

## **Agility O Performance Guidelines**

**Agility O has been developed by Jane Williams at Dog Star Training to combine aspects of Rally and Agility into a fun dog sport for pet dogs and their owners. It aims to develop and promote a positive relationship between the dog and owner based on effective communication and positive reinforcement of wanted behaviours through reward based training. Rewards can include praise, food, toys and interactions with owners. The use of punishments or harsh corrections is prohibited and points will be lost for inappropriate handling.**

### **Interactions between handler and dog**

**Praise, Encouragement and feedback are allowed throughout the competition.**

**Handlers may clap their hands or slap their legs as well as use words and sounds to encourage their dog while heeling between exercises or during moving exercises (turns, spirals, jumps, tunnels etc.) including while the dog is in the heel position.**

**Handlers are allowed to give verbal encouragement after the first command but not to repeat commands when the dog is out of position or not responding. Commands repeated to bring the dog back to position, or bring about a response, are marked as additional.**

**For each exercise a verbal cue and a signal are allowed.**

**Food, play and touch rewards are allowed at all levels but should not interfere with the flow of the course.**

**Food and toys should be carried out of sight or hearing of the dog and on the opposite side from the dog.**

**Dropped treats will be considered as interrupting the team's flow through the course.**

**While clickers are excellent training tools for reward based training they are not permitted during competitions.**

### **Targeting and luring**

**Hand signals and movements are allowed for the dog to follow, with a verbal command. Holding the hand in position as a cue for positions is permitted.**

**Luring with the appearance of the hand having a reward and being held directly in front of the dog's face to position the dog would lead to points being deducted.**

**If the handler lures the dog using food during the round, it may be completed as a training round. The handler may request at any time that the round continue as a training round.**

### **Positioning**

**The dog should be at heel walking on a loose lead when moving between stations or carrying out exercises at heel. Heel position is considered to be when the dog is at the handler's left side, with the shoulder approximately next to the handler's left leg. Points will be deducted for the dog pulling or walking ahead of the handler or lagging behind, so that the handler has to stretch to reach the dog's head.**

**Signs should be placed at each station so that the handler and dog pass to the left hand side, with some specific exceptions as identified in the lists of signs at each level.**

**Exercises should be performed within 0.6 metres (2 feet) of the sign unless otherwise specified in the list of signs. The equipment required at a station e.g. a hoop, jump or a mat will be placed to the left of the dog, for position and safety.**

**Turns should be performed as smooth turns, at a continuous pace unless otherwise specified. Turn signs are placed directly in the handler's path.**

### **Start, Finish and Bonus**

**All dogs at all levels must enter and leave the ring on lead.**

**The handler should elect to complete the bonus (or not) at the start of the round. If the handler decides not to attempt the bonus at Yellow or Bronze, no points will be deducted. At Silver and Gold, points will be lost if the team does not complete the bonus having elected to do so.**

**Judging starts at the team passes the start line and continues until the finish sign is passed. The bonus is judged to include the heelwork to the bonus and from passing the bonus sign until its conclusion. Points may be deducted for inappropriate handling at any time while the team is in the ring.**

**Agility O is not a timed event.**

## **Streams and Levels**

### **Streams:**

**At Yellow there is only one stream, at all other levels there is a Stream 1 for novice handlers and pet dog owners and a Stream 2 for professional dog trainers, people who teach Agility O, Rally or obedience or who compete in KC open shows in obedience or agility.**

### **Levels:**

**There are four levels of Agility O:**

- **Yellow – Starting Entry Level (One stream for dogs aged 6 – 12 months, or for dogs who have entered ten or less classes in previous competition events) – performed on the lead or off the lead (separate classes to be provided)**
- **Bronze – Novice Level (Stream 1 = Pet dog owners and handlers who are not professional trainers; Stream 2 = Professional dog trainers and handlers) – performed off the lead; teams become ineligible once they compete at Gold level**
- **Silver – Intermediate Level (Stream 1 = Pet dog owners and handlers who are not professional trainers; Stream 2 = Professional dog trainers and handlers) – performed off the lead; teams eligible if competing at Bronze or Gold, but not at Yellow**
- **Gold – Advanced Level (Stream 1 = Pet dog owners and handlers who are not professional trainers; Stream 2 = Professional dog trainers and handlers) – performed off the lead; teams eligible after competing at Silver level**