

The following guidelines, issued by the FEI between 2011 and 2013 have, with the approval of the FEI, been amalgamated into this one document and like subjects grouped for ease of reading.

I would like to thank the FEI for giving approval for me to do this so that the information can be provided to our National Judges in one document.

This document covers Mouth Problems



This document will be updated as further guidelines are issued by the FEI

MOUTH PROBLEMS

**From the FEI Dressage Judge General Ghislain Fouarge – 1/7/11
Guidelines for the evaluation of mouth problems**

Problems with the contact and how to deal with them

A horse going with an open mouth should be dealt with by deducting 1 or 2 marks each time it is observed depending on severity. Issues with the tongue are further evidence that the horse is avoiding the contact and has problems to accept the right contact through the bridle.

Where the tongue is drawn right up or over the bit the mark would be taken down by 2 or 3 points for each time it is clearly observed. The same would apply where the tongue is hanging out to the side and this fault would never score higher than 5 per movement. If the tongue is clearly over the bit not more than 4.

In some cases the tongue shows a very small amount at the front of the mouth. When this is approximately some mm it can be ignored. When this becomes exaggerated then 1 or 2 marks should be deducted depending on severity.

When a horse is momentarily a little behind the vertical but the overall picture is willing and on the aids the fault is not severe. If the horse is short in neck or too deep in front for a longer time at least 1 point would be deducted per movement (also for the Halt). The whole execution of the movement should be judged.

Sometimes the horse is correctly in front of the vertical, but it is clear that the contact is strong and that the horse is not through enough or leaning on the bit. In such cases at least 1 point would be deducted per movement.

Moving the lips is not a fault and can be ignored if the way of going is willing and in every other way correct. Grinding the teeth is not considered a fault if the horse appears happy and willing and has saliva.

Slight tilting will result in the deduction of 1 point per movement but 2 points where more severe.

Judges should keep in mind that problems with the contact also influence the mark given for submission. Severe problems with the tongue coming out or over the bit would result in a maximum of 5 for submission. If however, the contact is good then the judge should be prepared to go up with the submission mark.