

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the process for AAA Judge accreditation and progression, a 5-tier system as follows:

1. Apprentice Judge
2. Accredited Level 3 Judge
3. Accredited Level 2 Judge
4. Accredited Level 1 Judge
5. Senior Judge

The responsibility for progression through the different tiers is a collaboration between Judges and the SJC. Together, turning out world class Judges. Outlined below are the requirements to progress through levels.

It is important that Judges share responsibility with the AAA for training and upscaling that is provided. It is recommended that Judges view as many alpacas and fleeces as possible and speak with the breeders of the alpacas to learn from listening to people who run competent breeding programmes.

Those Judges who show a desire and aptitude in the training area will be supported by the SJC to reach their potential as trainers. The SJC recognises that training people requires different skills than judging and so your level may or may not be relevant to be involved with training.

2. PROGRESSION

2.1. APPRENTICE JUDGES

An Apprentice Judge may be appointed following successful completion at a specified standard at a Judge Intake Programme, which are conducted as needed by the AAA. Candidates will be ranked according to their performance in the Intake Programme and may be appointed as an AAA Apprentice according to the needs of the industry.

Unless special provisions* are put in place, an Apprentice Judge must successfully complete at least five (5) halter show apprenticeships and five (5) fleece show apprenticeships, noting the following:

- A maximum of two halter shows may be completed under the supervision of an Accredited Judge at Levels 2 and 3.
- The final halter show must be completed under the supervision of a Senior Judge.

Assessment Requirements are set out in paragraph 2.6. Extra shows may be required if the Apprentice is deemed not yet fully competent. If the Apprentice is identified as requiring further development in any particular skills area, they will attend an organised workshop or other form of specific training as approved by the SJC Chair to address any identified area for development before re-entering the Apprenticeship programme.

A qualified overseas Judge who wishes to certify as an AAA Accredited Judge, will be required to join the AAA Apprenticeship programme in a form determined by the SJC, which may include special provisions.

*Special provisions may be set from time to time by SJC to cover individual circumstances such as an experienced overseas Judge qualifying for and entering the Australian Apprenticeship programme. These provisions will be determined by taking into consideration the Judge's accreditation and experience in other jurisdictions.

2.2. BECOMING AN ACCREDITED LEVEL 3 JUDGE

After completion of a successful apprenticeship, a new Judge will be appointed as an AAA Accredited Level 3 Judge. A Level 3 Judge must judge their first three of five shows at smaller shows (up to 120 halter entries) to gain necessary solo judging experience and an understanding of timing. Assessment Requirements are set out in paragraph 2.6.

2.3. BECOMING AN ACCREDITED LEVEL 2 JUDGE

Level 3 Judges must have at least 18 months experience at Level 3 and be of good standing. They must have judged a minimum of 5 halter shows and 5 fleece shows at that level before making application to the SJC Chair to progress to Level 2. An upgrade to Level 2 is possible after successfully co-judging two shows with a Level 1 Judge or Senior Judge. Assessment Requirements are set out in paragraph 2.6 and Special Provisions for High Achievement (paragraph 2.7) may apply.

2.4. BECOMING AN ACCREDITED LEVEL 1 JUDGE

Accredited Level 2 Judges must have at least 18 months experience at Level 2 and be of good standing. They must have judged a minimum of 5 halter shows and 3 fleece shows at that level before making application to the SJC Chair to progress to Level 1. An upgrade to Level 1 is possible after successfully co-judging two halter shows and one fleece show with a Level 1 Judge or Senior Judge, where the final halter show must be co-judged with a Senior Judge. Assessment Requirements are set out in paragraph 2.6 and Special Provisions for High Achievement (paragraph 2.7) may apply.

2.5. BECOMING A SENIOR JUDGE

Senior Judge is a position that can be applied for by any Level 1 Judge and renewed every two years by written application to the SJC Chair. A maximum of six Senior Judges may be appointed every two years.

The position of Senior Judge is not seen as a life-long privilege and Level 1 Judges may fluctuate in and out of this position over time depending on their availability and personal circumstances. The Judges who fill these positions will be expected to lead by example, specifically:

- take a leadership role amongst their peers.
- prepare and run training for Judges as required working with other Senior Judges and drawing upon other judge and industry resources.
- mentor and guide fellow Judges and Apprentices.

The Senior Judges will be selected by a panel operating in a confidential manner, consisting of the SJC Chair, a AAA Board member, a Regional President, and an independent and unrelated exhibitor who regularly shows at a high level. The Regional President and the independent exhibitor members of the panel must change every two years as applications are reconsidered. Appointment as a Senior Judge will be based on the following criteria:

- Ability to demonstrate a high level of up to date expertise and consistency as a Judge.
- Ability to demonstrate industry involvement particularly in the area of showing and judging, participation at shows in any capacity for the previous two years.
- Ability to demonstrate an acceptance of responsibility to act as mentor/trainer to other Judges.
- Ability to show leadership within the industry which may include conducting courses or participating in educational events, mentoring, and guiding other breeders.
- Be a member of good standing within the industry as deemed by the panel.
- No period of suspension from judging in the previous two years.

Applications will be received at a nominated date in November every two years commencing in November 2020 and appointments made and advised by the end of December for the following two-year period.

2.6. ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

A passing mark is required for each section as well as the total on the appraisal forms for an Apprentice, a Judge seeking an upgrade to a higher level, or a Judge seeking to return to a previous level following an extended absence, is. The passing marks are as follows:

- 75% or above for Apprentices in the Apprenticeship programme or Judges seeking to return to Level 3.
- 80% or above for Judges seeking to upgrade or return to Level 2.
- 85% or above for Judges seeking to upgrade or return to Level 1.

In all of the above situations, if the relevant show has only entries of one breed, for example there are no suri halter entries or no suri fleece entries, the appraisal form should be modified to remove the relevant assessment categories so that the Apprentice or Judge being assessed is not unfairly penalised. The SJC will tailor the training and an assessment process to ensure the needs of the affected Apprentice or Judge are met.

2.7. SPECIAL PROVISION FOR HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

Where two co-judging appointments are required for an upgrade or returning to a previous level following an extended absence, the upgrading/returning Judge has the option to do only one upgrade providing they achieve:

- 85% or above for Judges seeking to upgrade or return to Level 2.
- 90% or above for Judges seeking to upgrade or return to Level 1.

This special provision does not apply to the assessment of Apprentices, as it is important they gain experience in judging as well as technical competency.

2.8. PROGRESS ASSISTANCE

If the Judge applying to be upgraded at any level does not pass, they are able to consult with the SJC Chair who will liaise with Senior Judges to develop a plan to assist with their progress.

3. MAINTENANCE OF ACCREDITATION

3.1. ANNUAL REQUIREMENT

In a normal show year, all accredited Judges will be required to judge at least two shows in Australia every calendar year to retain currency as an accredited AAA Judge. Provided Judges are regularly nominating for shows the Judge Allocator will ensure that each Judge receives at least two appointments per year. The SJC will consider the implications of abnormal show years on the annual requirement as and when required.

3.2. ABSENCE FROM JUDGING

A Judge who is inactive from judging for up to 18 months must inform the SJC Chair, as soon as becoming aware of their changed circumstances, in writing with details of their circumstances to seek approval for their continued absence from judging. Reasonable personal circumstances will be assessed by the SJC on a case by case basis. Such Judges will be recognised as *Non-Practicing*, meaning they will retain their accreditation and receive all relevant communications and updates, however will not be undertaking judging appointments or training for the period of their leave.

A Non-Practicing AAA Judge must maintain their good standing within the industry, this includes their conduct and compliance with these guidelines. This will be considered when an application to return to judging is assessed by the SJC. Where applicable, the AAA website will include a non-practicing notification to assist convenors with the show planning activities.

If special personal circumstances are not communicated to the SJC Chair by the Judge and 18 months have elapsed since the last judging appointment, the Judge will be deemed to have retired.

3.3. ACTIVITIES WHILST ON LEAVE

A Non-Practicing Judge should not undertake judging appointments as an Accredited AAA Judge for the period of their approved leave, unless exceptional circumstances exist. Exceptional circumstances will be assessed by the SJC on a case by case basis.

3.4. RETURNING TO JUDGING

A Judge who does not meet the annual requirement (paragraph 3.1) for any reason or is recognised as a Non-Practising judge (paragraph 3.2) will:

- if absent for 12 to 18 months, be required to successfully complete two co-judging appointments before applying to the SJC Chair to return to their previous level.
- if absent for 18 months or more, be required to successfully complete two co-judging appointments followed by two solo shows as a Level 3 Judge before applying to the SJC Chair to return to their previous level, if that level is higher than Level 3.

The Assessment Requirement (paragraph 2.6), Special Provision for High Achievement (paragraph 2.7) and Progress Assistance (paragraph 2.8) may apply to these co-judging appointments.

3.5. RETIRED JUDGES

The SJC values the contribution each Judge has given to the AAA, and it is important that when a Judge retires, we do not lose the valuable knowledge and experience they have accumulated. Retired Judges may be invited to assist with mentoring and training when suitable opportunities arise.

3.6. FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP

Financial membership is required to be maintained at the following minimum levels:

- Judge – Full Membership (this requirement will be satisfied by Joint Membership).
- Apprentice – Associate Membership.

4. JUDGING APPOINTMENTS

4.1. AAA NATIONAL SHOW

The AAA National Show halter classes must always be judged by at least one current Senior Australian Judge.

4.2. LARGE SHOWS

Shows with halter entries expected to exceed 200 should only be judged by a Level 1 Judge or Senior Judge. However co-judging opportunities at these larger shows will be encouraged where possible.

4.3. JUDGING AS AN ACCREDITED AAA JUDGE

All judging appointments undertaken as an Accredited AAA Judge should be arranged in consultation with the SJC, including Royal Shows and international shows which are managed outside the AAA.