

Assistant Examiners

New examiner - Learn, contribute, avoid

Senior examiner – responsibilities, can't/shouldn't refuse

Test chair – responsibility to post early/invite, facilitate, paperwork, food, not jump crew

As a new examiner, and then each time you upgrade to a new level, you will “assist” at that level. This is an opportunity to learn about the expectations and marking from examiners who already test at that level. Examiners must learn to recognise what “meets the standard” versus “does not meet the standard” and the difference between a 6.5 and a 7.0 at each level before they can test effectively on a panel themselves. Panels are open to assists and welcome the extra help. The senior examiner may assign a section of the stable management questions (to be submitted to the senior for feedback prior to the test) for the assistant to ask, or have them float between SM stations to observe each examiner's question style. As a new examiner you should participate fully in the test by filling in worksheets for all the candidates, assigning marks and comments for each box, to the best of your ability. Observe how the other examiners interact with the candidates and each other, how the schedule is set and what does and doesn't work over the day. If it won't disrupt the schedule or distract the candidates, feel free to ask the other examiners to clarify what you are specifically looking for and what mark would be appropriate. Assistants should contribute to the discussion about marks and comments for each candidate so that the senior examiner knows if your scores are in line with the rest of the panel. The senior examiner can't write a letter of recommendation for upgrading if they don't know how you are interpreting the requirements.

In any panel, there will be times when individuals disagree since we each bring our own strengths and weaknesses to the job, but together we create a balanced and constructive team. The chance to observe how others interact with candidates and different ways of setting up the day are invaluable as you become a senior examiner yourself. Assistants should observe the candidate critique at the end of the test with an eye for how to conduct an effective critique and how to manage candidate's reactions and concerns with tact and empathy.

The regional test chair and/or branch test representative are responsible for posting their test schedule in good time and providing worksheets and refreshments for each assistant examiner as well as the regular panel. Assistants are not a substitute for the jump crew at a test. If an assistant examiner would like to participate, the chair/rep should ask the senior ahead of time so that the schedule can be adapted and everyone can prepare. One or 2 assistant examiners is usually manageable but more than 2 can be difficult since each will have their own questions and the test and paperwork may take longer than ideal for the candidates.