



**USPC GUIDELINES FOR
CLUB/CENTER-LEVEL TESTINGS:
D-1 THROUGH C-2**

This Guide is designed to assist the local Club, Center and Region in the proper conduct of club/center level Tests for D-1 through C-2. Direct questions to the Instruction Department instruction@ponyclub.org



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Introduction

All certifications are based on the Pony Clubs Standards of Proficiency (SOPs). The SOPs and their related test sheets outline the skills and knowledge required, the test content, and the various types of arenas and areas required at each level, D-1 through A. Only the SOPs themselves define the specific requirements for each level within the specific riding discipline or track. The SOPs also define dress (or refer to a specific discipline rulebook) and equipment required for each level. At each level, the testing must cover all sections required and may not include any other requirements beyond that which are in the SOPs for that level. However, members are responsible for and can be tested on requirements of any previous level achieved. These standards provide a developmental and progressive path that each member can and should pursue at their own individual pace.

It is ESSENTIAL that prior to each scheduled testing, the District Commissioner (“DC”) or Center Administrator (“CA”), the Test Organizer (“TO”) designated by the DC or CA and Examiners review the “USPC Guidelines for Club/Center Level Testings” (“Guidelines”), the current SOPs for the levels/disciplines or tracks being tested, and the test sheets themselves. The most current guidance available, including the SOPs, Test Sheets and Guidelines can be accessed on the USPC website. The Guidelines should be used in conjunction with the Club/Center Level Examiner Handbook for a complete understanding of the certification process and to ensure conduct of a proper, safe and comfortable certification for all members. Familiarity with Testing Guidelines is also very helpful to the Pony Club members and their parents/guardians.

I. PHILOSOPHY

RIDING IS both a sport and a hobby for most of our members. It is something they do to have fun! Horsemanship encompasses both riding, horse care, and stable management. The USPC curriculum, which is reflected in the SOPs, is designed to teach not only the riding or mounted skills to our members, but also the care of the horse and equipment, responsibility, self-reliance, and communication skills. We use the SOPs and the respective tests to provide opportunities for goal setting, to recognize achievement, and to increase enjoyment by encouraging Pony Club members to gain confidence while at the same time, placing them in a safe and appropriate learning environment.

All Pony Club members should be encouraged to progress at a pace and along a certification track that is most comfortable and attainable for them. Pony Club instructors should be very familiar with the SOPs in order to base their instruction program on the clear progression of skills described in the Standards. The members should have the assistance of an older Pony Club member, instructor or knowledgeable adult in preparing for the certification.

II. PURPOSE OF A CERTIFICATION

THE PURPOSE OF A TESTING is to measure and define an individual member's current skill level and to recognize their achievement. The local club/center uses the SOPs as a basic guide or plan for their instructional programs. As a member progresses through the certification levels, the tests themselves should be a positive educational experience. They must be carried out by well qualified and well prepared Examiners in an environment that encourages the member to "show and tell" what he or she knows.

III. POLICY AND GUIDELINES

A. DC OR CA CLUB/CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- The proper administration and conduct of club/center level tests of its USPC members, D-1 through C-2.
 - Clubs and Centers must facilitate a testing opportunity a **minimum of twice a year**. This can be done within the club/center, with another nearby club/center (with the recommendation of their own DC or CA, and the invitation of the DC or CA and Organizer of the club/center conducting the certification), or at a regionally organized certification, (again with the recommendation of the member's own DC/CA). Offering tests more often is absolutely appropriate if the number of members warrants it. **At no level is it appropriate for a member or parent to make arrangements for a testing outside the club/center or region** without full concurrence of their local club DC or center CA and Regional Supervisor (RS).
 - The D-1 test is an exception as it is a **no-fail** test, and further information can be found in section III, B.
- Provide an instruction program and tests that follow USPC Policies, Procedures and Guidelines approved by the Board of Governors of USPC, Inc. Instructional programs should be based on the SOPs, and must include the elements of the Standards; however, club/center instruction **does not** have to be limited by/or guided solely by the USPC Standards of Proficiency.
- Evaluate a member's readiness, with assistance of qualified instructors, older Pony Club members or other qualified adults. The SOPs describe the specific requirements for each level. A Pony Club member is ready for a new certification level if he or she is able to perform ALL the requirements for that certification in a supervised situation. The SOPs can be found on the Pony Club website.
- Use of the "Checklist" is a tool that can be used to assess a member's readiness to test to the new level. The checklist creates an opportunity for both member and instructor to review and learn any riding skills or horse management skills/knowledge for a specific certification level. These Checklists can be found on the Pony Club website and are used along with the current Standards of Proficiency.
- In order to assist members' preparation for testing, it is helpful if they are able to participate in local club/center or regional instructional opportunities.

- DCs, CAs or their designated representatives are responsible for selecting Examiners. (See section III. C, for further discussion)
- The DC or CA must select and contract for a site that is appropriate for the requirements of the testing levels and skills being tested, to include adequate open space, cross-country terrain with obstacles set to a height to meet the requirements of the SOPs. Enclosed covered or outdoor arenas are NOT adequate for testing riding in the open or cross-country sections of the tests. Larger pastures or open fields (mowed, with safe footing), or cross-country courses are appropriate.
- The DC or CA is responsible for selecting and/or approving all the officials present for a testing (or approving of/agreeing to the officials selected if the test is organized by the region or neighboring club/center). These include but are not limited to the Testing Organizer (TO), Examiner(s) and Impartial Observer (“IO”).
- The DC or CA (strongly recommended), or their TO must be present to oversee proceedings and handle any unusual circumstances or conflicts that might disrupt the testing. *DCs/CAs, these are your Pony Club members...know what your Examiners expect of them.* (If a DC or CA’s own child or student is a member being tested, then it may be more helpful to appoint another club/center leader to provide oversight to the test proceedings as well as assigning an Impartial Observer.) As much as possible, be available to answer questions from members and parents, as well as Examiners.
- Post a completed copy of the Emergency Contact Card from the Safety Handbook in a conspicuous location. Complete an Incident Report Form (found on the Safety page on the USPC website) if there are any injuries to members or bystanders during the Testing.
- Provide a completed USPC Certificate purchased from Shopponyclub.org signed at the time of the test completion by the Examiner/s, and DC or CA (can be done ahead of time), recognizing the member’s accomplishment of the new certificate level. Make sure you get the Examiner’s signature on the test sheet **and** the Certificate prior to their departure from the site. It is a very powerful and important experience for the member to receive their certificate immediately upon completion of the test.
- A checklist for organizers is attached as **Addendum A** as a tool for planning and organization.
- **Keep a copy of the Test Sheet in the member’s file and give a copy or original to the member.**

B. SCHEDULING CLUB/CENTER TESTINGS: BELOW IS A TENTATIVE SCHEDULE TO HOW A CLUB OR CENTER MIGHT PREPARE IN ADVANCE FOR A TEST. THIS TIMELINE IS A GUIDELINE ONLY.

Proper and timely scheduling of tests is essential to the overall success of a club/center’s Testing Program. Members can work toward the goal and have a target time frame; and the more notice parents have the better able they are to schedule family availability.

The D-1 test can be conducted at any time, even during a lesson, because it is a no-fail test. The examiner will work through any issues with the member, so the outcome is successful completion of the task listed. The overall goal is to bring our un-certified members forward so they can begin to progress through the levels.

- At the club/center’s earliest meetings of the year, have a tentative schedule of tests to include at least two opportunities for your members during the year. (Example: Spring (April) and Fall (October)). In some regions, the decision may be to group C-1 and/or C-2 tests together and are organized for several or all of the club/centers within the region to participate. Regional officials or club/center officials may organize these tests, but the DC or

CA is still responsible for the preparation and recommendation of the member(s) to attend the testing. It is always recommended that the DC or CA attend a test where one of their members is testing.

- The DC, CA or Testing Organizer should find a test site and required officials at the earliest opportunity. The use of an IO is highly recommended. The IO is formally designated by the DC or CA to serve as the liaison between the members, their support team (parents, guardians, coaches), and the Examiner(s). The IO must not be a parent or instructor, etc. of a Member testing that day. See the Club/Center Level Examiner Handbook and Impartial Observer job description for more information and guidelines regarding the IO. Scribes can also be helpful, especially at C level where tests are longer, and when member(s) are attempting certifications in multiple tracks.
- Not less than 60 days, preferably more, prior to the testing date, the DC or CA and TO should determine the number of members and secure Examiners (one for every three members as a general rule).
- Two weeks prior to the test a general schedule of events should be provided, to include location, directions, and start time. The examiners and TO should collaborate when planning the schedule. Members and their families must be informed of required attire (which is clearly outlined in the SOPs), what to bring, meal arrangements, costs (if any), and all other pertinent information. Supply each member with a copy of the particular SOPs and Test Sheets on which the member will be tested.
- Within 14 days of the test obtain the final schedule from the Examiner and provide it to all members and officials. Recommended time frames by phase for each test level, D-1 through C-2, are included in this guide based on the Eventing track SOPs, Section IX. These times can be adjusted or modified based on the level and type or discipline being examined and number of members. NOTE: It is important to let everyone know in advance that any schedule at a testing is tentative and flexibility must be advised and briefed to the participants. Many things can make one section go faster or slower than expected. Number of members being tested in a group, the behavior of horses, and weather can have an effect on the flow of the schedule. Every reasonable effort must be made to keep the test on track while allowing the member adequate time to demonstrate the skill required, if possible.
- On the day of the test the schedule must begin with a briefing covering all pertinent information about the conduct of the day, to include but not limited to facility issues, introduction of the Examiners and IO, general schedule and flow of events for the day, and other pertinent information. Members and their parents, or support person, should attend. The parents should be advised of a good location from where they can watch, without interfering or interrupting the testing.

C. SELECTING EXAMINERS:

Particularly above the D-3, and sometimes D-2 levels, it is strongly recommended to choose appropriate and knowledgeable Examiners from the local region or neighboring club/center, NOT someone from within your own club/center. Allow your instructors and older, upper-level members to be the mentors and teachers to your members, not their Examiners. Do not select a member's regular instructor, older sibling or parent to test their own children, even if they are qualified Examiners. There is, at a minimum, the appearance of bias when an instructor is judging their own student. Also, choosing someone outside your club/center to be the Examiner better prepares your members for future upper-level certifications, while providing a less biased assessment.

Ensure your selected Examiner(s) has been trained by and apprenticed with an experienced Examiner, attended a Standards and Certifications (S&C) Clinic (within a one to two year window is recommended), and has scribed for or "shadowed" an experienced Examiner, at the levels being tested. You can require attendance at an S&C Clinic, especially for those who have not grown up through, or recently participated in the Pony Club instructional

programs and the certification system, or who have not recently attended an S&C clinic. With the changes and evolution of the SOPs it is important for all Examiners, even USPC graduates, to remain current by attending a Standards and Certifications Clinic and by reviewing all SOPs and test sheets prior to each certification.

More training and information is found on the USPC website, Local Level Testing Resources page. There are many helpful tools for Examiners from the Local Level Examiner Handbook, Best Practices, Examiner Review, Certification and Checklists.

DCs or CAs should network with other DCs or CAs and RSs in the surrounding area to find the best Examiners. Your Regional Instruction Coordinator (“RIC”) is also a good source for qualified Examiners.

Examiners should be familiar with and understand the Basic Balanced Position (BBP), the Standards being tested, test sheets, the Club/Center Level Examiners Handbook and these Guidelines. Ask how *they* interpret a certain skill or requirement to ensure you are “on the same page.”

The DC or CA must ensure that the Examiner selected is capable of recognizing when the member does not meet standards, and that they are able to tell the member when they do not meet standards and WHY. The member, their safety, and the organization as a whole, is poorly served if the Examiner is not capable of turning the member down for the new certificate level when necessary, or is unable to provide clear explanations of why the member has not demonstrated the Standard.

Compensation for the Examiner is at the discretion of the DC or CA and club or center policy, but as a minimum, reimbursement for all travel expenses and appropriate meals during the testing period should be offered. All financial/compensatory arrangements should be agreed upon at the time the Examiner is first scheduled to do the test. Treat Examiners with respect and consideration and provide them with a quiet place to eat lunch and for writing up test sheets. While some Pony Club Examiners may waive compensation, it should not be expected of them.

Discuss with the Examiners any local conditions of which they need to be aware.

Examiners may be adults or active Pony Club members. Using older, ‘upper-level’ Pony Club members as Examiners is particularly successful for the D-level tests, because they generally have a very positive relationship with the elementary-school aged D members. Older Pony Club members from outside your own club/center provide role models for younger members; they are most often the most knowledgeable and current on the Standards; and they prepare the younger members for interaction with the “outside Examiner” they will be meeting in the future. Using the older Pony Club member also provides those older members with the important instructor and leadership opportunity Pony Club offers. Here are a few very important “rules of thumb” to consider when utilizing older and/or upper-level Pony Club members as Examiners:

- An experienced, mature Examiner is necessary for the C level certifications as these are a bridge to the National level tests.
- It becomes increasingly more important to have both a substantial age difference (and real gap in certificate levels between Examiner and Member), as the level being tested increases.
- Ensure proper oversight of Pony Club member Examiners. While it is never appropriate to leave any Examiner, adult or junior, without supervision, it is especially important to ensure that Pony Club member Examiners have the visible support and appropriate guidance of the DC, CA or the TO during the test. A team of Pony Club member Examiners (two or three for a group of 3 or more members), can be very beneficial.

D. CONDUCTING THE TEST - GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Whenever possible, complete the test in one day. If it is necessary to conduct a test over more than one day due to unforeseen weather or footing conditions, all requirements must be completed within one month of the original test date.

The test should be educational, but not deteriorate into a lesson on the topic/skill being addressed and may not go beyond the requirements listed on the SOPs for that certificate level. ALL portions of the Test sheet must be completed, and riding must take place in the areas/venues (i.e., riding in the open, over terrain, etc.) required by the particular Standard of Proficiency being tested in order for the test to be completed.

At subsequent tests members are responsible for, and can be tested on, the requirements of any previous level achieved.

Because D-1 is an introductory level, there should be a “no-fail” approach to the D-1 test. A D-1 test can be done at a regular mounted or unmounted meeting. However, ensure the new member understands and is ready for the testing process and can meet the minimum D-1 SOPs prior to administering the test. The D-1 is now separated into D-1 HM and D-1 Riding and can be taken together or separate.

THE LOWER-LEVEL D TESTINGS (D-1 AND D-2) SHOULD BE A POSITIVE TEACHING/LEARNING EXPERIENCE. Ensure your members have been observed achieving the minimum SOPs of each certificate level so they have real potential to meet standards at these levels. Meeting standards at the D-1 and D-2 levels helps build the confidence of our members. Use of the Checklists (found on the Pony Club website) and having a very knowledgeable and personable instructor reviewing the members’ readiness prior to testing provides the correct atmosphere for a successful testing day.

Multiple D level tests may be taken on a single day. This is most often recommended or done for older joining or re-joining members who have more advanced skills and knowledge levels at the time they become members. We want to make their transition to Pony Club a smooth and positive one, thus facilitating rapid advancement, and greater interaction with their own age and skill peer group. A new Pony Club member, unless quite mature and both knowledgeable and skilled, be tested no higher than the D-3 level (depending on age and skill levels) in a single day, so that he or she can gain a broad experience of Pony Club and a grasp of the Horse Management knowledge required up to the D-3 level.

AT THE C-1 AND C-2 LEVELS, ONLY ONE TEST SHOULD BE TAKEN AT A SINGLE TESTING/ON A SINGLE TESTING DAY IF ALL SECTIONS OF BOTH HORSE MANAGEMENT AND MOUNTED REQUIREMENTS OF THAT LEVEL ARE TO BE TESTED. An appropriate and thorough testing at the C level is tiring to both mount and member which discourages multiple tests in that day.

The C-1 and C-2 Certificate levels are more in depth than the D levels, and the requirement exists for the member to demonstrate more independence and self-reliance in the testing environment. It is important that DCs or CAs select experienced, well-trained Examiners for these levels so any member that moves on to the National levels is prepared properly to do so.

Be sure that Examiners, members, parents, and other spectators understand that there will be no unauthorized assistance, misuse of equipment, carelessness while working with horses or ponies, or unsportsmanlike behavior. Members are expected to show courtesy to one another, to Examiners, and to their mounts. Unauthorized assistance includes but is not limited to those individuals not being tested providing answers to the members while they are interacting with the Examiners, or assistance or coaching once the test has begun. Assistance can be given in such areas as holding horses while being wrapped or the member is setting a course, and for providing water to

riders. This is best done by a Pony Club buddy or helper that comes to the test, or other neutral party, rather than a parent. If in doubt whether an action is or is not unauthorized assistance at any time during the certification day, the IO should be consulted, and they will assist with the matter.

All members, but especially lower-level Ds, need a relaxed test atmosphere for the oral portions of the test. Oral questioning can take place in a quiet room or under a tree, although many questions can be asked while the horse is present and the Pony Club member can demonstrate skills.

Organizers and Examiners should be prepared to adjust to different conditions that may exist at the time of a testing. Under no circumstances should children be kept mounted for long periods; riders should dismount or take breaks, if appropriate due to extreme temperatures, while others are performing individual skills. There should always be plenty of water readily available for both riders and horses both at the ring and in the barn.

Provide lunch and refreshments for the Examiners and other officials, and fluids for members and their mounts. Inform parents of meal arrangements for members prior to testing.

Make sure, after the test, that the landowner (and anyone else involved) was thanked and the property left as it was found or better.

- E. **The following page is the Pony Club Chart of Learning. This is also found online with a Progression Chart of how to move through the various levels and tracks in Pony Club.**

Pony Club Chart of Learning

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Member Certifications will always include their highest Horse Management (HM) earned first, followed by the highest certification(s) earned in any riding discipline (Eventing, Dressage, Hunter Seat Equitation, Show Jumping, and Western). Example: Sally Sicklehock – H-B HM, C-2 EV, B DR, C-1 HSE, D-3 WST

Local Level Certifications - Progression begins at the D-1 (which is a no-fail test) with members moving through the Standards in the desired track (HM, EV, DR, HSE, WST) to the C-2 level. Movement from one riding discipline level to another is acceptable when it is to the SAME certification level, see example below. Certifications cannot be awarded until the Horse Management for that level is passed. Contact your DC/CA to arrange for any certifications.

HORSE MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS (HM)	RIDING CERTIFICATIONS (EV, DR, HSE, WST)	NOTES
D-1	D-1	<p>Horse Management begins at the D-1 and can be continued up through the H-A level.</p> <p>D-1 is not specific to any discipline but the same for all English or Western. It is a <i>no-fail test</i>.</p> <p>Eventing-D-2 through C-2: This is the only discipline where the Flat and Jumping may be tested all at one time or individually. Flat must precede Jumping test. Both Flat and Jumping must be completed before moving up a certification level.</p> <p>Dressage, Hunter Seat Equitation, and Western D-2 through C-2: HM may be tested separately, but all riding sections must be tested together.</p> <p>Example of switching from one track (discipline) to another: D-2 HSE member wants to switch to the EV track. To do so they need to take the D-2 EV riding tests (they already have their D-2 HM) and then proceed to the D-3 when ready. They could take the D-2 and D-3 EV riding tests all at one time if they are ready.</p>
D-2	D-2	
D-3	D-3	
C-1	C-1	
C-2	C-2	

National Level Certifications - Progression begins at either the H-B Horse Management or the C-3 Riding. Movement from one riding discipline level to another is acceptable when it is to the SAME certification level, see certification FAQ's, with the exception that C-2 Eventing members may test into the C-3 of either (EV, DR, or SJ). C-2 Hunter Seat Equitation members flow into Showing Jumping. ONLY Eventing C-3, B, A members may register to split the certification into two different tests (Phase 1 & 2). See certification FAQ's for more detailed information on Eventing phase testing. Apply online at www.ponyclub.org

HORSE MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATIONS (HM)	RIDING CERTIFICATIONS (EV, DR, SJ)
H-B First national level certification must be 13 years old to apply.	
	<p>C-3</p> <p>Members must be 13 years old to apply for the C-3. They may take the C-3 test prior to taking the H-B test.</p>
	<p>B</p> <p>Minimum age for the B is 14 years old and must have earned their H-B.</p>
H-A Highest HM level offered in Pony Club. Must be 16 years old and can apply any time after they have earned their H-B Certification.	<p>A</p> <p>Members can take their A test prior to their H-A. Minimum age is 16 to apply.</p>

F. SHARING OF MOUNTS AND USE OF MULTIPLE MOUNTS:

- **All Pony Club members should be tested riding a safe and reliable mount.** Any member's, their parent's, DC's or CA's concerns about a particular horse or pony should be discussed with the DC, CA, TO or the Examiner well before the test. If a mount is deemed to be unsafe by the TO, DC, CA or Examiner on site during the test, and is posing immediate danger to the rider or others, the person in charge (normally the DC, CA or TO on site with the concurrence of the Examiner) must stop the member's testing immediately.
- While not recommended, the sharing of suitable mounts for a certification is allowed at the D-1 through D-3 level. However, sharing should only be permitted if the member testing:
 1. Is familiar with the mount and has ridden it prior to the certification, successfully and safely at the level being evaluated.
 2. Informs the TO (who informs the examiners) of the "shared mount" prior to the test day in order to accommodate the mount's condition and the test schedule. As the safety of horses and riders is paramount, if Examiners determine any mount's condition or other circumstances preclude a mount's continued participation in the testing, they may indicate the member(s) in question must withdraw from the test.
- C-1 and C-2 members may share a horse if they meet the above criteria and additionally are only testing for the:
 1. Riding on the Flat of the Eventing Certification
 2. Jumping portions only of the Eventing Certification
 3. Dressage C-1 or C-2 Certification
- It is suggested that if the testing is split into multiple days, consideration be given to offering the Riding on the Flat on one day and the Riding over Fences and Riding in the Open (Jumping portions) on a separate day. All of this is to protect the mount from overuse on any given day. Failure to follow these guidelines will make it difficult for the member to meet the Standards.
- Members may bring their own, borrowed, leased or rented mount(s) to a certification or retest. Members may bring more than one mount to use at a certification. The care of each mount is solely the member's responsibility.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXAMINERS

EXAMINERS MUST READ AND BE KNOWLEDGEABLE OF THE SOPS AND TEST SHEETS FOR THE LEVELS BEING EXAMINED, THE CONTENTS OF THESE GUIDELINES, AND BE FAMILIAR WITH THE EXAMINER HANDBOOK, MANUALS AND TEXTS STUDIED BY MEMBERS.

The Examiner should be sensitive to young people, and able to conduct the test in a positive, educational framework. Attendance at a local USPC Standards and Certifications Clinic, whenever possible, is highly recommended, and may be required by the DC or CA of the member's club/center.

The Examiner must be:

- Capable of knowing what meets Standards and what does not,
- Know how to encourage improvement,

- Know how to tell a member when they do not meet Standards, and
- Be able to explain why a member did not meet Standards.

The Examiner must avoid making comments about readiness to take future tests beyond the one being tested on that day. Even if a member exceeds Standards, THE EXAMINER SHOULD NOT MAKE A STATEMENT REGARDING THEIR ABILITY TO PASS A FUTURE TEST.

Certifications can be stressful for members (and their parents), and Examiners should empathize with members' diverse personalities. The Examiner should set the tone of the test as a learning situation, drawing the best from each member, but must not turn the situation into a "lesson."

Outgoing, confident members should not be allowed to intimidate those who are less confident or shy; rather, each member must be encouraged to demonstrate what he or she *does* know. Ensure the testing atmosphere does not turn into a competition between members. Control the discussion so very shy members have the opportunity to tell/show what they know without the more outgoing child providing the obvious answers, leaving the quiet child without a response or few alternative answers (although they may have known all the answers already provided). The Examiner must not put a member in a position to have to exceed Standards in order to answer the question. No member is required at any time to exceed Standards

The Examiner should request details about the facility and equipment available. If a disability exists that limits performance, but the member can ride safely and still MEET the requirements of the Standard, he or she should pass the test.

There is a range from ADEQUATE (Meets Standards) TO SUPERIOR (Exceeds Standards), and anyone within that range should pass the certification.

The Examiners must ensure they have all necessary equipment, SOPs, and Test Sheets with them and information about the facility prior to starting the test.

Oral examination or demonstration must be used for the Horse Management sections at all certificate levels. Orals should be conducted on a one-to-one basis or in very small groups of two or three at the D and C levels. Care must be taken to see that members are afforded every opportunity to express what they know, thereby gaining confidence in a testing situation. *This is a time for the members to show what they know, not the Examiner!* Care must be taken to allow the quieter/shy child to demonstrate knowledge, and not be expected to exceed Standards in order to answer a question already addressed by others in a small group. Rotating through your members, each giving a portion of the answer is an effective approach. Do not always call on the same individual to answer first or last.

For testing jumping skills and riding in the open (when required by the SOP being tested):

- Examiners must know what jump equipment will be made available, how large the arena or jump space is, and have jump courses in mind or ensure they will be set. The Examiner must inspect any courses already set, measuring jumps used to ensure they are within Standards. Refer to the SOPs for required distances, dimensions & sample course maps.
- The Examiner must have a tape measure, check all striding, and check jump heights to insure they meet the SOPs being tested.
- The Examiner should have a stopwatch, know how to use it and how to measure pace before the start of the test.
- At the club/center level tests D-1 through C-2, Examiners must adjust the striding of ground poles, the grid, combinations, and related distances on course to meet the striding of the mount being used and may not

require/expect the member to adjust their mount's stride to the course or grid already set. The Examiner may need to organize the members' order of go to maximize each setting before changing it for the next mount(s).

- The Examiner must provide adequate warm-up and lower warm-up fences, prior to requiring jumping to height, both in the arena and in the open.
- Examiners must inspect the terrain to be covered in the open and measure jump heights prior to proceeding on course to ensure the course is safe. All obstacles on the cross-country course should be at required heights (as close as possible) according to the requirements of the SOP being tested, but not exceed the Standards. Lower warm-up fences may be taken first.

Although Examiners may suggest a particular exercise as an explanation or aid to perform to Standard better, **ONLY THE REQUIREMENTS LISTED ON THE TEST SHEET MAY BE TESTED.**

Examiners must complete Test Sheets prior to leaving the test site, complete with clear and descriptive written comments, especially for those sections where the member did not meet the Standards (DNMS). Comments should be specific and encouraging, with suggestions for correcting any problems. Even when a member does not meet the Standard, the Examiner's comments should be as positive and encouraging as possible.

Members must be notified by the Examiners, individually of test results to avoid uncomfortable situations among members, parents and Examiners. In addition to continuous feedback during a test, the Examiner should give a complete critique with each member following the test, with parents invited to listen IF THE MEMBER AGREES.

Examiners must dress appropriately, either in appropriately clean casual riding attire, which consists of a shirt with collar and sleeves, tucked in with a belt, and boots shined, or in appropriate paddock boots, khakis or slacks, shirt with collar and sleeves, and tucked in, with a belt (if pants have belt loops). Examiners must keep in mind they are representing Pony Club Standards as much as the member is expected to. The Examiner must not use profanity, or slang that could be found offensive to the members or their parents.

V. EXPANDED INFORMATION ON TESTING NEW AND CONTINUING MEMBERS

Sometimes, although rare, a member who achieved the D-1 while young, is unable to test again in a timely manner due to a number of possible reasons which could include lameness or illness of their own horse, or moving to a new state or town, or a period of time away from Pony Club though still riding, etc., which has prevented their participation in a normal testing cycle. If the member is later ready to test both D-2 and D-3, this is possible at the next certification. Again, DCs and CAs want to facilitate growth and achievement for the members where and when they are ready, and possibilities exist.

It is important for DCs and CAs to be honest with both the member and parent when they *and* their instructor or other valid evaluators, feel the member is in fact not ready to be successful at the next certification level(s). Resisting the temptation to "push" a child is difficult for most parents at some point, and the DC or CA is responsible to insure "safety first", at all times. However, if the member and parent are intent on testing, as long as it does not pose an immediate safety hazard, it is recommended that the DC or CA allow the member to test.

VI. RIDING GROUPS AND USE OF MULTIPLE EXAMINERS

The ratio of Examiner to member, especially at the lowest test levels of D-1 and D-2, is very dependent on the age of your members and the Examiner's experience. One Examiner to every one or two members if very young is appropriate. Not allowing the riding group to be more than four (with two or three Examiners) with members of a very young age promotes safety.

A ratio of 1 Examiner to every 3 to 4 members is a rule of thumb, beyond the youngest members. However, it is preferable for up to 6, (or even 8 members at the C levels) to ride together while all 2 or 3 assigned Examiners work together testing these members. The Examiners should confer on the members and their performance of the required skills. This helps the Examiners see the relative success of the members to determine which of them meet Standards and which of them do not meet Standards. Each Examiner brings their own observations to the analyses of the members' performances. Riding with others also provides the members (and their families) with a better understanding of their performance relative to the Standards. The Examiners come to a consensus of each individual member's performance. Finally, it helps the parents understand their own child's performance relative to the group, and helps prevent the perception, of "the easy" versus "the hard" Examiner if the members were in 2 or 3 separate testing groups with only one Examiner. (This is especially true when you have two or more of the same level tests going on independently of each other with just one Examiner each, at the same facility, at the same time.)

VII. RE-TESTING SECTIONS OF A TEST

For only D-2 and above, if a member does not meet Standards (DNMS) in any part of one (or more) section(s) of the test (the number of un-mounted and mounted sections allowed for re-testing is specifically designated on each test sheet at each certification level), re-testing on these blocks may be appropriate. The allowed number of blocks to be re-tested is stated on each test sheet, and re-testing is strictly limited to that number.

- Members must arrange for retests through their DC/CA.
- A member may retest only if the member qualifies for a retest by passing the minimum number of sections stated on the test sheet.
- Those testing during the current year have until December 1st of the following year to complete retests.

The DC or CA must maintain accountability and control of the test sheet, until the certification is complete. Normally, any test or re-test must take place within the Pony Club member's own Region. It is important that DCs, CAs or Instructors do not provide unnecessary roadblocks or obstacles to the availability of re-testing opportunities. We want to facilitate growth and success when possible.

VIII. TESTING OPPORTUNITIES: SUGGESTION FOR SUCCESS

There are numerous ways for clubs/centers and DC/CAs to offer multiple tests within the year, and still have adequate numbers of members to demonstrate group riding in the open, and group teaching at the C Levels. Club/centers within a Region can get together to hold multiple tests. This ensures greater numbers attending the tests and more opportunities for their members to have a workable date to test. Also, members from one club/center can test at another club/center's

certification, or regions can assist their club/centers' DC/CAs by helping to organize Regional tests. Note that DC/CAs are still responsible for recommending their members to attend a test, and the DC/CA should be present, even if hosted by another club/center. In principle, it is still the DC/CA's responsibility to ensure the location and conduct of the test is in accordance with the requirements in the SOPs, and the DC/CA must still sign the member's Certificate. Increased opportunities to test provide more possibilities for success and growth for our Pony Club members.

IX. GENERAL/RECOMMENDED TIME FRAMES FOR D-1 TO C-2 TESTS THAT INCLUDE ALL SECTIONS OF HM, FLAT AND JUMPING*

Groups of 2-3 per Examiner

*D-1	D-2 & D-3 level:
½ to 1 hours riding	1 ½-2 hours riding
1 hour un-mounted	2 hours un-mounted

** The D-1 is a no-fail test so a member either meets or exceeds standards, there are NO retest for the D-1. This test can simply be done at an unmounted or mounted meeting.*

C-1 level:	C-2 level:
2-2 ½ hours riding	2 ½ -3 hours riding
2-2 ½ hours un-mounted	2-2 ½ hours un-mounted

The D-2 to C-2 Tests which include all un-mounted and mounted sections are used in the development of this schedule and can be used as an example from which a modified schedule can be developed for any alternate progression certification track. Times do not include breaks and tack changes, Examiners finishing paperwork, conducting the initial meeting, and briefing members on results. Unforeseen events, weather or difficulties with mounts can also affect the ability to stay on schedule.

Generally speaking, a workable schedule is as follows (again, using the complete D-2 to C-2 Tests as a general guideline):

- Turnout/Inspection (questions such as parts of the horse, tack, conformation, shoeing, etc., may be asked at this time, as long as it is not too long and the horse behaves).
- Horse Management (D Levels hands on: saddling, grooming, etc.).
- Flat riding phase
- Break/Lunch (also for possible tack change, watering horses, etc. at C levels)
- Grid work and jumping or further flat work
- Riding in the open (D-2 and up)

- Cooling out
- Break/Lunch (in the case of C Levels)
- Other Horse Management skills (hands-on) followed by remaining Oral Questioning (Parents can be used to watch horses if tied to trailers rather than stabled)
- Complete paperwork and provide results

X. TEST SITE REQUIREMENTS

Test site requirements are driven by the requirements of the SOPs and related Test Sheets being tested. Read the requirements of the test and Standards carefully to ensure your site meets the requirements for space, terrain and equipment required.

XI. REQUIRED MEMBER ATTIRE & EQUIPMENT

All required equipment and attire is described in the SOPs for each certificate level and the accompanying guidance for the specific discipline. This Guide does not supersede any requirements set forth in the SOPs. Be sure members have read the SOPs carefully and understand the attire and equipment needed for their testing.

XII. DIMENSIONS OF FENCES

Each of the SOPs provides a chart with the appropriate and required dimensions for jumps and grids to be used during the test. Always refer to the SOP and Test Sheets to ensure you are testing to Standard. Although striding distances can be adjusted to suit the size and stride of the horse being ridden, the required heights for the Certificate Level must be jumped by the member during the test. If the mount brought to the test is not capable of the required heights on that day, the member may not complete/be successful at that certificate level on that day.

XIII. SAMPLE JUMPING COURSES FOR D-2 THROUGH C-2

Please see the grids and charts in SOPs. Sample course maps can be found on the website.

D-2 Level Requirements and Sample Courses

Uncomplicated course with generous sweeping turns in enclosed area

4-5 obstacles, 18" maximum, with ground-lines if a vertical other than small log used

(No oxer or in-and-out combinations requiring correct striding)

Trotting permissible

D-3 Level Requirements and Sample Courses

Small gymnastic grid to be set in accordance with the Chart "**Over Fences D-3 Level**" provided on last page of SOPs for D-Levels

Simple hunter type course with no difficult turns, with changes of direction across the diagonal

Course to be set in an enclosed or contained area

5-7 obstacles, **majority of fences should be set at, but not exceeding 2'3"**. Related distances of three or more strides (distances to be adjusted for individual horse's or pony's stride).

All jumps to have ground-lines, with one oxer (graduated only) on course

No single stride, bounce or two stride combinations

C-1 Level Requirements and Sample Courses

Small gymnastic grid to be set in accordance with the Chart "**Over Fences C-1 Level**" provided in the SOPs for C-1/C-2 Levels

Course to be set in an enclosed or contained area providing some related distances and smooth bending lines

6-8 obstacles, **majority of fences to be set at, but not exceeding 2'9"** with 2-3 oxers (must be graduated), and one 2 stride combination, (vertical must come first).

No bounce or 1-stride combinations

C-2 Level Requirements

Gymnastic Jumping Grid to be set in accordance with the Chart "**Over Fences C-2 Level**" provided in the SOPs for C-1/C-2 Levels

Slightly more difficult turns, related distances; bending lines

Enclosed area recommended

7-9 obstacles, **majority of fences to be set at, but not exceeding 3'**.

2-3 oxers (may be 1-stride), not part of combination; may be in line if enough room

XIV. WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Regional and Club or Center leadership throughout the country must work to ensure that all tests are recognized as important and vital to the USPC goal of developing well-rounded, capable horsemen. These Guidelines and the documents they support (the Standards of Proficiency for each level and the supporting Test Sheets), are the core elements of the Pony Club Instructional Program and should be read carefully by all those involved with Pony Club instruction and testing.

Please contact the local club/center leader or Regional Instruction Coordinator or Regional Supervisor for local level tests issues/concerns. For all other questions/issues please contact the Instruction Department at the national office, Instruction@ponyclub.org, 859-254-7669.

APPENDIX A

D-1—C-2 TESTING ORGANIZER’S CHECKLIST

6 MONTHS IN ADVANCE

Schedule at least 2 tests for the upcoming year #1 _____ #2 _____

3 – 6 MONTHS IN ADVANCE

Arrange for test site Location: _____ Cost: \$ _____

Date secured _____

Weather options _____

Insured through PC? Yes _____

Meets testing criteria? e.g., fenced in, footing, enough jumps, suitable cross-country (if applicable).

Notes: _____

Medical facility nearby Yes _____ (PH) _____ ----- _____

Trailer parking Yes _____/No _____

Hire Examiner Examiner #1: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Food Allergies/Preferences: _____

Examiner #2: _____ Fee: \$ _____

Food Allergies/Preferences: _____

Impartial Observer Assigned Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Scribe Assigned Name: _____

Phone #: _____

APPENDIX A

60 DAYS IN ADVANCE

- Determine # of members D-1 ____; D-2 ____; D-3 ____; C-1 ____; C-2 ____

- Provide date, facility, food, required equipment and attire information to members, families and officials

30 DAYS IN ADVANCE

- Obtain tentative schedule from Examiner

14 DAYS IN ADVANCE

- Final Schedule distributed to members, families, and officials

DAY OF TEST

- Test sheets on hand
- Certificates on hand