a pony which to his/her knowledge has been bred, sold, leased or produced by the judge or his/her immediate family, partner, business partner or employer.
 - place in a class a pony in which he/she has had a financial interest since 1st January of the preceding year.
 - place in a class a stallion by whom he/she has had a mare stunted in that season.
 - judge any rider/handler who has shown in a class a horse/pony owned, produced or trained by him/her since the 1st January of the preceding year.Should a situation arise when such a pony appears, a referee, preferably on the appropriate panel of judges, should be appointed by the show secretary to place the pony in question in its position in the class. If possible, a Judge may not have as their Steward any person who owns a pony, has bred a pony or has any other interest, financial or otherwise, in a pony in the class being judged.
14. If a pony entered in a class is, in the opinion of the judge, unsound, the judge may, at his/her discretion, require the exhibitor to withdraw the pony from that class, subject to the right of the exhibitor to refer the matter to a veterinary surgeon, should one be in attendance. If no vet is available, then the judge's decision on the matter is final.

15. For Health & Safety and Insurance purposes a judge should ensure that all exhibitors remain standing whilst in the ring when showing ponies. **KNEELING IS NOT PERMITTED.**
16. A judge may be accompanied in the ring only by one of the Society's trainee judges or by a person or persons appointed by the show. A judge should not permit a trainee judge for whom he/she has acted as sponsor to officiate alongside him/her.
17. Judges are forbidden to refer to the show catalogue either before or during judging. They are, however, encouraged to carry a schedule, which should be carefully studied, noting the number of rosettes available and any special awards. Also, special attention should be given to the correct procedure for judging the Championships, using the schedule.
18. Judges should acquaint themselves with the ring they will be judging in and arrange to meet their stewards at an appointed time. Before judging commences discuss with your steward the procedure you would like to use while judging, such as where to line up, corner to use for change of rein etc. Also, make sure the rosettes, qualifying cards etc are all accessible for awarding at the end of the class. Whenever possible issue instructions regarding the conduct of the class through your steward. Always thank your steward at the end of the classes.
19. It should be noted that ponies may be shod or unshod.
20. Judges who have been invited to officiate at the Society's Annual Breed Show must not accept invitations to judge similar classes at other shows prior to the Breed Show in the same year e.g. if a Judge is invited to judge a section of In-hand classes at the Breed Show, they may judge ridden classes, if they are qualified to do so, at other shows but not In-hand classes.
21. Judges without an "R" may not judge ridden classes where there are more than two Ridden classes or the best ridden pony is to go forward to an overall Mountain and Moorland Championship, or where the class is a qualifier for Area or National Mountain and Moorland Championships.
22. Be cautious and sensitive in any remarks made after the judging is complete. However, Judges should be open to questions from exhibitors regarding reasons for the placings of their animals but keep your reasons brief, polite and discreet.
23. **You** know that **your** integrity is beyond question - make sure that it is **seen** to be so.
A judge must be totally unbiased and fair. It must also be remembered that it is the **ponies** only that are being judged.
24. Judges should go to the secretary's office before leaving the showground to check on any queries and thank the show committee for its hospitality.
25. All judges must inform the SPSBS Council prior to accepting any engagements to judge abroad, if asked to judge in the capacity of a SPSBS panel judge. Judges are encouraged to take Society rosettes if they are judging for Daughter Stud-Book Societies.
26. All Judges must ensure that the affiliated show has suitable insurance.
27. Stallion badges are required to be worn on the bridles of all entire males, 2 years old and over, for both in-hand and ridden classes.

GENERAL

28. Judges should exercise discretion in accepting invitations to judge the same type of show in the same area in any one year. Judges must not, under normal circumstances, undertake more than six affiliated shows in any calendar year and the shows must be well spaced apart geographically. Having judged at any particular show in the UK, a Judge must not return to that show to judge within a three year period other than in exceptional circumstances, in which case the office must be informed as soon as possible.
29. Judges must not canvass for judging appointments.
30. A judge who judges at a show at which a trainee judge has been accepted should fill in

his/her report promptly, providing as much information as possible. Failure to do this may delay a trainee's progress. Reports should not be discussed with the trainee judge and should give an honest and accurate account of the Senior judge's opinion of the trainee judge as a future panel judge and ambassador of the Society. Reports should be submitted directly to the Society Office. All reports, however, whether qualifying or not, must be returned to Shetland House by the Senior Judge.

31. Judges should ensure they are familiar with the Guidelines for Showing Shetland Ponies printed at the end of these Rules, and be aware that they have the authority to request the removal of any owner/pony who they feel has not complied with the aforementioned Rules.
32. Judges Seminars are arranged by Societies. It is recommended that Judges make every effort to attend these meetings. Current topical issues will be discussed and it is hoped that as many Judges as possible will make use of this facility.

ADDITIONAL RULES FOR INTERMEDIATE JUDGES

33. Judges on the Intermediate Panel should study the foregoing Rules for Senior Panel Judges as many of these will apply.
34. Judges on the Intermediate Panel will automatically, on the 1st of January after completing three years on the Intermediate Judges Panel, move up to the Senior Judges Panel as long as no written substantiated complaints have been received in the SPSBS office.
35. A judge on the Intermediate Panel may not accept an invitation to judge classes on the Society's behalf at the Society Breed Show, the Royal Highland Show or the Royal Welsh Show.
36. A judge on the Intermediate Panel is not permitted to act as an assessor of a trainee judge.

ADDITIONAL RULES FOR TRAINEE JUDGES

37. Trainee judges are requested to study the foregoing Judges' Rules as many points apply (even at this early stage in their judging career).
38. Trainee judges are reminded that they are being assessed not only on their knowledge of ponies, but also their suitability as ambassadors of the Society and should act in a courteous and considerate manner both inside and outside the ring.
39. When arranging an appointment to attend a show as a trainee judge, the trainee should first request permission to do so, not only with the officiating senior judge but also with the show secretary. It must be understood that some shows do not permit trainee judges. The Society Secretary must be notified of shows to be attended once permission has been granted.
40. A trainee should ensure that the Senior judge, with whom he/she has judged a particular show, is given a Trainee Judges Report form and a stamped envelope addressed to the Society Secretary. If an SAE is not provided for the Senior Judge, the report may not count towards the total required. For a report to count towards the total number required, there must be a minimum of three Shetland classes. All reports, however, whether qualifying or not, must be returned to Shetland House by the Senior Judge. **The Show attended must be affiliated to the Society and the Judge on the SPSBS Senior Panel.**
41. A trainee judge must wear a distinguishing red armband, as supplied by the Society, when accompanying a Senior judge in the ring.
42. Trainee judges **must not** attend shows in this capacity alongside a judge who has acted as one of their sponsors or is a close relation.
43. Trainee judges are not permitted to officiate at shows linked to Society sales.
44. Trainee judges should attempt, wherever possible, to attend shows outwith their local area and not with local judges. A maximum of four shows may be undertaken in any one calendar year.

45. Trainee judges should ensure they undertake Shows with as wide a range of classes as possible, covering all heights of ponies up to 42” and all colours.
46. Trainee judges should remember that the senior judge is the official judge, and only the senior judge should direct the steward and exhibitors.
47. Trainee judges should offer their opinions on the ponies only when asked by the senior judge, and not discuss the pony with exhibitors, nor handle the ponies unless instructed to do so by the senior judge.

ADDITIONAL RULES FOR RIDDEN/DRIVEN JUDGES

48. Trainee, Intermediate or Senior Judges may apply to join the Ridden panel by requesting the necessary form from the Office. Prior to applying to join the Driven panel, Judges must first have successfully completed the BDS trainee scheme.
49. The Senior Judge under whom the Trainee Ridden or Driven Judge wishes to probation must either have a relevant “R” or “D” against his/her name on the Society’s Senior Panel list or is a BDS Judge. NPS Mountain & Moorland panel judges, judging at the Performance Show, Malvern, may also take probationers.
50. A minimum of two Shows must be undertaken, with reports submitted by the Senior Judge as detailed in Rule 40. In order that ridden reports qualify, each show must have a minimum of two flat ridden classes.
51. In Ridden classes, Judges should note that ponies must be shown in a suitable bridle.
52. In lead rein classes, ponies must be shown in a suitable snaffle bridle with the reins going directly from the bit to the rider’s hands. The lead rein must be attached to the nose band only.
53. In first ridden classes, ponies must not be cantered except in their individual show.
54. In Ridden classes, Judges should note that 50% of the marks available should be awarded for ride and manners and 50% for conformation and breed type.
55. In the event of a rider falling off, at any time whilst in the ring, the judge must ask the rider to leave the ring immediately, dismounted, and take no further part in that class on the grounds of Health & Safety.
56. Whips or show canes carried must not exceed 30” in length. Spurs may not be worn.
57. Please also refer to the separate additional rules for ridden and driven classes.
58. Ridden and Driven ponies must be 4 years old or over.

Rules for Exhibitors Showing Shetland Ponies

1. **Dress** : must be neat, no training shoes, baseball caps or jeans. Where possible, ladies should wear a collar and tie or blouse with jacket and neat trousers or skirt/kilt. Sensible footwear is essential to allow a pony to be shown effectively. Gentlemen should wear a collar and tie and jacket with neat trousers or a suit or kilt. Hats are not compulsory for either sex but, without doubt, improve the overall picture of pony and handler (and may be compulsory at some Shows). There must be no individual stud, person or pony names displayed **in any way** in the ring e.g. on clothing, rugs, saddle cloths. Whips or show canes carried must not exceed 30” in length. Spurs may not be worn in ridden classes
2. **Ring Etiquette** : the Judge must never be spoken to using his/her name. Listen to instructions provided by the Steward or Judge and watch exhibitors in front of you. When asked to walk/trot a pony out, ensure the pony travels with you - do not drag it along. When turning the pony, push it away from you - do not pull it towards you. **KNEELING IN FRONT OF PONIES IS NOT PERMITTED AT ANY TIME.** Do not ever leave the ring before the end of the class without first gaining the permission of the Judge, through the Steward. Mobile phones are not permitted under any circumstance.

3. **Trimming/Clipping** : the pony's ears may be trimmed flat but there must be no trimming inside the ear. Trimming of whiskers on the jaw line is acceptable. Manes and tails must not be pulled but tails may be rough trimmed to clear the ground if dragging. Leg feathers must not be trimmed. No false hair, artificial colouring or make-up should be used. Working ponies of four years old or over **only** may be clipped in the interest of welfare. Under **no** circumstances should foals be clipped. Ponies should always be shown in a clean condition.
4. **Tack/Equipment** : colts/stallions of two years old or over must be shown bitted and display a stallion bridle disc. Younger animals and older females may be shown in a suitable headcollar. For In-Hand showing, only plain, English-style jointed or straight bar snaffles are permitted. Chifneys or other similar bits are not acceptable. For ridden classes, suitable bridles must be used. In the interests of safety, handlers aged 14 yrs. or under must wear a hard hat when exhibiting in In-hand classes. Hard hats, conforming to current BS standards must be worn, and correctly secured, by all ages of exhibitors in ridden classes. In lead rein classes, ponies must be shown in a suitable snaffle bridle with the reins going directly from the bit to the rider's hands. The lead rein must be attached to the nose band only.
5. **Registration/Eligibility** : in Affiliated Shows – “stallion” classes aged four years or over are open to all entire males. There is **NO** requirement to hold a Licence of any sort. Three year old fillies with foals at foot may not be shown. Foals must be a minimum of three weeks old on the day of the Show. Colts and stallions are not permitted in Young Handlers classes. Children aged under 14 yrs. may not show colts (excluding foals) or entire males in In-hand classes. Children aged under 12 years may not show entire males in ridden classes. Please ensure your pony is correctly registered in your name. **Please ensure that your pony is correctly registered in your name as required by law. If the pony is on loan/lease then that should be lodged in writing with the office.**
6. **Championships** : where a Shetland is eligible to go forward to a Supreme Championship involving other breeds, every effort should be made to attend. This should be considered an honour and a chance to promote and bring the Shetland breed to the attention of others. If you cannot attend a Championship for which you are eligible, please ensure you advise the Show Secretary and/or Steward as soon as possible.
7. **General** : exhibitors should be aware that a judge may not:
 - place in a class a pony which to his/her knowledge has been bred, sold, leased or produced by the judge or his/her immediate family, partner, business partner or employer.
 - place in a class a pony in which he/she has had a financial interest since 1st January of the preceding year.
 - place in a class a stallion by whom he/she has had a mare stunted in that season.
 - judge any rider/handler who has shown in a class a horse/pony owned, produced or trained by him/her since the 1st January of the preceding year.

Should a situation arise when such a pony appears, a referee, preferably on the appropriate panel of judges, should be appointed by the show secretary to place the pony in question in its position in the class. If possible, a Judge may not have as their Steward any person who owns a pony, has bred a pony or has any other interest, financial or otherwise, in a pony in the class being judged.

Failure to comply with the above Rules may result in disciplinary action being taken. Council reserves the right, at its discretion, to remove a judge from its Judges Panel.

THE ABOVE JUDGES' RULES SUPERSEDE PREVIOUS JUDGES GUIDELINES, RENDERING THEM NULL AND VOID FROM THE DATE GIVEN.