



GUIDELINES FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF ALL ABILITIES CLASSES

EA INTERSCHOOL STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL 2026

What is 'All Abilities'?

All Abilities in sport refers to inclusive programs and initiatives designed to provide opportunities for people of all abilities, including those with disabilities, to participate in sports and physical activities.

The primary goal is to be inclusive of everyone, regardless of their physical, intellectual, or sensory abilities, and to help young riders, with additional needs, become active members of the Equestrian community by building pathways to participation and fostering social connections.

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KEY OUTCOMES

- To implement inclusive classes at Interschool State and National levels in Dressage and Show Horse
- The expansion of the exemption process and eligibility for riders with physical and intellectual additional needs. This allows the All Ability Riders to compete with their Interschool peers, while supporting their progression toward future Para and Virtus pathways and classification.
- To offer team places in Dressage and Show Horse in State teams, in the specified levels of Dressage and Show Horse, at the Australian Interschool Championships 2026
- To review the 2026 process to inform planning for 2027, which may be expanded to further disciplines



ELIGIBILITY

Riders must hold current **Participation or Competitor** membership in their state branch.

Riders need to follow the classification guidelines and EA Exemption process through the supply of relevant medical and psychological assessments

Eligibility and levels are decided on rider ability, not age group.

Riders select their most relevant level in the All Abilities classes offered

Riders may be classified and hold exemptions through these pathways:

- Para Equestrian classification – riders with physical or motor disability who are eligible (over 12 years)
- Virtus Classification – Intellectual Disability, Autism, current Sport Inclusion Australia classification <https://sportinclusionaustralia.org.au/> & [Secure Your Athlete Eligibility – Fair, Inclusive Sport Starts Here](#)
- Riders who may be eligible for Exemption but are not at the required age for Para or Virtus assessment
- Riders who present with a combination of physical and neurodevelopmental impairments that significantly affect riding ability may be deemed eligible through medical verification even where the rider does not meet the formal eligibility criteria for Virtus or Para-Equestrian classification.
- Medical verification – for riders whose disability impacts riding function but may not fit formal classification.

Riders competing in both Open Interschool and All Abilities classes must compete at Level 3 (Progressive) or Level 4 (Advanced) in Show Horse and select All Abilities classes that align with their riding ability. For example; riders competing in Open Interschool Preliminary Dressage should enter Level 3 (Progressive) for both Dressage and Show Horse All Abilities classes. While those competing Open Interschool Novice Dressage should enter Level 4 (Advanced) for both Dressage and Show Horse All Ability classes.

APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTIONS

All Interschool riders seeking an EA Interschool Exemption, and assistance with eligibility to compete in Interschool Open or All Abilities classes, must formally apply through the Equestrian Australia National Office, to the EA Exemption Committee. Applications will be assessed by a group with expertise and knowledge in the areas of disability, and the requests submitted. Riders may then be supplied with an EA Interschool Exemption card to be able to compete in EA Interschool All Ability classes, that may have listed extra conditions, e.g. compensating aids etc. The EA Interschool Exemption Card is only applicable to Interschool competitions. Riders may also have a current Para, Virtus or EA Dressage Exemption that permits them to also compete in these discipline specific classes. Riders must make the organisers of competitions aware of their exemption requirements and supply documentation prior to competing. EA Interschool Exemption Application: <https://form.jotform.com/260550730416046>



EA INTERSCHOOL EXEMPTION CARD

Once approved, riders receive an EA Interschool Exemption Card outlining:

- Approved compensating aids/ adaptive equipment.
- Assistance permitted in competition.
- If required, the recommended eligible competition category (Levels 1–4).

The EA interschool Card will initially be valid for 12 months. If the rider's condition changes during the Exemption Card Period, or a change to rider details needs to be made, a new application form and supporting evidence must be submitted to the Equestrian Australia National Office.

If a further exemption is required, it is recommended that you reapply a minimum of six - eight (6-8) weeks prior to the expiration date of the current exemption. This will help to ensure ample time for processing and maintain continuity for your competition experience.

For further information please see on Interschool Exemption Card please see the EA Interschool rule book: https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/EA%20National%20Interschool%20Rules%20CLEAN%20version%201st%20January%202026_2.pdf - *Article 5.7 Exemption Cards – All Abilities*

COMPENSATING AIDS

Riders may be permitted to use approved additional or altered riding equipment

This may be: Standard to the discipline, Profile specific or Non-standard as assessed by the Exemption Panel

COMPENSATING AIDS (ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT) FURTHER INFORMATION & LINKS:

Please see FEI Para compensating aids guidelines:

https://inside.fei.org/system/files/Compensating%20Aids%20Guidelines%20Para%20Dressage%20May%202020_13.10.2022_0.pdf

EA Para Dressage Rules: <https://www.equestrian.org.au/paraequestrian> - Annex H Compensating Aids (Adaptive Equipment)

Virtus Rules: <https://virtus.sport/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/7.12-VIRTUS-Equestrian-Dressage-Rules-2026-Version-1219.pdf> section 6.2 Compensating Aids



PROFILES & LEVELS

All Abilities Dressage:

There will be four (4) levels of Dressage offered, each with 2 ridden tests, using the EA Para Dressage Tests - <https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/organisers/p-e-dressage/tests> . Entrants may select to ride 1 or 2 tests but will be ineligible for a level Jackpot or Championship if both tests are not competed

Level 1 Introductory – Movements in walk only

Level 2 Developing – Movements in walk and trot

Level 3 Progressive – Movements in walk, trot and canter

Level 4 Advanced – Walk, trot and canter with technical elements

All Abilities Show Horse:

There will be four (4) levels of Show Horse classes offered.

Each level will have a Led (In hand), Rider, and Ridden phase. Entrants may select 1, 2 or 3 phases, but will be ineligible for the Championship if all phases are not competed

Level 1 Introductory – Simple walk movements

Level 2 Developing- Walk, and trot workout

Level 3 Progressive - Walk, trot and canter workouts

Level 4 Advanced –Walk, trot and canter with technical elements.

Classes- They may not always be run in this order:

Phase 1 – Led In hand

Phase 2 – Rider Class (judging the rider, not Smartest on Parade/turnout)

Phase 3 – Ridden workout (judging the suitability of the combination – i.e. the horse as a Show Horse suitable for an All Abilities rider at the level.



EVENT PLANNING

Event organisers need to assess their ability to offer classes, levels and specific tests in Dressage and Show Horse, with appropriate judges and stewards, in an inclusive and safe manner.

Ensure officials have completed the EA All Abilities LMS online course and are aware that, if having to speak with riders in these classes, that the rider's support person needs to be present.

Consider the nature of the riders and the need for a quiet, safe area, with suitable access, for warm up and competition.

Interschool competitions are considered unofficial and are governed by the EA Interschool Rules and, if relevant, EA Discipline rules.

It is a condition, that potential entrants supply information to the organising committee, prior to entry. They must submit all documentation and specific requirements with their entry registration.

ALL ABILITIES DRESSAGE				
Level	CLASS	TESTS	STATE	NATIONAL 2026
1A	Introductory Walk Only	EA PD Grade 1 Preparatory Test 1/7/23 (20x40m arena)	Yes	Yes
1B	Introductory Walk Only	EA PD Grade 1 Preliminary Test 1/7/23 (20x40m arena)	Yes	Yes
2A	Developing Walk Trot	EAPD Grade 111 Novice Test 1/7/23 (20x40m arena)	Yes	Yes
2B	Developing Walk Trot	EAPD Grade 111 Elementary Test 1/7/23 (20x40m arena)	Yes	Yes
3A	Progressive Walk Trot Canter	EAPD Grade 1V Preliminary Test 1/7/23 (20x60m arena)	Yes	Yes
3B	Progressive Walk Trot Canter	EAPD Grade V Preliminary Test 1/7/23 (20x60m arena)	Yes	Yes
4A	Advanced Walk Trot Canter	EAPD Grade V Novice Test 1/7/23 (20x60m arena)	Yes	Yes
4B	Advanced Walk Trot Canter	EAPD Grade V Elementary Test 1/7/23 (20x60m arena)	Yes	Yes

Please note: For Neurodevelopmental/Virtus eligible riders, as per the Virtus Dressage rules, the first halt at the beginning of the test is not required

Please see: <https://www.equestrian.org.au/interschool> for further details and all workouts.



DRESSAGE GUIDELINES

- EA Para judges should be used at State and National levels
- The use of EA Para stewards is strongly recommended for safety and to facilitate the best experience for riders, or if a Para Steward is not available please ensure the EA accredited Steward has completed the online LMS EA Interschool All Abilities Course
- All Dressage tests may be called; movements can only be called once or twice only and only the text written on the test. If required Exemptions can be requested for use of phonics for use with the Dressage letters (phonics as per the Virtus Dressage rules), but it must be listed on rider's exemption card and notified to the Event OC and Judge in advance.
- Riders may choose to ride only one test
- A horse may be shared for level 1 *Introductory* & level 2 *Developing* by up to two competitors competing in one test each.
- Classes may be split into Primary and Secondary if entries are large but riders should be grouped by ability not age.
- Rider test blocks should be grouped in the level and test they are riding, to assist judges
- Placings are recommended to 6th in each class. An overall Champion may be awarded if two classes are completed.
- Due to the potential size of classes, Championships may be awarded on % across all levels offered.

ALL ABILITIES SHOW HORSE				
Level	Class	Classes	State	National 2026
1A	Introductory Walk Only	LED In Hand workout A/B walk only no trot	Yes	Yes
1B	Introductory Walk Only	Rider Workout A	Yes	Yes
1C	Introductory Walk Only	Ridden Workout A judged as horse rider combination harmony and suitability	Yes	Yes
2A	Developing Walk Trot	LED In Hand workout A/B walk and trot	Yes	Yes
2B	Developing Walk Trot	Rider Class with workout either A or B	Yes	Yes
2C	Developing Walk Trot	Ridden Class judged as horse rider combination harmony and suitability with workout either A or B	Yes	Yes
3A	Progressive Walk Trot Canter	LED In Hand workout A/B walk and trot	Yes	Yes



3B	Progressive Walk Trot Canter	Show Horse Rider Class with workout B	Yes	Yes
3C	Progressive Walk Trot Canter	Ridden Class judged as horse rider combination harmony and suitability with workout B	Yes	Yes
4A	Advanced Walk Trot Canter	LED In Hand workout A/B walk and trot	Yes	Yes
4B	Advanced Walk Trot Canter	Show Horse Rider Class more complex movements with workout C	Yes	Yes
4C	Advanced Walk Trot Canter	Ridden class judged as horse rider combination harmony and suitability with workout C	Yes	Yes

Riders competing in Open Interschool Show Horse and All Abilities classes must ride Level 3 Progressive or Level 4 Advanced dependent on their riding ability.

Please see <https://www.equestrian.org.au/interschool> for further details and all workouts and score sheets.

SHOW HORSE GUIDELINES

- Workouts should be published with the entry schedule
- Where possible, judges with Para experience or understanding should be used at State and National levels
- EA Para stewards should be used for safety and to facilitate the best experience for riders.
- Riders may choose to compete in only one or two of the phases
- A horse may be shared for level 1 *Introductory* & level 2 *Developing* by up to two competitors competing in three classes each rider
- Classes may be split into Primary and Secondary if entries are large but riders should be grouped by ability not age.
- All workouts may be called. Suggestion; that a capable and knowledgeable volunteer be used to call all Show Horse class workouts to ensure fairness and consistency.
- The use of cones permitted and recommended to be used for categories 1-3 Introductory, Developing & Progressive
- Placings are recommended to 6th in each class. An overall Level Champion may be awarded if three phases are completed.
- An overall All Abilities Supreme Champion may be awarded across all levels based on total points. In the event of equality, countback using rider score should be applied



ARENAS

Arenas need to be safe and accessible to all riders. Consider noise levels and external distractions.

Where possible warm up and competition areas should be sand or fibre (as Grass reins are not permitted)

Show Horse workout arenas should be clearly designated and enclosed and include any cones as indicated on workouts - cones permitted and recommended to be used for categories 1-3 Introductory, Developing & Progressive

Time needs to be allowed to accommodate the change of size of arenas between 40x20m and 60x20m.

A rider's support person must remain outside the competition area, unless they are calling for the rider.

Some riders may require specific changes to the arena as per their exemption card (e.g. moving A in once they have entered the Dressage arena).

It is important everyone is clear on any extra assistance, what it involves and where assistants are permitted to be positioned

VENUE FACILITIES, FAMILIARISATION & WARMUPS

There should be prior communication of the plan/layout of venue.

Consideration of ring placements in regard to other classes, including area familiarisation requirements. Warm up arenas are not shared with other classes, enclosed or fenced warm-up arenas are preferred and recommended.

Accommodate any additional access, parking or camping needs for families.

A rider's support person must also stay on the outside of the warm-up arenas, unless assisting with any adjustment of equipment which needs to be done in view of a steward and at the side of the warm up arena.

Warm up arenas may require extra stewards and conditions. Some All Abilities riders will have extra assistance persons who may need to accompany the rider to the warm up and to the ring (some riders may even have a certified assistance support dog in attendance at the event).

JUDGES & STEWARDS

EA Para judges are should be used at Interschool State and National competition.

Judging needs to be in order of classification

Ensure judges have a list of all EA Exemption requirements & ensure the both Judges and Stewards have completed the EA All Abilities online LMS course.

Stewards need any special requirements for riders prior to and when entering the ring



CHAMPIONSHIPS & TEAM POINTS

Organisers may choose to award a Championship prize in each level or an overall Dressage and Show Horse champion. All components of the class- two Dressage tests or three Show Horse phases must be completed to be eligible

The Para Championships is decided on the ranking of scores of all Para competitors. If there is an equality of placing the combined percentage will be used

The Show Horse Supreme Champion is decided on the ranking all riders' total points for the three phases. In the case of an equality of scores, the higher points in the rider class will be used.

All Abilities rider team points should be included in school or state totals. Points are may be awarded for individual classes.

Some riders may be eligible to compete in both All Abilities and Open classes; however, points cannot be combined across the two categories. Where a rider competes in Open Interschool classes, only their Open results will count towards team points, and their All Abilities points will not be included.

SUPPORT FOR ORGANISERS

- Have a clear understanding of needs of riders and clear communication prior to the competition regarding any additional needs. E.g. for mounting, placement of extra aids, assistants, use of headphones, markers
- For large competitions over several days, it is advisable to run All Abilities classes at the commencement of the event.
- Dressage and Show Horse may run on the same day or over two days
- It can be more suitable to the riders' needs to run classes/phases close together.
- Presentations for Championships should, where possible, be conducted alongside the Open classes, with All Abilities results included in team points. However, if a rider is competing in both Open Interschool classes and All Abilities classes, only their Open results will count towards team points, and their All Abilities results/points will not be included.
- Please encourage and educate riders, families, Team Managers and officials that when All Abilities classes are in progress, the area should be treated as a "quiet zone." This should be promoted through clear signage in competition and warm-up areas, as well as via rider notes, rider briefings, draws, and other communications.



LINKS & CONTACTS

The EA Interschool webpage has detailed information in regard to All Abilities

<https://www.equestrian.org.au/interschool>

All Abilities Dressage Tests

<https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/EA%20Interschool%20All%20Abilities%20Dressage%20Tests%2026%20%281%29.pdf>

All Abilities Show Horse Workouts

<https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/All%20Abilities%20Show%20Workout%20Diagrams%20-%20levels%20A%20%26%20B%20-%20Ridden%2C%20Rider%20%26%20Led%202025%20December.pdf> &

<https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/EA%20Interschool%20All%20Abilities%20Show%20Horse%20Advanced%20Work%20Out%20Walk-Trot-Canter%20w%20technical%20elements%20diagram%20March%202026%200.pdf>

Interschool All Ability Show Horse Score Sheets can be found on the EA website on the Interschool Page.

These contacts can direct families and organisers to the correct information.

EA Interschool: interschool@equestrian.org.au

Equestrian Victoria Interschool: isv@equestrianvictoria.com.au

USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES

FEI Compensating Aids Guidelines -

<https://inside.fei.org/system/files/Compensating%20Aids%20Guidelines%20Para%20Dressage%20May%202020%2013.10.2022%200.pdf>

EA Para Dressage Rules - <https://www.equestrian.org.au/paraequestrian>

FEI Para Dressage Rules -

<https://inside.fei.org/sites/default/files/FEI%20Para%20Dressage%20Rules%202026%20Clean%20version%20final%20V3%200.pdf>

Virtus Rules - <https://virtus.sport/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/7.12-VIRTUS-Equestrian-Dressage-Rules-2026-Version-1219.pdf>



APPENDIX

Equestrian Victoria intends to offer the following classes at the Australian Interschool Championships 2026. It is aimed to run the All Abilities classes on Day 1 Monday 28th September and if necessary, also Day 2 Tuesday 29th September

Each State may nominate up to two qualified riders in each category. The process for allocation of State Team points will be confirmed by the EA Interschool Committee, prior the release of the schedule.

Dressage

Entrants may choose to compete in only 1 test, but they will be ineligible for the Championship.

Level 1-4 -Two tests at each level offered

Show Horse

Entrants may choose to compete in only 1 or 2 phases, but they will be ineligible for the Championship. Riders competing in Open Show Horse classes must enter at the appropriate All Abilities Show Horse level based on their riding ability: Level 3 (Progressive) or Level 4 (Advanced). For example, riders competing in Open Interschool Preliminary Dressage should select Level 3 (Progressive), while those competing in Open Interschool Novice Dressage or higher should select Level 4 (Advanced).

Levels 1 to 4 Led, Rider and Ridden Phases