



AWHA Ltd Mare Classification

Why is mare classification important?

A female that is AWHA Ltd registered in the Stud Book Appendix (SBAp) or Warmblood Performance Registration Book (WPRB = ex Warmblood Identification Register (WID)) stamped '*eligible for classification*', or of Thoroughbred or Anglo-Arabian breeding, must be classified into a category. This enables their progeny by an AWHA Ltd Approved (App), Licensed (Lic), Performance Accepted (PA), Imported Frozen Semen (IFS) or Imported Chilled Semen (ICS) listed stallion to be registered into the Stud Book Appendix.

The classification of a mare consists of an evaluation of her exterior (i.e. type and conformation) **and movement** (i.e. correctness, impulsion, swing and rhythm) when led at the walk and trot. An option also exists where the mare may be inspected in free movement (walk, trot and canter). This allows the canter to be included in the classification. Mare owners are able to choose whether or not to free run their mare. The scoresheets have been set up to ensure that mare owners are not disadvantaged if they choose not to have their mare classified in free movement. On the day, the AWHA Ltd Classifiers will determine if conditions are safe to have the mare free run.

Mares must be micro-chipped and/or branded when presented for classification. **The original registration certificate must be given to the AWHA Ltd Classifiers when the mare is presented**, unless you have already forward them with your application for Mare Classification to the AWHA Ltd Registrations Administrator.

Preparation leading up to the classification day

Before the classification day, train your mare to lead willingly at the walk and trot and to stand still for inspection. The better she shows her movement, the higher she should score. The Classifiers will also want to look at her teeth and pick up her feet, so she should be comfortable with being handled in this way. If you wish to have your mare inspected in free movement (walk, trot and canter), ensure that she has been free run in an arena and is able to be easily caught once the free run component of the classification has been completed. Assistance can be used to ensure your mare moves in both directions freely, without stressing her.

Example: 60 x 20 m enclosed arena – 3 people with a lunge whip can stand on the centreline in the middle of each 20m circle point. This helps to keep the horse moving on the outside of the circle. The Classifiers can then fully view your mare at the walk, trot or canter, or have her change leads without the handlers running around from one side to the other in front of them and thus blocking their view.

Example: 40 x 20 m enclosed arena – 2 people with a lunge whip can stand on centreline in the middle of each 20 m circle point.

Example: Round yard – the mare is let free and 1 person should be enough to keep the mare moving if the mare has been trained to move freely in a round yard. **Please note:** a horse on a lunge is not ideal as it can restrict movement somewhat, but with the agreement of the AWHA Ltd Classifiers, this would not be ruled out due to circumstances (e.g. lack of an arena or suitable presentation space).

Classification day

Your mare will need to be presented before two AWHA Ltd Classifiers. She does not need to be plaited, etc. for classification, however, it is in your best interest to present her in a manner that will give the Classifiers the best opportunity to assess her favourably. She should be well groomed and in good condition, noting that hoof black and makeup is not to be applied. It is not recommended to plait the tail for classification, as it can affect the nerves going from the tail over the back and the mare may not use her back as well. For tips on presenting your mare for classification, please [watch this video](#).

The Classifiers will be inspecting type, conformation and movement. The movement element of the classification is weighted, so this is an important phase. Therefore it is in your best interest to teach your mare to stand up well to show her best frame and to ensure that she is able to walk and trot out on the lead well (to best show her paces) and optionally, show off all 3 movements, inclusive of the canter at the free run without the restriction of a handler.

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At the Classifiers' indication, each mare will be individually presented. First of all, your mare will be measured and have her identity checked against her registration certificate/passport. You will then be asked to stand her up for viewing of her conformation. Place the mare so that the Classifiers can see all four legs at once (i.e. the "Open Position", see image below).



Image depicting the "open position" for inspection. Image courtesy of IHB Pty Ltd.

When asked to move off, commence one circuit of the exhibition triangle (see diagram below) in walk, turning around the markers in a clockwise direction, returning to your original starting position. You will then be asked to repeat the triangle in walk or continue into the second circuit in trot.

The Classifiers stay in the same position, and with the triangular form of the course they are able to first inspect your mare from behind, then her action deployment from the side, and finally her correctness from the front. For that reason, however, it is necessary to follow exactly the triangular form of the course.

At the trot the mare should be given the chance to move as freely as possible. With regard to actively moving the horse, the handler should be someone who is able to move well enough themselves to show this movement. When trotting your horse you take both the reins in your right hand.

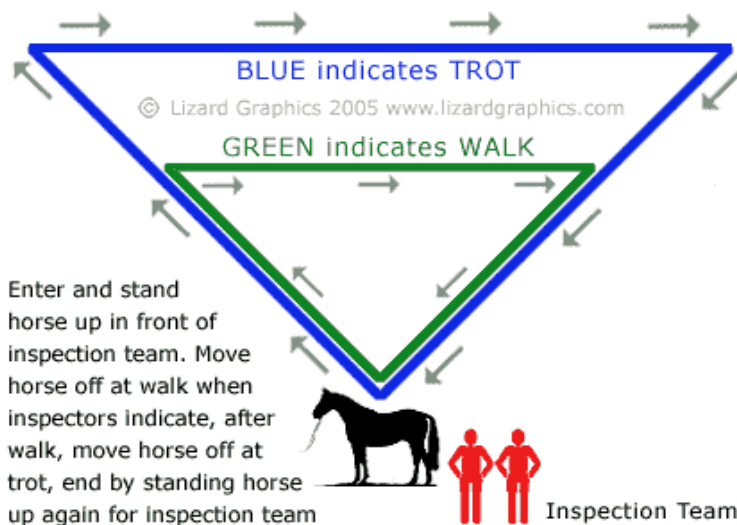


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If you have chosen to have your mare's canter movement inspected, and the Classifiers have determined that it is safe to let her free run, then at this point you will unclip the lead from your mare and allow her to free run in the arena to show off all 3 paces (walk, trot and canter). **Please note:** it is not recommended to chase a heavily pregnant mare around and consideration of the safety of people and horses on the day will prevail. Excessive stimulation of any mare will not be tolerated.

The Classifiers will each complete their respective scoresheet which are forward to the AWA Ltd Federal Registrar at the conclusion of the inspection. You will be advised on the day as to whether your mare has successfully completed classification. If successful, you will be presented with an AWA Ltd Mare Classification sash. You will be advised of the formal result once the scores have been processed by the AWA Ltd Federal Registrar. Learning your mare's strengths and weaknesses in this way can be of assistance in helping you to select a suitable stallion or even assist with your training program for your mare.

If your mare passes Classification, it means her progeny by stallions with an active AWA Ltd breeding permit will be eligible for registration into the AWA Ltd Stud Book Appendix.

Classification Scores

A Classification scale of 1 to 10 is used. The weighting of each mark is the same as that used for dressage: 1 = very bad, 2 = bad, 3 = fairly bad, 4 = insufficient, 5 = sufficient, 6 = satisfactory, 7 = fairly good, 8 = good, 9 = very good and 10 = excellent.

Mares are scored out of a possible 100 points, with the total marks reflected as percentages. The standards are high and because of the AWA Ltd's aim of improving the Australian Warmblood, it is recommended that mares with inferior conformation and/or movement should not reproduce. Thus a score of 4 ("insufficient") or less, for any one area of the classification disqualifies the mare from gaining AWA Ltd breeding approval.

In order to be promoted in the Stud Book, Warmblood Foundation Mare Register or Foundation Mare Register, a mare must score 65% or better on the averaged marks of a minimum of two Classifiers, with no mark less than 5. A score of 75% is required for entry into the Head Stud Book or Class 'A' Registers.

Listed below are the categories your mare may enter into, dependent upon her registration status, classification score and height.

Stud Book Height = minimum height 158cm or over.

Small Warmblood Stud Book Height = height greater than 148cm but less than 158cm.

Stud Book Appendix registered horses – the % score of the classification and the height will decide which category the mare will be entered into, i.e.:

Main Stud Book = a classification score of 65% and under 75%.

Head Stud Book = a classification score of 75% or over.

Elite Stud Book = both Main and Head Stud Book Mares are eligible to obtain Elite status, upon attaining certain standards in open competition.

Warmblood Foundation Mare (WFM) Register. Warmblood mares that are registered in the WID/WPRB who are stamped '*eligible for classification*', will have their % score from the classification and height to decide if they will be Class 'A' or Class 'B' (height minimum 158cm or over). **Please note:** Classes 'A' and 'B' do not apply for Small Warmbloods.

Class 'A' = 75% and over.

Class 'B' = 65% and under 75%.

Small Warmblood Foundation Mare Register = 65% and over.

Foundation Mare (FM) Register – for Thoroughbred and Anglo-Arabians (minimum height 153cm or over)

Class 'A' = 75% and over.

Class 'B' = 65% and under 75%.



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Once your mare's scores have been collated by the AWA Ltd Federal Registrar, you will be mailed an upgraded registration certificate along with your mare's classification scoresheet. You will note that the 'Status' field will be updated along with the relevant abbreviation being applied to the end of her registration number – **SB** (Main Stud Book), **HSB** (Head Stud Book), **WFM** (Warmblood Foundation Mare) or **FM** (Foundation Mare).

However, if your mare is registered as an AWA Ltd Small Warmblood, the abbreviation **SWB-SB** (Small Warmblood Main Stud Book), **SWB-HSB** (Small Warmblood Head Stud Book) or **SWB-WFM** (Small Warmblood Foundation Mare) will be entered behind your mare's registration number.

Eligibility criteria and conditions for mare classification

1. You must be a current financial member of the AWA Ltd.
2. Females must be three years of age or over. The age of the horse is taken from 01 August.
3. The application for mare classification needs to have been processed and accepted by the AWA Ltd Registrations Administrator prior to the classification day, unless an exemption has been granted by the AWA Ltd Federal Registrar.
4. The original registration certificate/passport must be available for viewing by the classifiers when the mare is presented, unless the mare's registration certificate/passport has already been submitted to the AWA Ltd Federal Registrar.
5. Thoroughbred mares must have Australian Stud Book (ASB) registration and Anglo-Arabian mares must have Arabian Horse Society of Australia (AHSA) registration.
6. If your mare's registration is pending with the AWA Ltd Federal Registrar, the state Branch will be notified with all the mare's details; therefore no paperwork is required to be presented to the Classifiers on the day.
7. Mares must measure 158cm and above for Main, Head or Warmblood Foundation Mare Stud Book or greater than 148cm for the Small Warmblood Stud Book to be eligible for classification. Thoroughbred or Anglo-Arabian mares must measure a minimum of 153cm to be eligible.
8. Mares must be branded and/or micro-chipped when presented for classification.

If you have any queries regarding the eligibility of your mare, please contact the AWA Ltd Registrations Administrator via email registrar@awha.com.au