

The D1 - C2 Program Committee has been hard at work reviewing and updating the Guidelines for Club Level (D1 - C2) Ratings. Below is a link to the latest version of this document. Please take the time to look over this draft version and offer your comments, questions or suggestions. Remember, this is a DRAFT VERSION and not in final format. All feedback should be sent to instruction@ponyclub.org no later than November 1st.

USPC GUIDELINES FOR CLUB RATINGS: D-1 THROUGH C-2 2009

Introduction

The Standards of Proficiency (SOPs) provide the core curriculum for instruction for young riders and horse enthusiasts in Pony Club. The Standards of Proficiency and their related Test Sheets outline the skills and knowledge required, the test format, and the various types of venues required at each Rating Level (D-1 through A, Traditional, Show Jumping or Dressage), in order for a member to be awarded that rating. The ratings themselves are based solely on the material, skills, requirements and knowledge outlined in these SOPs. At each level, the rating must cover **all sections** of each rating level test sheet, but may not include any other requirement beyond that which is in the Standards of Proficiency for the applicable level. These Standards provide a developmental and progressive path that each member can and should pursue at their own individual pace. **Prior to each testing, the DC and Examiners should review these guidelines to insure conduct of a proper, safe and comfortable rating for all candidates. Familiarity with this Guide is very helpful to members and parents/guardians as well and should be used in conjunction with the “Examiner Handbook” ([add hyperlink](#)).**

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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 the riding and the horse care and management. The USPC curriculum, which is reflected in the Standards of Proficiency is designed to teach the care of horse and equipment, responsibility and self reliance, communication skills, and understanding of the physical and mechanical functions of horse and rider, as well as the mounted skills. We use the Standards of Proficiency and the respective ratings 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 rating track that is most comfortable for them.** Pony Club instructors should be very familiar with the Standards of Proficiency in order to base their instruction program on the clear progression of skills described in the Standards. The candidates should have the assistance of an older Pony Club member, instructor or knowledgeable adult in preparing for the rating test.

II. PURPOSE

THE PURPOSE OF A RATING TEST is to measure and define an individual member's current skill level and to recognize achievement. Pony Clubs use the Standards of Proficiency as a plan for instruction programs, as well as a measurement of the club or region's instruction programs. As a member progresses through the rating levels, the rating 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 candidate to "show and tell" what he or she knows.**

III. POLICY AND GUIDELINES

A. DC/ CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

The proper administration and conduct of club level testing/rating of its USPC members, D-1 through C-2.

Insuring the instruction program and ratings for club members follow USPC Policies, Procedures and Guidelines as approved by the Board of Governors of USPC, Inc.

Provide instruction programs based on the Standards of Proficiency, however club instruction does not have to be limited by the Standards.

Evaluate a member's readiness to rate, with assistance of qualified instructors, older pony club members or other qualified adults. The Standards of Proficiency describe the specific requirements for each level. A Pony Club member is ready for a rating

test if he or she is able to perform **all** the requirements for that level in a **supervised situation**.

It is required to offer Club Level Rating Tests at the D-1 through C-2 levels to all members at least twice a year. This can be within the club, with another nearby club (*with the recommendation of their own DC, and the invitation of the DC or Organizer of the rating club*), or at a regionally organized rating, (*again with the recommendation of the member's DC*). Offering tests more often is absolutely appropriate if the number of candidates warrants it. **At no level is it appropriate for a candidate or parent to make arrangements for a testing outside the Club or Region** without full concurrence of their local club DC or Regional Supervisor (RS).

In order to assist members' preparation to rate, the rating candidates should have a good attendance record at the local club or regional instructional opportunities. Local club or regional leaders may determine their own attendance policies for the upcoming year, usually determined and announced in conjunction with their annual sponsors meetings. It is important, however, that local club and regional attendance and/or participation policies facilitate the candidates' ability to progress and meet club requirements within the context of their academic requirements and in recognition of the social or economic norms of the club or region.

A useful tool for candidates and club leaders is the ratings "Flow Chart." This is a matrix listing the individual skills required for each rating level and provides space for instructors or other observers to indicate their assessment of the readiness of each member to achieve the next rating. These assessments can be done both within or external to the club or region instruction, depending on club or region expectations.

Although DCs have the authority to conduct club level rating tests personally--or designate a club instructor to conduct the tests—the USPC Instruction Council strongly recommends against this practice above the D1 and D2 level. Certainly it is often most comfortable for the elementary-school age D1 candidate to be tested by an adult or older Pony Club member with whom they have a relationship. However, beyond the D1 and, at times D-2, level experience, it is important for the overall assessment of the club or region instruction program to seek 'outside of club' evaluation of candidates for ratings.

DCs or their designated representatives are responsible for selecting Examiners.
(See section III. B, for further discussion)

Select and contract for a site that is appropriate for the requirements of the rating levels being tested, to include adequate open space, cross country terrain with obstacles that are to the Standards, and adequate jumps set to height to meet the requirements of the SOPs. **No enclosed arenas, to include outdoor arenas, are adequate to test riding in the open or cross country sections of the tests.**

Select and contract for a site that is appropriate for the requirements of the rating levels being tested, to include adequate open space, cross country terrain with obstacles that are to the Standards, and adequate jumps set to height to meet the requirements of the SOPs. **No enclosed arenas, to include outdoor arenas, are adequate to test riding in the open or cross country sections of the tests.**

Ensure each candidate is fairly and impartially tested on all sections of the rating level test and has met the Standards of each section, in order to be awarded the new rating. Consider using a method most often seen at the National-level ratings—the Impartial Observer (IO). The IO is formally designated by the DC to serve as the liaison between the candidates, their support team (parents, guardians, coaches), and the Examiner. See the Examiner Handbook (check title) for a description of the IO.

Avoid situations that have, or have the appearance of, a conflict of interest. (See section III. for expanded discussion).

Rating should be on the club calendar for the year ahead. However, they should be scheduled at least eight weeks prior to the testing date. At that point, DCs or their designated representative must notify candidates and their parents about the date, place, time, attire (which is clearly outlined in the Standards of Proficiency), what to bring, meal arrangements, cost (if any), directions, and all other pertinent information. **Supply each candidate with a copy of the particular Standards of Proficiency and Test Sheet on which the candidate will be tested.**

DC or their designated representative must be present to oversee proceedings and handle any unusual circumstances or conflicts that might disrupt the test. These are your Pony Club members...know what your Examiners expect of them. (If a DC's own child or student is a candidate, then it may be more helpful to appoint another club 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 candidates and parents, as well as Examiners. Be aware of the nearest Emergency Medical Facility and their phone number.

Be ready to provide a signed USPC Ratings Certificate recognizing the member's accomplishment of the new rating level. Make sure you get the Examiner's signature prior to their departure from the site. It is very powerful to the member candidates when you present them with their certificates immediately upon completion of the test.

B. SELECTING EXAMINERS:

Above the D-1 level, recommend the choice of appropriate and knowledgeable Examiners from the local region or from a neighboring Pony Club.

Do not select a member's regular instructor as their Examiner. Older siblings should not rate younger ones, nor should parents or coaches/instructors rate their own children, even if they are qualified Examiners. Hiring someone outside your club to

be the examiner better prepares your members for future upper-level ratings, and provides for a less biased assessment.

Network with other DCs to find the best Examiners in your area.

Ensure the Examiners you select do not present a conflict of interest or an appearance of bias.

If possible, select someone who has attended a recent Standards and Ratings Clinic. You can require attendance at a Standards and Ratings Clinic, especially of those that have not recently grown up through, or participated in the Pony Club program and rating system. Note that with the evolution of the Standards throughout the years, **it is important for even those graduates of the USPC program to review the Standards in a Standards and Ratings Clinic.**

Ensure the Examiner has read these Guidelines entirely, paying particular attention to the sections for Examiners.

The DC must insure that the Examiner selected is capable of recognizing when the candidate does not meet standards, and is able to tell the candidate when they do not meet standards and why. Ensure the Examiners are familiar with and understand the Basic Balanced Position (BBP). The candidate, their safety, nor the organization as a whole, is well served if the Examiner is not capable of turning the candidate down for the new rating when necessary.

Compensation for the Examiner is at the discretion of the DC and Club policy, but a minimum of reimbursement for all travel expenses and appropriate meals during the testing period should be offered. **Treat Examiners with consideration and provide them with a quiet place for lunch and for writing up test sheets.**

Provide Examiners, well ahead of the test, with a copy of the Standards being tested, test sheets, time schedule, and these Guidelines, and any necessary tools such as a tape measure. Ask how *they* interpret certain skill or requirement to ensure you are “on the same page.”

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

Inform them if any candidate has a learning, physical, or other disability, if this information is known by the DC by reason of disclosure to the DC by candidate or candidate’s parent or other legal guardian, and with their written permission.

Examiners may be adults or active Pony Club members. Using ‘older’ and/or ‘upper level’ (national-level) Pony Club members as Examiners is particularly successful for the D-level ratings, because they generally have a very positive relationship with the elementary-school age D candidates. Older Pony Club members from outside your own club 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 is required to offer. **However, there are a few “rules of thumb” to consider when utilizing older and/or upper level (national-level) Pony Club members as Examiners:**

- Ensure an appropriate age difference between the Examiner and the candidates. While asking a 13-year old C1 to rate a 7-year old D1 may be a very positive experience for both members, the same 13-year old C1 may have a less-successful experience if asked to rate a 12-year old D1.
- Ensure an appropriate rating level difference between the Examiner and the candidates. In general, D-level members are not ready to serve as Examiners for any lower rating candidates. At the same time, most C1s are also not ready to rate most D3 candidates. A *minimum* of 2 rating levels difference, as well as a measureable age difference is a good rule of thumb.
- 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 or the DC-representative during the conduct of the rating test.
- Ensure proper compensation for the Pony Club member Examiners. While many Pony Club members may waive compensation, it should not be expected of them. At the least, transportation and food costs should be compensated or provided. Compensation does not need to be in the form of fee-for-service. Some clubs offer coupons for local area discounts, or clinics, or other ‘exchanges.’

C. ORGANIZING AND CONDUCTING THE RATING TEST:

Because D-1 is an introductory level, there should be “no fail” on the D-1 test sheet. A child may join your club at any age and readiness level as outlined in club policies, however insure the new member can meet the minimum D-1 Standards of Proficiency prior to administering the test. The child may receive his/her Pony Club pin prior to testing in order to feel more a part of the organization prior to testing.

Every child must be given the opportunity to test to an appropriate level in a timely manner; however, they must be a member of USPC for one month before they can take any rating.

Each member must take each rating level test and pass all sections in order to be awarded that rating level, and each rating level must be achieved before testing to the subsequent or next rating level.

The lower level D ratings (D-1 and D-2) should be a positive teaching/learning experience. Insure your candidates have been observed achieving the minimum standards of proficiency of each rating level so they are able to be passed at these levels. “Failure” at these levels is counterproductive to building confidence in our young members. Use of the Flow Charts and having a knowledgeable and personable instructor reviewing their readiness to rate prior to testing provides the correct atmosphere for a successful testing day.

Multiple D Level ratings may be taken on a single rating day. This is most often recommended/done for older joining members that 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 age and skill peer group. **However, all aspects of each level of the Standards of Proficiency must be demonstrated in order to move on to the next.**

Three (3), six (6), and nine (9) months horse record-keeping is required for all members, at particular rating levels, prior to testing and receiving the appropriate Rating. However, as long as required record keeping can be provided, and compiled in an appropriate record book, membership for that amount of time is not necessary in order to rate, as long as all skill and knowledge requirements appropriate to the level are present and records/record book is present.

At the C-1 level and above ratings, only one rating should be taken at a single rating, rating day. Even for the older new member only one rating, at C-1 and above, should be taken in a single rating day. An appropriate and thorough rating at C-1 and above, is adequately tiring to both mount and member to preclude multiple ratings in that day, and to require adherence to this rule. Tests can be taken as early as consecutive days.

At least eight weeks prior to the testing date, the DC and Organizer determine the number of candidates, choose a site and secure examiners (one for every three candidates as a general rule). **It is preferable to select an examiner from another club, and an examiner well experienced for rating D-3 through C Levels.** The DC or local instructor, if knowledgeable of the Standards and Ratings and experienced at instruction, can feel comfortable rating the D-1s

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 a four-week time period.

The rating test should be educational, and must be limited to the requirements listed on the Standards of Proficiency for that rating. 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.) prescribed *in order for the test to be completed.*

At subsequent testings candidates are responsible for, and can be tested on, the requirements of any previous level.

Appropriate pace for each rating level is stated in the Standards and adequate open space must be provided in the testing environment to safely test pace. The examiner should be provided with a stop watch, know how to use it and how to measure pace, before the start of the test. Excessive time should not be spent on this, especially at the C level tests in order to not over tire the mounts.

Be sure that examiners, candidates, 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. Candidates are expected to show courtesy to one another, to examiners, and to their mounts.

Oral examination or demonstration must be used for the Horse Management sections at all levels. *Orals should be conducted on a one-to-one basis at the D level, and in very small groups of two or three at the C levels.* Care must be taken to see that candidates are afforded every opportunity to express what they know, thereby gaining confidence in a testing situation. ***This is a time for the candidates to show what they know, not the examiner!***

All candidates, but especially lower level Ds, need a relaxed test atmosphere for the oral portions of the ratings. **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 is demonstrating skills.** In a testing that includes several rating levels, one group can ride while another is doing orals, and vice-versa.

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, if appropriate due to extreme temperatures, while others are performing individual skills. There should always be plenty of water available for both riders and horses. If weather or footing conditions become un-safe the test must be suspended and continued at a later time/date (within 30 days).

Provide lunch and refreshments for Examiners, and fluids for candidates and their mounts. Inform parents of meal arrangements for candidates 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.

D. SHARING OF MOUNTS AND USE OF MULTIPLE MOUNTS:

All Pony Club members should be tested riding a safe and reliable mount. Any candidate's, parent's, or DC's concerns about a given horse or pony should be discussed with the DC, Organizer or the Examiner well before the rating test. The

borrowing and, or sharing of suitable mounts is allowed at the D-1 through D-3 level only, but **only** if the rider is familiar with the mount and has ridden it, *prior to the testing*, on the flat and over fences safely and successfully at the level being tested. **If a mount is deemed to be unsafe, and posing immediate danger to the rider or others, by the Organizer or DC on site during the test, the person in charge must stop the candidate's testing immediately.**

At the C-1 and C-2 levels, a mount may not be shared for any mounted portion of the test by candidates at the same testing. The exchange of mounts for testing purposes is not allowed at this level. A candidate may not exchange or change mounts during a Test, if they are not meeting Standards, in order to have a "better opportunity" of passing or meeting Standards. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, a rating is not completed in the same day, the candidate is expected to complete the Rating on the same mount they rode when the Rating began. If for reasons of lameness or similar circumstance, the candidate is unable to complete the rating on the same mount, the candidate may use a substitute mount with the DC's approval.

At the club level C-2 rating, a different mount may be used for lounging if the mount being ridden is not safe or appropriate for the lounging portion.

A C-1 and C-2 candidate may use more than one mount at their rating for single phases of the test (riding on the flat, jumping, longeing) due to soundness or safety issues, with prior arrangement with the DC. Once a phase begins with a mount the entire phase must be completed with that mount.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EXAMINERS

Examiners must read and be knowledgeable of the Standards of Proficiency, Test Sheets, the Examiner Handbook, and THE CONTENTS OF THESE GUIDELINES, and be familiar with the Manuals and texts studied by candidates. They should be sensitive to young people, and able to conduct the test in a positive, educational framework. **Attendance at a local USPC Standards and Ratings Clinic, whenever possible, is highly recommended.**

The Examiner must be capable of knowing what meets Standards and what does not, know how to encourage improvement, how to tell a candidate when they do not meet Standards, and be able to explain why.

The Examiner must avoid making comments about readiness to take future ratings beyond the one being tested on that day. Even if a candidate exceeds Standards the Examiner should not make a statement regarding their ability to pass a future rating.

Testings can be stressful for candidates (and their parents), and Examiners should empathize with young people's moods and diverse personalities. The Examiner should set the tone of the testing as a learning situation, drawing the best from each candidate, but must not turn the testing situation into a "lesson." Outgoing, confident candidates should not be allowed to intimidate those who are less assured or more shy: rather, each candidate must be encouraged to demonstrate what he or she *does* know. Ensure it does not turn into a competition between candidates. Control the discussion so very shy candidates 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 should request details about the facility and equipment available, and of any learning and /or physical disabilities of candidates. **If a disability exists that limits performance, but the candidate 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 Examiners must ensure they have all necessary equipment and information with them. 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.**

Providing adequate warm up and lower warm-up fences, prior to jumping to height, is appropriate.

The Examiner must have a tape measure and check all striding and jump heights to insure they meet the Standards as outlined in the Standards of Proficiency being tested.

Examiners must inspect the terrain to be covered in the open and obstacles measured prior to proceeding on course.

Examiners must adjust the striding of the grid, combinations and related distances to meet the striding of the mount being used, and may not require/expect the candidate to adjust their mount's stride to the course or grid set. The Examiner may need to organize the candidates order of go to maximize each setting before changing it for the next mount(s).

Candidates must be asked to jump to the Standard but no higher. Jumps must be provided by the Organizer that are to or can be set at the appropriate height. Warm up jumps at a lower height in the stadium and on the cross country course, may be taken first, before jumping to height. **Testing may never be above the Standard.**

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

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

Candidates must be notified individually of test results to avoid uncomfortable situations among candidates, parents and examiners. In addition to continuous feedback during a test, a complete critique with each candidate should follow the test, with parents invited to listen *if the candidate agrees*.

Examiners must dress appropriately, either in appropriately clean casual riding attire, 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 candidate is expected to.** The Examiner must not use profanity, or slang that could be found offensive to the candidates or their parents.

V. EXPANDED INFORMATION ON TESTING NEW MEMBERS

A new Pony Club member who is young and inexperienced may become a D-1 and then take two to four years to achieve the D-3. An older, more experienced rider who joins Pony Club may be capable of passing several rating levels at his or her first testing (D-1 to D-3). However, the D-1 to C-2 Program Committee strongly suggests that a new Pony Club member, unless quite mature and both knowledgeable and skilled, be rated no higher than D-2 or D-3 (depending on age and skill levels) for the first several months, so that he or she can gain a broad experience of Pony Club. Pony Club rating levels reflect more than just riding skills. They also indicate a member's horse management knowledge levels, the member's communication skills, ability to analyze and discuss various aspects of horsemanship, and the member's leadership skills and maturity. Pony Club has a culture of responsibility in horsemanship and horse management that takes time to internalize. The Leadership throughout USPC wants to facilitate fun and personal growth through the development of good horsemanship and riding skills.

VI. TESTING CONTINUING MEMBERS

Sometimes, though more rare, the candidate having achieved the D-1 while young, is in a position to be unable to test again in a timely manner though perhaps ready, (lameness or illness of their own horse while taking lessons on another, moving to a new state or town, a period of time away from Pony Club though still riding, etc., prevents their normal testing cycle).

If the candidate is later ready to test both D-2 and D-3, with the DC's approval, this is possible at the next rating. Again, DCs must be facilitating growth and achievement for the candidates where and when they are ready.

It is important however, for DCs to be honest with both the candidate and parent when they *and* their instructor or other valid evaluator, feel the candidate is in fact not ready to be successful at the next rating level(s). Resisting the temptation to “push” a child is difficult for most parents at some point, and the DC is responsible to insure “safety first”, at all times. However, if the candidate and parent are intent on rating, as long as it does not pose an immediate safety hazard, it is recommended the DC allow the candidate to test. It becomes absolutely essential in this case, as always, that you have Examiners that fully understand the Standards and are willing to determine, and state the facts with explanation, when a candidate does not meet Standards.

VII. RIDING GROUPS AND USE OF MULTIPLE EXAMINERS

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

A ratio of 1 Examiner to every 3 to 4 candidates is a rule of thumb, beyond the youngest candidates. **However, it is preferable for up to 6, (or even a maximum of 8 candidates at the C levels) to ride together while all 2 or 3 assigned Examiners work together testing these candidates.** The Examiners should confer on the candidates and their performance of the required skills. This helps the Examiners see the relative success of the candidates, which do meet and which do not meet Standards. Each Examiner brings their own observations to the analyses of the candidates' performances. Riding with others also provides the candidates (and their families) with a better understanding of their performance relative to the Standards. **The Examiners come to a consensus of the candidate's performance in a similar fashion as do the National Examiners at a National level rating. 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" rater at any given rating.** (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.)

VIII. RETESTING OF PORTIONS OF A SINGLE RATING TEST

Re-testing of a section(s) is available under set circumstances only. If a candidate does not meet Standards (DNMS) in any part of one or more sections (up to 1/3 of the sections on the Test Sheet, and a more limited number of mounted sections (**The number of mounted sections allowed for re-testing is specifically designated on each test sheet at each rating level**), a re-test *may* be scheduled on sections not passed. **ONLY THE ORIGINAL EXAMINER MAY RECOMMEND SUCH A RE-TEST TO THE CANDIDATES DC, AND MUST BE SO INDICATED ON THE CANDIDATE'S TEST SHEET AT THE TIME OF THE ORIGINAL TESTING.** The DC must approve and schedule the re-test, preferably with the original, or one of the original Examiners. **Such a re-test is not automatic, and is not necessarily appropriate in all circumstances.** It is only appropriate in cases where a small amount of correction is needed on the part of the candidate, which can be reasonably expected to be accomplished in the short span of 30 days or less. The re-test must be completed in one day, and within one month of the original testing. Failure to pass any part of the re-test will require the candidate to take the entire test again, when next scheduled by the club. If the re-test is not completed within a month, the entire test must be taken again at a regularly scheduled test.

All sections under the riding portions of the test, i.e. Riding on the Flat, Riding Over Fences, and Riding in the Open, to include discussion sections, are considered mounted sections.

If a candidate takes a portion of the test over again with a different Examiner, BOTH Examiners must have signed the test and the certificate before the candidate is considered to have passed. Normally, any test or re-test must take place within the Pony Club member's own Region. The DC decides whether or not a Pony Club member may be tested or re-tested with another club.

IX. GROUP TESTING OPPORTUNITIES

There are numerous ways for Clubs/DCs to offer multiple tests within the year, and ways to have adequate numbers of candidates to demonstrate group riding in the open, and group teaching at the C Levels. Clubs within a Region can get together to hold multiple ratings, thus insuring greater numbers attending the rating and more opportunities for their members to have a workable date to rate; members from one club, can rate at another club's test; or Regions can assist their clubs' DCs by helping to organize a Regional ratings, though the DC is still responsible for their own candidates, and should be present at the testing. However, it is still upon the member's own DC's recommendation that the individual members are allowed to rate at any of these optional rating opportunities. It is the DCs responsibility to insure the location, and conduct of the test is in accordance with the requirements in the SOPs.

X. RECOMMENDED TIME FRAMES FOR RATINGS TESTS*

D-1 and D-2 levels: Groups of 2 to 4
1-2 hours riding (conducting orals as you go)
1 hour max un-mounted

D-3 level: Groups of 3-4
1 ½ -2 hours riding max (some orals)
1-2 hours un-mounted

C-1 level: Groups of 4-6 (2 -3 examiners ideal)
2-2 ½ hours riding
1 ½ hours un-mounted

C-2 level: 3-7 (2-3 examiners ideal)
2-3 hours riding (break, tack change)
1 ½ -2 hours un-mounted

**Times do not include Examiners finishing paperwork and briefing candidates on results*

Generally speaking, a workable schedule is as follows:

Turnout/Inspection (questions such as parts of the horse, tack, conformation, shoeing, etc., may be asked at this time).
Horse Management (hands on: saddling, grooming, etc.).
Flat riding phase
(break for possible tack change, watering horses, etc. at C levels)
Grid work and jumping
Riding in the open (D-2 and up)
Cooling out
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 paper work and provide results

XI. TEST SITE REQUIREMENTS

The following facilities are to be available for D-1 through C-2:

- Enclosed or contained area, sufficiently level for flat and stadium phases

- Ground poles, cavaletti/trotting poles and grids, adjustable stadium fences sufficient to make required courses even if some fences are jumped twice or from opposite directions (as long as appropriate ground lines are placed on both sides jumped)
- Open area for cross-country, with varied terrain, if possible
- Cross-country type obstacles, suitable for level being tested (*NOT TO EXCEED LEVEL*). (Cavaletti/trotting poles in the open area may be used for D-2's.
- Adequate open space for testing pace and cross country at pace requirements

Additional equipment/facilities required:

D-1 Level

Enclosed area
4-6 trotting poles
Stalls or holding pens (or assistants)

D-2 Level

6-8 ground/trotting poles
4-5 jumps (cross rails & verticals-no spreads)
Ground-line poles for jumps
Stalls or pens (or assistants)

D-3 Level

Dirty stalls or trailers to demonstrate cleaning
Stall cleaning equipment
Water bucket & hay bag/net to be hung
Simple protective/tendon boots (front only)
8-10 ground/trotting poles/ grid items
5-7 jumps, verticals and simple oxers,
Jumps to have ground-line poles

C-1 Level

Horse blanket
1-2 D Pony Club members with mounts
tacked up for inspection by
candidates
Stethoscope and thermometer
Sample farrier tools or pictures of them
12-14 poles for grid, jumps to have
ground-lines
Sufficient jumps/poles for course of 6-8
obstacles, including an oxer,
Jumps to have ground-lines
Horse trailer properly hitched to vehicle

C-2 Level

Easy-to-longe horse or pony
Appropriate longeing equipment
(Candidate may longe own
mount)
Adequate poles and jumps to set grid
and courses per the SOPs
Jumps to have ground lines

XII. REQUIRED RIDER ATTIRE & EQUIPMENT

All D Levels

ASTM/SEI approved riding helmet
Hard-soled shoes which cover the ankle
or boots with heels,
Breakaway halter, lead rope, bucket, hay
bag/net
Tack to be used on own mount

C-1 and Above

Correct formal or informal attire
w/ ASTM/SEI approved helmet
All tack to be used on mount
Any artificial aids used on own mount
Tack to be used on own mount
Any artificial aids used on own mount

Any artificial aids used on own mount

XIII. OTHER RIDER MATERIALS

D-1 Level

Basic grooming tools

D-2 Level

Protective boots and/or bell boots, *if used*

D-3

Up-to-date Pony Health & Maintenance

Record Book (3 months minimum)

Protective boots and/or bell boots

C-1 Level

Record Book (6 months minimum)

Stable or standing wraps and bandages

Simple conditioning & feeding schedule

C-2 Level

Record Book (9 months minimum)

Shipping and standing/stable wraps

Thermometer and watch w/ second hand

Letter from DC in reference to

teaching program

Longeing equipment appropriate for

mount

XIV. DIMENSIONS OF FENCES D-1 TO A

PLACE CHARTS FROM FRONT/BOTTOM OF STANDARDS OF
PROFICIENCY
IN THIS SPACE
SHOWING DIMENSIONS OF FENCES D TO A
DRESSAGE SPECIALTY LEVELS AND
DIMENSIONS OF FENCES FOR SHOW JUMP SPECIALTY
LEVELS

XV. SAMPLE JUMPING COURSES D-1 THROUGH C-2

(Also see grids and charts in Standards of Proficiency)

D-1 Level Requirements and Sample Courses

Very simple course, once around in enclosed area

4-6 ground poles

(Walk over poles in jumping position; No in-and-out or poles-in-line [cavaletti] allowed.)

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

Gymnastic Jumping Exercises to be set in accordance with the Chart "**Over Fences D-3 Level**" provided on last page of Standards of Proficiency 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 to be set at 2'6"** maximum height, 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

Gymnastic Jumping Exercises to be set in accordance with the Chart "**Over Fences C-1 Level**" provided on page 6, Standards of Proficiency 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 2'9" maximum height**, with 2-3 oxers (must be graduated), and one 2 strides combination, (vertical must come first).

No bounce or 1-stride combinations

C-2 Level Requirements

Gymnastic Jumping Exercises to be set in accordance with the Chart "**Over Fences C-2 Level**"

Slightly more difficult turns, related distances; bending lines

Enclosed area recommended

7-9 obstacles, 3' max. height

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

Longeing equipment appropriate for horse.

XVI. WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Regional and Club leadership throughout the country must work to ensure that all ratings are recognized as important, even 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 a beginning and should be read carefully by all those involved with Pony Club.

If problems or questions arise, it is important to know that there is someone to turn to for answers. The D1 - C2 Program Committee is anxious to ensure that USPC, as an educational organization, is meeting the needs and expectations of all Pony Club members and their

families. The committee is also available to help insure the program is delivered equitably, fairly and consistently throughout the Nation. This committee works closely with the Curriculum and Standards Committee, the C-3 Program Committee and the National Testing Committee, and Regional Administration. Please feel free to call on the current Chair of the D-1 to C-2 Committee, if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions.

For contact information for THE D1 - C2 PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Refer to the current Annual Directory for names, addresses and phone numbers of the committee members, or go to www.ponyclub.org and go to Contacts, or contact instruction@ponyclub.org

