

The Board of Dressage Ireland would like to clarify some issues surrounding the rule changes implemented for 2021. The main motivation for the changes was due to the current Covid guidelines surrounding amateur participation in sport, under these circumstances we have had to restructure our membership to allow riders to compete as full riding members only. We have taken on board comments and concerns and have readjusted the categories shown below.

The reasoning behind the widening of the points bands was to allow riders and horses more time at a level if they feel they require it.

Please note:

Anyone finishing in the top 3 in their level (Prelim to Advanced Medium) at National Championships will have to move up a level from the 1st January of the following year or they can stay at the same level and compete restricted.

Combinations who have already scored over 64% at a given level on two occasions with different judges (including in previous years) cannot move down two grades; for example, if a combination receives two scores of over 64% at advanced medium you cannot go back down to then compete as a combination at elementary level.

Rule Changes of Note for 2021

Below are details of the changes to rider categories, point allocation, points bands and downgrading procedures, as well as details of the addition of restricted classes that will apply to all riders as of Jan 2021.

Rider Categories

Category 0 Trailblazers riders are considered Category 0

Category 1 Riders that have NOT competed above Novice Level Dressage or CCI 2* Eventing

Category 2 Riders that have NOT competed above Advanced Medium Level Dressage or CCI 3* Eventing

Category 3 Riders that have competed at Advanced or above including CCI 4* Eventing
Riders **must** declare their category when joining or renewing their annual membership.

At regional shows, all categories of rider entered into Preliminary and Novice classes (and Elementary, if warranted by the quantity of entries at that level) could be competing in the same class, but results will be divided into category 1,2 and 3 sections.

At National Championships and National Winter Finals, Preliminary, Novice, Elementary and Medium, results will be subdivided into categories at the discretion of the show organisers.

No rider categories apply in Young Horse Classes.

When a Category 1 rider completes their first Elementary or higher class or a Category 2 rider enters their first Advanced or higher class, **it is the rider's responsibility to inform the Show Secretary and the Dressage Ireland office** by email of their Category change.

Members who fail to accurately declare their category/level will face disciplinary action.

For full details on membership categories please see the Dressage Ireland website.

1.1. Horse Grading and Points

1.1.1. Points

Horses are graded using a points system. Points for grading classification purposes will only be allocated for performance at Dressage Ireland Dressage Competitions, which such allocation shall be at the sole discretion and power of the Board. Points will not be awarded for Intro classes, Para classes, music classes, young horse classes or confined classes including Trailblazers. Points will be awarded based on the percentage achieved by eligible combinations in eligible classes, in accordance with the scales below:

Score (percentage)	Points Awarded
60 – 61.99%	1
62 – 63.99%	2
64 – 65.99%	3
66 – 67.99%	4
68 – 69.99%	5
70 – 71.99%	6
72 – 73.99%	7
74 %+	8

An 'eligible combination' is a registered horse graded at or below the grade of the class, ridden by a full or junior/young rider member of Dressage Ireland Clg.

An 'eligible class' is a graded class (see section 3.4) providing that the judge, presiding on the day, is a suitably qualified dressage judge recognised by Dressage Ireland Clg at that level.

All eligible combinations that obtain the percentages shown above in eligible classes will be allocated points regardless of placing and prize money.

1.1.2. Grades

Subject to the exception covered by section [2.7.3](#), horses may compete only at the level they are graded at or higher. The point band for each grade is as follows:

Grade	Points
Preliminary	0 to 199 points.
Novice	200 to 349 points.
Elementary	350 to 449 points.
Medium	450 to 549 points.
Advanced Medium	550 to 649 points.
Advanced	Over 649 points

Horses already registered with Eventing Ireland or holding British Eventing points will be graded as follows:

A horse that has competed 1* shall be given 200 points.

A horse that has competed 2* shall be given 350 points.

A horse that has competed 3* be given 450 points.

A horse that has competed 4* be given 550 points.

It is the rider's responsibility to declare the competition record when registering.

Anyone finishing in the top 3 in their level at National Championships will have to move up a level from the 1st January of the following year or they can stay at the same level and compete restricted.

Combinations who have already scored over 64% at a given level on two occasions with different judges cannot move down two grades; for example if a combination receives two scores of over 64% at advanced medium you cannot go back down to then compete as a combination at elementary level.

New for 2021

Restricted Classes

- Any combination who wants to compete at a level where their horse is out of the points bracket for that level may compete as a restricted combination at any level they choose.
- The onus is on the rider to declare on their entry form that they are competing as a restricted combination.
- Any combination that wishes to compete in the restricted category can only do so at any level lower than the horse's current grading.
- These combinations can move back up at any time to their horses current grade.
- Restricted combinations are not eligible for any prizes or prize money – only rosettes will be given.
- Any restricted combination can qualify for and compete at National Summer and Winter Championships if they receive the necessary scores.

Confined Classes

The following classes are classified as confined classes will not be eligible for points

Trailblazers

Freestyle

Rider age classes (Pony, Junior, Young Rider and Children on Horses)

1.1.1. Registration and Grading of imported Horses

Please allow 4-6 weeks to register an imported horse.

The following procedure applies for registration and grading of imported horses (other than those competed under British Dressage rules - see section 2.7.5):

To register an imported horse the owner must complete the horse registration form and submit it, along with the supporting documents listed on the form, to the Dressage Ireland secretary.

Horses imported to Ireland at 4 years of age will be registered as preliminary and given 0 points.

Owners wishing to register an imported horse aged over 4 years must send a letter/email from the relevant National Federation declaring the level/records of the horse. They will be awarded points corresponding to their record. Newly imported horses over the age of 4, without Dressage competition records, will be automatically allocated 15 points at each level according to their age at the time of registration, to the scale given in the table below.

Age at import	Points allocated
4	0 points
5	215 points (200 for Novice, +15)
6	365 points (350 for Elementary + 15)
7	465 points (450 for Medium + 15)
8	565 points (550 for Advanced Medium + 15)
9	665 points (650 for Advanced + 15)

If it can be proved that a horse without a competition record was imported at an earlier age the points allocated can be altered with approval of the Board. It is the owner's responsibility to provide proof of age at import. I.e. Official import document or record of a vaccination administered in Ireland.

Where the declared grading is 'Advanced', no further assessment is required and the horse is registered.

For a declared grading, other than 'Advanced' the horse is registered but if the rider feels that the horse has been allocated too high a grade they may enter an "assessment period". Tests must be entered restricted during the assessment period.

For this assessment period the horse must compete at a minimum of 2 shows and 3 tests with different judges. The rider must send the test score sheets to the Dressage Ireland office for the attention of the Grading Committee. It is not sufficient to just report scores: the score sheets signed by the judges must be submitted. From January 2020 grade reviews will take place four times a year; at the end of March, June, September and December.

The grading decision will be one of the following options:

Decision 1: The **Grading committee** agrees with the declared grading. In such cases the horse is awarded the number of points necessary to place it at either the start or the middle of the grading band, as the Board deem appropriate, from the date of registration. In such cases, all results gained during the assessment period will be retroactively validated and can be counted as qualifying results for Regional and National Championships. Points will be awarded for these results in line with section 2.7.1 of these rules.

Decision 2: The Grading Committee considers that the declared grade was incorrect and the horse will be graded at the level deemed appropriate by the Board, based on the score sheets submitted. In the case of the horse being graded at a higher level, none of the scores gained during the assessment period will be validated as qualifying results or considered eligible for points.

In cases where the Board's Grading Committee's assessment is that the horse's training level may be significantly above the declared grade, they may decide to extend the assessment period until at least 3 further score sheets from at least 3 further shows for tests ridden at a level above the declared grade have been submitted.

In the event of the grading not being accepted the decision of the Grading Committee can be appealed to the Board

1.1.2. Grading of imported Horses previously registered with British Dressage

By way of exception to the rules laid down in 2.7.4, for horses that are imported to Ireland from or through the United Kingdom and had competed under British Dressage rules, a full competition record must be submitted with the registration form so that grading points can be allocated accordingly. Please note that horses with British Dressage points will automatically be allocated an additional 100 Dressage Ireland points as BD do not allocate points at Preliminary level. Horses that have competed under British Dressage rules with full results submitted to DI office will not be subject to grade assessment.

1.1.3. Grading of Horses training abroad

Horses, which go abroad for training and compete in national competitions abroad, will NOT be categorised as imported horses on their return to Ireland. However, full competition results must be regularly sent to the Dressage Ireland Office as the appropriate number of points, according to results achieved, will be added to the points the horse had when it left Ireland. It is the rider's responsibility to ensure that they apply for permission to compete abroad in accordance with Section 4.

1.1.4. Downgrading

Downgrading of imported horses is only permitted under **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances and is entirely at the discretion of the of Dressage Ireland Clg. board or authority delegated to the appointed grading committee. In order to apply for a downgrade, the member must ride 3 tests at their required level at Dressage Ireland shows. The three tests must be judged by 3 different judges.

Copies of these three tests along with a letter/email of application and the €100 downgrade application fee must be sent to the DI office FAO the Grading Committee. From January 2020 grade reviews will take place four times a year; at the end of March, June, September and December, at this time grades previously awarded will be reviewed. **Each downgrading runs until the 31st December in the year it is applied for and is for the nominated rider only. If required, downgrades must be re-applied for each calendar year.**

Horses graded out of points for a level can now follow the restricted class route.