



EQUESTRIAN
AUSTRALIA

PARA EQUESTRIAN CLUB GUIDE

PART 2 TOOLKIT



PARA EQUESTRIAN
AUSTRALIA



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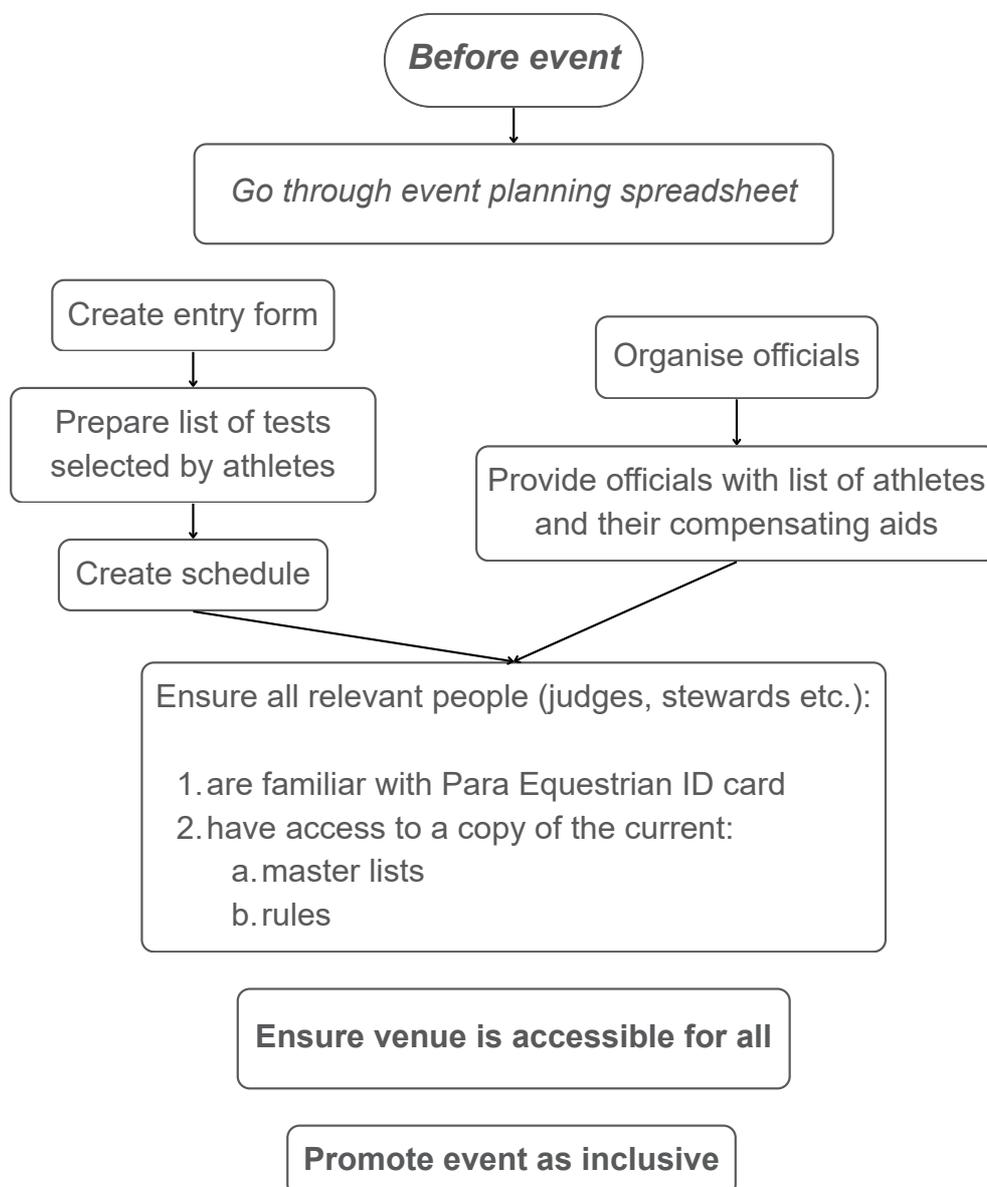
GLOSSARY

| Term | Abbreviation | Definition |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Affiliated Club | AC | An equestrian club that is a member of Equestrian Australia |
| Classification | | Classification determines which athletes are eligible to compete and how they are grouped together for sports competition |
| Classified rider | | A rider that has undergone an assessment and determined eligible to rider in para dressage events |
| Compensating Aid | | An aid that allows a para dressage athlete to ride at their grade level without disadvantage. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Standard ii. Profile-specific; and iii. Non-standard aids |
| Eligible Impairment | | An impairment designated as being a prerequisite for competing in Para sport |
| Equestrian Australia | EA | National Sporting Organisation (NSO) and peak body for the administration of Equestrian Sport in Australia |
| Exemption Card | | Provided for riders who have a diagnosed disability but are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. not eligible for classification; or ii. eligible but do not wish to be classified to allow them to compete on equal terms |
| Fédération Equestre Internationale | FEI | International Sporting Organisation (ISO) responsible for governing the sport of equestrian |

| Term | Abbreviation | Definition |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| Grade | | A category (I-V) in which athletes are grouped by reference to the impact of an Eligible Impairment on their ability to execute the specific tasks and activities fundamental to Para Equestrian sport. |
| ID card | | A card issued to classified riders confirming their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Profile and Grade ii. Profile-Specific and non-standard compensating aid |
| Master List | | A list of currently classified riders with their Grade, Profile and Profile-Specific and non-standard compensating aids |
| Organising Committee | OC | An EA-affiliated organisation, group, society or body held to be responsible for the management of any equestrian event |
| Para Dressage | PD | A dressage competition that allows athletes with measurable physical and/or visual impairments to compete on an equal basis |
| Para Equestrian | PE | Targeted competitions and activities for riders who have physical, intellectual or visual impairments |
| Profile | | A number (1-39) assigned to an athlete based on their functional ability. Profiles are grouped together in Grades |
| Riding for the Disabled Association | RDA | A voluntary, nonprofit organisation that provides opportunities for anyone with a disability to enjoy safe, healthy, therapeutic, horse-related activities |
| Sport Inclusion Australia | SIA | National sporting organisation responsible for processing eligibility applications for athletes with an intellectual ability to compete |
| Virtus | | The global organisation that governs, advocates, organises and promotes elite sport for athletes with an intellectual impairment |

EVENT PLANNING CHART AND CHECKLIST

The chart below lists some key para equestrian specific items to consider when running an event. For a comprehensive list of tasks, see the Event Planning Guide available from the Equestrian Australia website: <https://www.equestrian.org.au/event-organisers>.



During event

Provide safe area and times for para athletes to warm up

Allocate helpers to change arena between Grades

Prepare arena for changeover

Promote event as inclusive

After event

Review event to identify what worked and what didn't work

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

| Conditions of Entry | | Official Events | | |
|----------------------|---|--|--|---|
| | | Participation | Competitive (National) | Competitive (FEI) |
| Athlete | Minimum age | 12 years on 31 December of current year | 12 years on 31 December of current year | 14 years on 31 December of current year |
| | EA Membership Category | Adult (WA only), Participant or Competitor | Adult (WA only), Participant or Competitor | Competitor |
| | Maximum number of tests (includes Competitive, Participation and Freestyle) | | Two/day per horse | Two/day per horse |
| Horse or Pony | EA registered | No | Yes | Yes |
| | Official bridle number | No | Yes | Yes |
| | Competition License | No | Yes | Yes |
| | Minimum age | 6 years old | 6 years old | 6 years old |
| | Maximum number of tests (includes Competitive, Participation and Freestyle) | Two/day | Two/day | Two/day |

PARA DRESSAGE TESTS

Physical and Vision Impairment

| EA Para Dressage Tests https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/equestrian-australia-para-dressage-tests | FEI Para Dressage Tests https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/organisers/para-dressage/tests | |
|--|--|--|
| Grade I | | |
| EA PD Grade I Preparatory Test (Level 1) EA PD Grade I Preliminary Test (Level 2) EA PD Grade I Novice Test (Level 3) EA PD Grade I Elementary Test (Level 4) EA PD Grade I Freestyle Test | CPEDI 1* Para Novice Test A Para Novice Test B Para Novice Test Freestyle | CPEDI 2* Para Intermediate Test A Para Intermediate Test B Para Intermediate Test Freestyle |
| | CPEDI 3* Para Grand Prix Test A Para Grand Prix Test B Para Grand Prix Test Freestyle | |
| Grade II | | |
| EA PD Grade II Preparatory Test (Level 1) EA PD Grade II Preliminary Test (Level 2) EA PD Grade II Novice Test (Level 3) EA PD Grade II Elementary Test (Level 4) EA PD Grade II Freestyle | CPEDI 1* Para Novice Test A Para Novice Test B Para Novice Test Freestyle | CPEDI 2* Para Intermediate Test A Para Intermediate Test B Para Intermediate Test Freestyle |
| | CPEDI 3* Para Grand Prix Test A Para Grand Prix Test B Para Grand Prix Freestyle | |

| EA Para Dressage Tests https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/equestrian-australia-para-dressage-tests | FEI Para Dressage Tests https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/organisers/p-e-dressage/tests | |
|---|---|---|
| Grade III | | |
| EA PD Grade III Preparatory Test (Level 1) EA PD Grade III Preliminary Test (Level 2) EA PD Grade III Novice Test (Level 3) EA PD Grade III Elementary Test (Level 4) EA PD Grade III Freestyle | CPEDI 1* Para Novice Test A Para Novice Test B Para Novice Test Freestyle | CPEDI 2* Para Intermediate Test A Para Intermediate Test B Para Intermediate Test Freestyle |
| | CPEDI 3* Para Grand Prix Test A Para Grand Prix Test B Para Grand Prix Test Freestyle | |
| Grade IV | | |
| EA PD Grade IV Preparatory Test (Level 1) EA PD Grade IV Preliminary Test (Level 2) EA PD Grade IV Novice Test (Level 3) EA PD Grade IV Elementary Test (Level 4) EA PD Grade IV Freestyle | CPEDI 1* Para Novice Test A Para Novice Test B Para Novice Test Freestyle | CPEDI 2* Para Intermediate Test A Para Intermediate Test B Para Intermediate Test Freestyle |
| | CPEDI 3* Para Grand Prix Test A Para Grand Prix Test B Para Grand Prix Test Freestyle | |

| EA Para Dressage Tests | FEI Para Dressage Tests | |
|---|---|--|
| https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/equestrian-australia-para-dressage-tests | https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/organisers/p-e-dressage/tests | |
| Grade V | | |
| EA PD Grade V Preparatory Test (Level 1) | CPEDI 1* | CPEDI 2* |
| EA PD Grade V Preliminary Test (Level 2) | Para Novice Test A Para Novice Test B | Para Intermediate Test A Para Intermediate Test B |
| EA PD Grade V Novice Test (Level 3) | Para Novice Test Freestyle | |
| EA PD Grade V Elementary Test (Level 4) | | Para Intermediate Test Freestyle |
| EA PD Grade V Freestyle | CPEDI 3* | |
| | Para Grand Prix Test A Para Grand Prix Test B | |
| | Para Grand Prix Test Freestyle | |

Intellectual Impairment

| FEI Para Dressage Tests | |
|--|--|
| https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/organisers/p-e-dressage/tests https://inside.fei.org/fei/disc/fei-world-challenge/para-dressage/season-2025 | |
| Development Level | Performance Level |
| II-1 | |
| Para Grade II Novice Test A Para Grade II Intermediate A | Para Grade IV Intermediate Test A (Individual) Para Grade IV Novice Test A (Team) |
| II-2 | |
| Para Grade III Novice Test A (Individual) Para Challenge II Grade III Foundation Test (Team) | |
| II-3 | |
| Para Grade II Novice Test A Para Grade II Intermediate A | Para Grade IV Intermediate Test A (Individual) Para Grade IV Novice Test A (Team) |

MASTER LISTS AND ID CARD

Equestrian Australia Master List:

<https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/para-equestrian-classification>

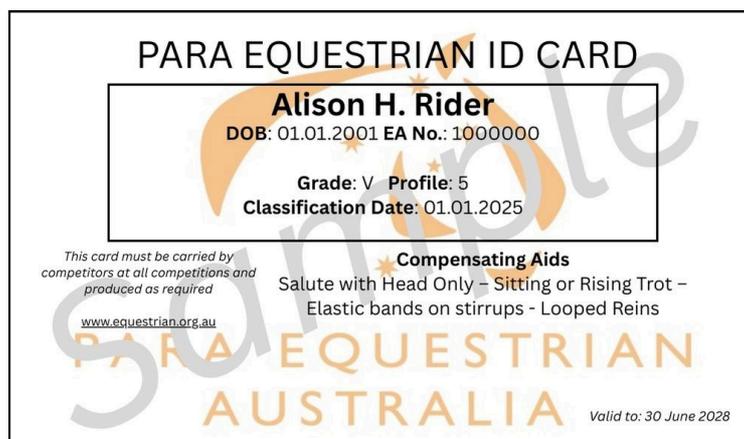
FEI Master List:

<https://data.fei.org/Tools/BaseData.aspx?table=PEDAthletesClassification>

Sport Inclusion Australia Master Lists:

<https://sportinclusionaustralia.org.au/masterlists/>

Example ID Card:



Sample Para Equestrian ID card

STANDARD COMPENSATING AIDS

The standard aids below may be used by all Para Dressage and Virtus classified riders, except where noted.

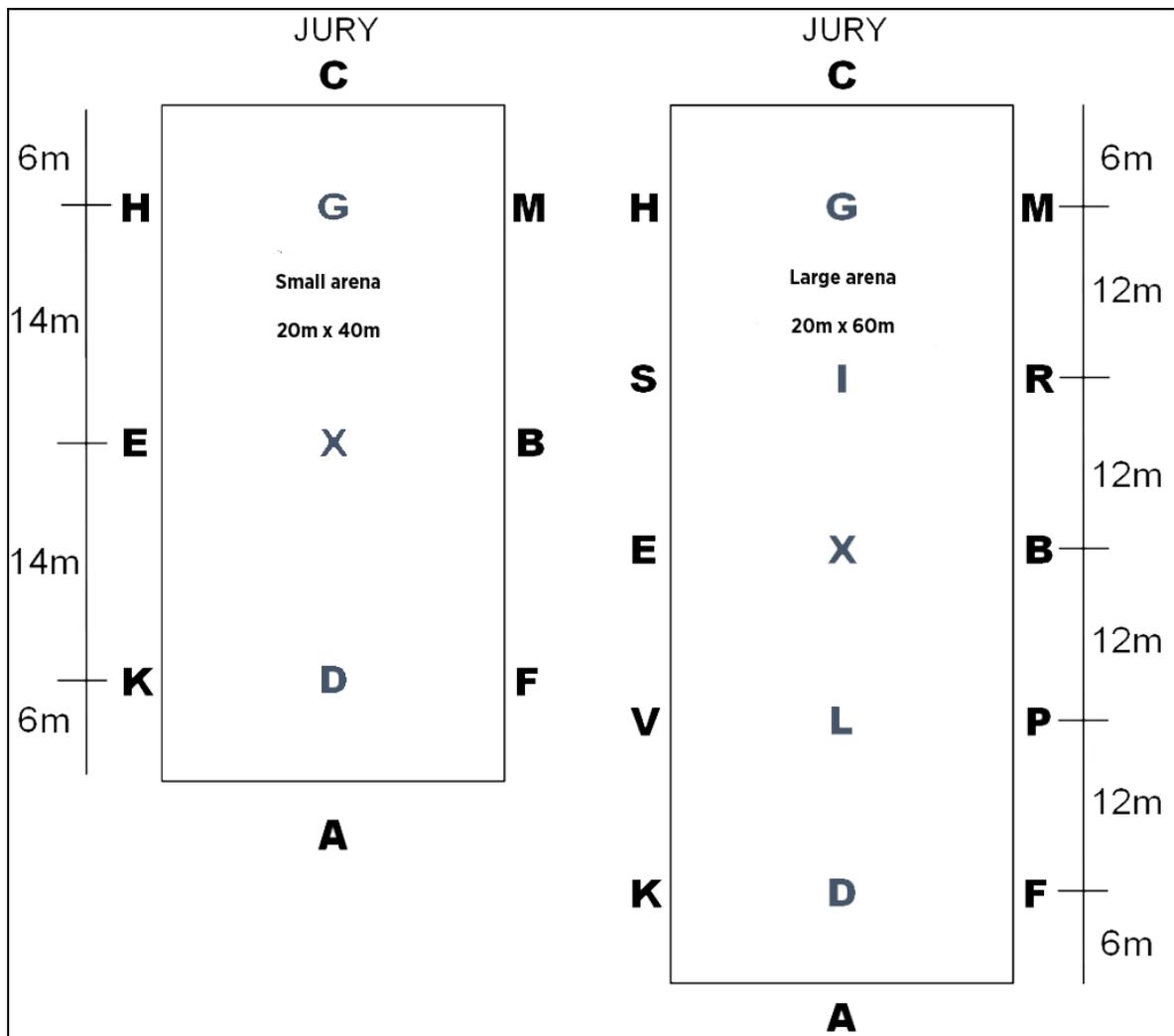
| Item | Comment |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Salute with head only (SWHO) | |
| Sitting or rising trot | |
| Gloves | Optional |
| Spurs | Not offset |
| Saddle (any type) | Any modification or adaptation is non-standard and must be noted |
| Deep saddle | <i>Para Dressage only</i> |
| Soft hand hold | <i>Virtus</i> : Maximum dimensions 10 x 30 cm |
| Elastic bands on stirrups | Elastics must be able to break loose |
| Enclosed stirrups | |
| Magnetic stirrups | |
| One whip | Maximum 120 cm length, no modifications |
| Breast plate and/or neck strap | |
| Split rein for double bridle | The two reins on each side may be connected by a joiner and become one rein before reaching the rider |
| Elastic inserts in reins | |
| Safety vest (including inflatable) | |
| Knotted reins | |

In addition to the standard aids listed above, all Virtus classified riders may use:

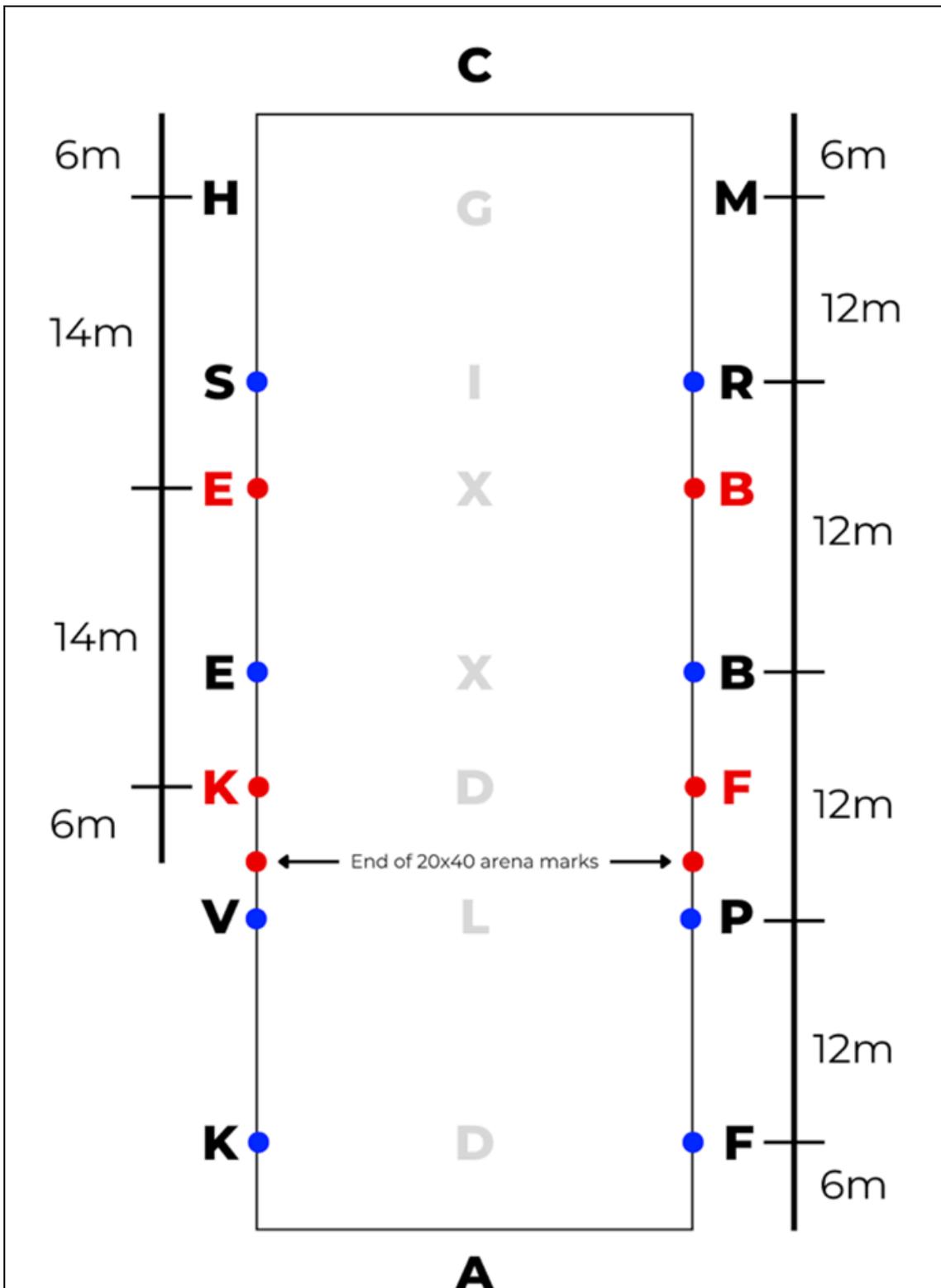
| Item | Comment |
|--|---|
| Sign language | |
| Use of voice (athlete) | |
| Test Caller | Must be recorded for video competitions and escorted in live competition |
| Reins of any type (multi coloured reins permitted) | Must not be attached to the saddle Any kind of auxiliary reins are strictly prohibited |
| No stirrups | |
| Seat Savers | |
| Firm hand-hold | Maximum dimensions 10 x 30 cm |
| Any FEI permitted snaffle bit or Weymouth | |
| Double bridle | |
| Looped Reins | |
| Bar reins | |
| Marker Beepers | |

DRESSAGE ARENA LAYOUT

| | | Arena Size | | |
|------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| | | 20 m x 40 m | 20 m x 60 m | |
| Discipline | Para Dressage | | Grades I, II and III | Grades IV and V |
| | Virtus | National | - | II-1, II-3 |
| | | International | II-1, II-2, II-3 | - |



Arenas used in para dressage



Overlay of 20 m x 40 m and 20 m x 60 m arenas showing letter placement.
Red dots show 20 x 40 m arena letter placement and **blue dots** show 20 x 60 m arena letter placement

MOUNTING RAMPS

Building standards for mounting ramps are available from the Riding for Disabled Association (RDA) Australia and are reproduced with permission on the following pages.

When locating mounting ramps, consider the location to ensure safe access, entrance and exit to arenas or facilities, and to allow the horse to move away freely from the mounting block without obstruction.

FACT SHEET – Mounting Equipment



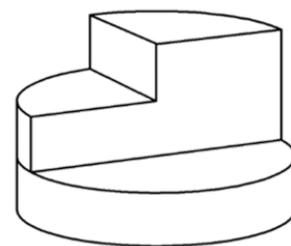
Standards for RDA Ramps

RDA Australia follows industry standards and best practice models for design, use and building of mounting facilities for use in RDA centres and at RDA activities. The minimum standard for RDA mounting facilities is they must safely meet the needs of the participants at the centre. For a newly established Centre this may mean that a mounting block with steps is suitable for participants where all current participants are ambulant. Suitable mounting blocks include:

- Commercially available equestrian mounting steps.
- Privately constructed mounting steps (in timber/steel).

Ideally, the mounting step should be wide enough to accommodate the rider and the Coach, must be positioned on a level surface and each step must be the same height as the step preceding it.

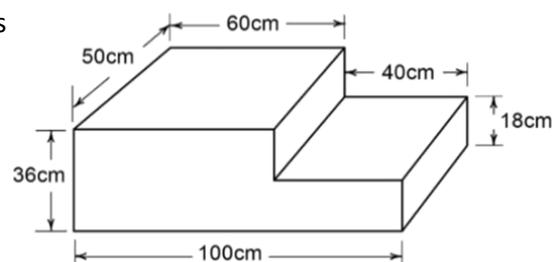
RDA prohibits the use of milk or soft-drink crates or step ladders. This equipment poses safety concerns as they are not designed for equestrian use and can easily upturn and a horse can become entangled in the equipment.



Commercial equestrian mounting step

RDA Centres should work towards installing a wheelchair ramp so future participants in wheelchairs or with restricted mobility can be catered for.

The Australian Standards, set requirements for fixed platforms and walkways and many of these standards apply to RDA ramps.



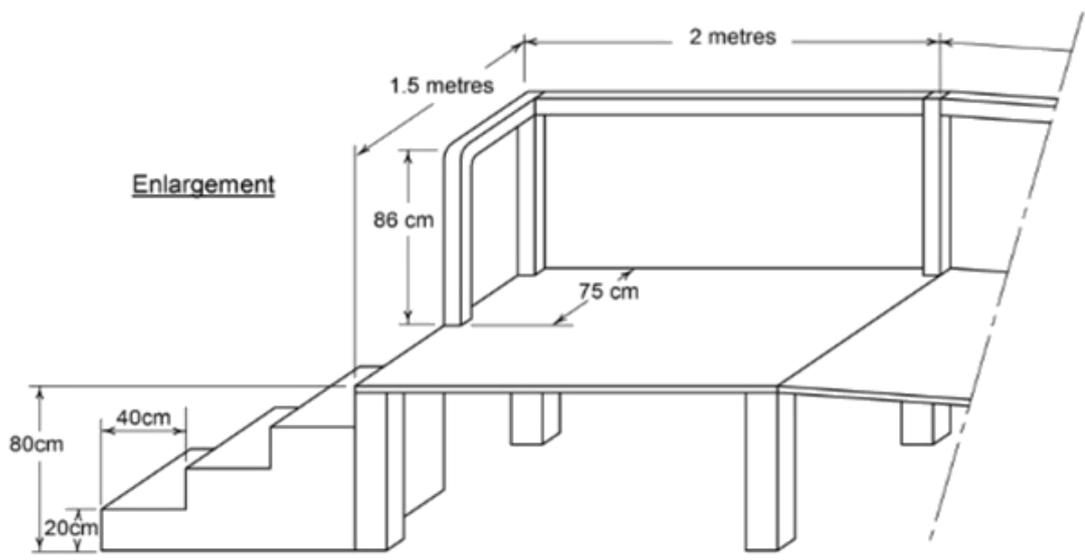
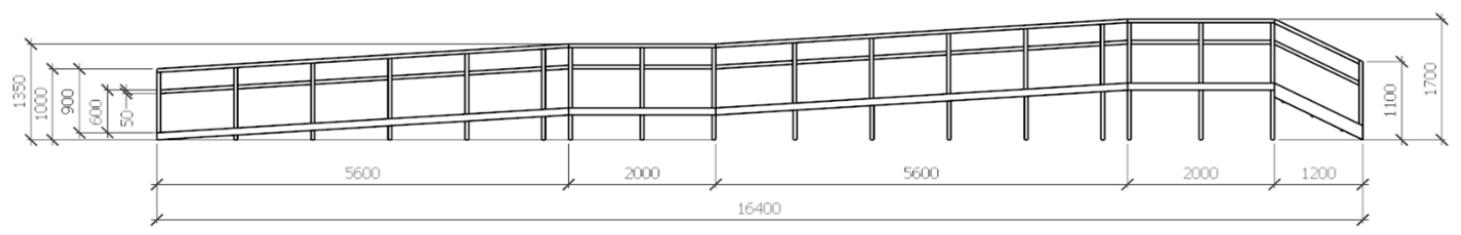
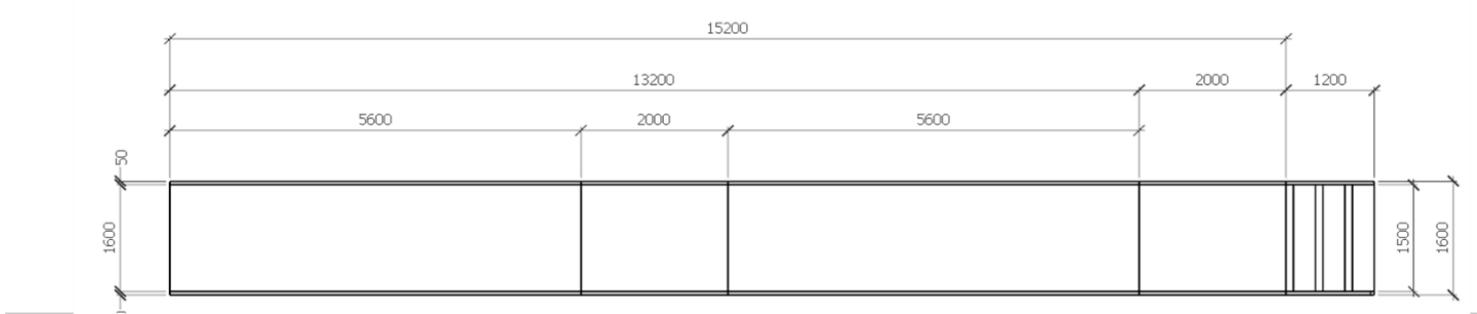
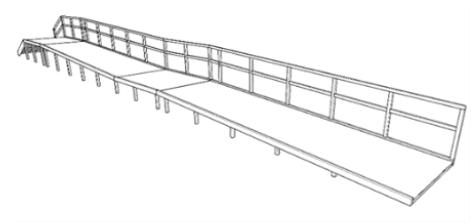
Privately constructed mounting step

Australian Standards:

- Any ramp planned must comply with Australian ramp standard – AS 1428.1
- The platform (landing) must a minimum of 1.2 m x 1.2 m (recommended 1.5 m to include turning space for a wheelchair and for two persons to work safely side by side).
- The ramp (walkway) must be a clear 1 m width as a minimum, (recommended as 1.2 m width).
- The gradient required is 1:14 on the ramp incline (recommended gradient to allow a person in a wheelchair to self-propel up the ramp).
- Handrail heights of 900 mm high (a second handrail is recommended for use by children at the height of 600 mm high).
- Handrails are smooth, uninterrupted and extend beyond the entrance to the ramp or steps and must finish with a closed curve at the end. Circular cross-sections with a diameter of 40 mm is recommended.
- The entrance to the ramp or steps should have a gap of no more than 3 mm between the ramp and the walking path surface to avoid tripping.
- The surface of the ramp and platform must be slip resistant and materials used must be suitable for wear in the environment it is constructed. For example if the ramp is outdoors it must be constructed from weather resistant materials.
- The ramp and platform must have a minimum load rating of 300 kg.



FACT SHEET – Mounting Equipment



FACT SHEET – Mounting Equipment



Additional Standards for RDA accreditation

The following additional standards are recommended specifically for RDA purposes:

- The edge of the mounting platform where the horse stands should have a slightly raised edge. This can be achieved with a thin strip of timber beading to prevent a rider or Coach's foot slipping off the platform during the mounting process.
- A strip of high visibility paint or tape is marked along the open edges of the ramp and platform to highlight the edges for vision impaired participants. A contrasting tactile strip of at least 900 mm long can also be placed at the beginning of the ramp to alert riders with partial sight of the entrance to the ramp.
- Steps are added to the exit end of the ramp so the coach can step down from the platform to assist a mounted rider as they exit the ramp. This also reduces the potential for injury to Coaches and volunteers from jumping down from the platform.
- A second removable step may be placed on the opposite side the ramp to assist the person helping on the offside of the horse to position high support riders.
- Signage on the ramp to indicate that access is by authorised persons only. A gate at the entrance to the ramp can assist with limiting the number of people accessing the ramp.
- If space allows, two platforms at different heights can be more versatile to assist with mounting both ponies and horses. The ideal height is 800mm for horses and 600mm for ponies



LINKS

| Event Documents | |
|--|---|
| Event Organiser Guides and requirements | https://www.equestrian.org.au/event-organisers |
| Paralympics Australia's Universal Design Guide for Creating Inclusive Sport in Australia | https://www.paralympic.org.au/about-us/policies-resources/ |
| EA Accredited Para Dressage Judges | https://www.equestrian.org.au/members/search/official |
| Risk Management Planning and Incident Reporting | https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/risk-management |
| Incident Report Fact Sheet | https://www.equestrian.org.au/sites/default/files/EA%20Incident%20&%20Concussion%20Reporting%20Fact%20Sheet%201.pdf |
| Report an Incident | https://form.jotform.com/202477282848061 |
| Australian Sport Commission Volunteer Map | https://volmap.ausport.gov.au |
| Australian Sport Commission Volunteer Resource Hub | https://www.ausport.gov.au/volunteering/volunteer-resource-hub |
| Volunteer Register | https://volunteersignup.org |
| Standards for RDA Ramps Fact Sheet | https://www.rda.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/RDA-Standards-for-Ramps.pdf |
| Classification | |
| Equestrian Australia Classification information Physical impairments | https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/para-equestrian-classification |
| Vision impairments | https://www.paralympic.org.au |
| Intellectual impairments | https://sportinclusionaustralia.org.au |
| Virtus | https://www.virtus.sport |

| Master Lists | |
|---|--|
| Equestrian Australia Master List | https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/para-equestrian-classification |
| FEI Para Master List | https://data.fei.org/Tools/BaseData.aspx?table=PEDAthletesClassification |
| Sport Inclusion Australia (Virtus) Master Lists | https://sportinclusionaustralia.org.au/masterlists/ |
| Rules and Aids | |
| EA Para Equestrian Rules | https://www.equestrian.org.au/Paraequestrian-rules |
| FEI Para Dressage Rules | https://inside.fei.org/fei/disc/para-dressage/rules |
| EA Dressage Rules | https://www.equestrian.org.au/dressage-rules |
| Virtus Dressage Rules | https://virtus.sport/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/2026-Virtus-Equestrian-Rule-book-V1.pdf (updated 1 Jan 2026) https://virtus.sport/governance-and-policy#toggle-id-7 |
| Compensating aids (photo list) | https://inside.fei.org/fei/disc/para-dressage/classification/documentation |
| Dressage Tests | |
| EA Para Dressage tests | https://www.equestrian.org.au/content/equestrian-australia-para-dressage-tests |
| FEI Para Dressage Tests | https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/organisers/p-e-dressage/tests |
| FEI Para Dressage World Challenge Tests | https://inside.fei.org/fei/disc/fei-world-challenge/para-dressage |

CONTACTS

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Lead

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Classification enquiries

classification@equestrian.org.au





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Equestrian Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across Australia where we are privileged to live, work and ride. We recognise and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's continuing connection to culture and Country. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, who are the custodians of the stories, traditions, and culture of First Nations People.

We remember always that this land was, and always will be, another's Dreaming.

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