



The Gundog Club

The Gundog Club

G4 HPR graded test
(Proposed for consultation)

January 2018

Summary

This document invites views – from Gundog Club instructors and students – on a proposed test for HPR G4.

The Graded Training scheme has three types of tests for: Retrievers; Hunting Retrievers; and HPRs. The grades currently go up to Grade 5 for Retrievers and Hunting Retrievers, but only to Grade 3 for HPRs. We now propose to extend the scheme and introduce a Grade 4 for HPRs.

This has been made possible by a group of volunteers who have kindly given up their time to advise the admin staff of the Gundog Club in writing this consultation. Many thanks go to Jo Laurens and Jan Malesa, and also to Andrew Farley, for their invaluable assistance.

Obviously, the key difference between the tests for a Hunting Retriever or a Retriever, and an HPR, is an element that tests pointing ability. In introducing this requirement we have tried to propose a format that will be accessible to people, and practical to test, given that it requires live game.

We particularly welcome input on the practicality of what we propose – which is that the pointing element of the test can be submitted for assessment by video, so long as a Gundog Club accredited instructor certifies that the candidate in the video achieved the required standard.

We welcome any comments and input on our proposals by 15th March 2018.

The Gundog Club including the Graded Training Scheme and the Affiliate Instructor Scheme, is now owned and managed by national gundog welfare charity The Gundog Trust – charity number 1147407.

The Gundog Trust is committed to the following aims:

- To promote, support and develop gundog training opportunities
- To encourage community participation in gundog training and fieldwork
- To promote the humane treatment and welfare of gundog breeds.

Copyright and trademarks

The Gundog Club owns the copyright of all of its published materials. It also has several 'trademarks'. These are words or phrases associated with our Gundog training scheme.

These trademarks are an important part of our Graded Training Scheme and are now recognised throughout the UK and beyond, as representing Gundog Club training and the standards comprised therein.

Any unauthorised use of these terms, or unauthorised use or copying of the Gundog Club's materials, is a threat to the charity as it deprives us of revenue which we need to meet our objectives.

The Trustees will take action to protect the Gundog Club's copyright and trademarks of the Gundog Club's training materials.

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1. About the Gundog Club

The Gundog Trust works towards its aims by providing the following resources:

- A National Graded Training Scheme
- A register of Accredited Gundog Instructors
- Gundog Training Books to accompany the scheme

The Graded Training Scheme has been developed to help both those that want a competent working gundog, and those that just want to have fun with their pet.

Each grade builds on the skills learnt at the previous grade in easy steps. Students can measure their progress by entering a Field Test when they complete their training at each grade.

2. Proposed G4 HPR test

See Annex One for the full details of the proposed test.

The hunting section of the proposed test is very similar to the hunting section currently contained in Grade 4 Hunting Retriever.

The retrieving section is, however, a cut down version of that contained in Grade 4 Retriever and some items such as the dog honouring another dog's retrieve are not required. The retrieves that introduce handling are, however, included.

The general behavior required is similar to that in the Hunting Retriever, the dog off lead with reasonable heelwork, rather than the more specific requirements of the dog at heel for the Grade 4 Retriever.

The pointing section is, of course, unique to HPRs.

There are two eliminating faults for all grades: the dog showing aggression, and inappropriate or harsh handling. There are three additional eliminating faults for a G4 retriever – a refusal to retrieve, a refusal to enter water, and excessive noise from the dog. Excessive noise from a Hunting Retriever or HPR loses marks but is not an eliminating fault.

The three tests at Grade 4 compare as shown in table one.

Table one: Comparison between G4 tests: Gundog Club Graded Training

	All	G4 retriever	G4 hunting retriever	Proposed G4 HPR
General behavior	Under control Quiet handling No excessive noise from the dog	Off lead for the whole test, and at heel if not retrieving	Off lead and at heel (heel is not required to be precise) for the whole test	Off lead and at heel (heel is not required to be precise) for the whole test
Hunting		-	Hunts for 3 minutes with natural hunting ability, demonstrating enthusiasm, style and effective ground coverage Stop to fall and shot	Hunts for 10 minutes Rest similar to hunting retriever Stop to whistle and stop to fall and shot (retrieves follow)
Pointing		-	-	The dog should point game for at least 3 seconds
Retrieving		Honour another dog's retrieve Long Mark: 80-100 yards Double mark - dog to be sent for each mark in turn Mark across water Long Blind - 60 yards Blind with Distraction Hold an area	Mark over a jump Short 20 yard blind	Mark across water Blind 'back' retrieve 30 yards Left or right blind with distraction mark Hold an area
Eliminating faults	Aggressive behaviour by the dog Harsh or inappropriate handling	Failure to retrieve Failure to enter water Excessive noise from the dog		

3. The pointing test

See Annex One for the full details of the pointing test

We have sought to propose a format that is likely to be practical for instructors to provide. In doing so, we are mindful that one of the aims of the Trust is to encourage participation in gundog training, and so it is important that the format of the tests remain accessible.

To this end, the pointing test allows the use of wild, dizzied or game in launchers. Of course, the set-up must comply with the relevant law regarding treatment of game and release of game.

In terms of assessment, there are two options. The pointing element of the test may be assessed in the normal way by an assessor but this is likely only to be practical if dizzied or game in launchers is used. It may be impractical if wild game is used due to the length of time the assessor may have to spend in an area with the student. So a second option of the instructor assessing their own students and submitting a video for verification to the Gundog Club is available.

4. Pricing

The Gundog Club's pricing structure dates from a time when students normally travelled to an assessor to take a test. There is a flat charge (£58 for Grade 4) from which the Gundog Club pays the assessor and covers its admin and fixed costs.

These days, it is common for instructors to organise assessments for a few students at a time, and invite assessors to their ground. Clearly, the requirement to provide dizzied game, or game in launchers, and video a student is a significant extra component over and above the Grade 4 tests for Retrievers or Hunting Retrievers. As is the assessment of a video by the Gundog Club (if required).

Due to the possible variations allowed, we propose that instructors and/or assessors set their own charges for providing game which is payable by the student direct to the instructor or assessor, in addition to the test fee paid to the Gundog Club of £58. This applies equally whether the instructor provides game or access to game and videos a student, or a student visits an assessor who provides game or access to game. In addition, we propose a fee of £6 for assessment of a video by the gundog club.

By way of example, a student who attends a training session with his or her instructor, and obtains a video of their dog pointing, should pay the instructor directly for that session at the asking price of that instructor, and pay the Gundog Club £6 for verifying the video. To complete the test, the student must pay the test fee of £58, and attend and assessment for the hunting and retrieving sections of the test in the normal way.

If an assessor provides the game, or access to the game, then the price for that is agreed between the student and assessor, no video is required and no video fee payable, and the normal test fee of £58 is payable to the Gundog Club.

A student may submit a video for assessment before or after taking the hunting/retrieving assessment. That is, a student can take each part separately and find out whether they have passed the first part before entering the second.

5. Consultation questions

Please read the next section first, which describes the proposed test, and then return to these consultation questions.

1. In what capacity are you responding to this consultation? Eg a Gundog Club

Instructor/Assessor or a Gundog Club student, or prospective student?

2. Do you agree that the balance of requirements between Hunting, Pointing and Retrieving in the proposed G4 HPR test is right? If not, what do you suggest we should change?
3. Do you think the requirement of a 3 second static point is right for the pointing element of the test? If not, what should we change?
4. Is the format of the pointing test – allowing wild, dizzied or game in launchers and video assessment by instructors – practical? If not, how should we change the requirements?
5. Do you agree that it is necessary and appropriate for students to pay a separate fee to the instructor and assessor for the provision of game and facilities for the pointing test?
6. The test is scored out of 300 with the maximum marks allocated as follows: Hunting – 140. Pointing – 50. Retrieving 100. Additional available marks: 10. A pass (70%) is required in each section for an overall pass. Do you think this balance between the elements is right? If not, how should we change it?
7. Please feel free to make any other comments, or suggestions on the proposed test.

6. Responding to this consultation

Your comments and suggestions by 15th March 2018 would be very much appreciated. You can send comments after this date, and we'll take them into account if we can before we issue the final test, but comments by the 15th March 2018 would be appreciated.

Emailing us is best, at admin@thegundogclub.co.uk putting HPR G4 consultation in the subject line of the email.

The Gundog Club Graded Training and Awards Scheme

Grade Four Proficient HPR

The Candidate's Guide to Field Test
Standards and Procedures

Standards required at Grade Four - Proficient HPR

Hunting

The dog must hunt in a controlled and effective way. He must show a natural hunting ability, demonstrating enthusiasm, style and effective ground coverage. He must also be responsive to his handler, who should demonstrate the ability to control the dog quietly.

The dog will stop to whistle, and shot and fall (use of the stop whistle is permitted) and remain steady once he has done so without any further commands.

Pointing

The purpose of the pointing component of the test is to determine that the dog has a pointing instinct on game.

It is preferable for wild game to be used for assessment, but dizzied game, or game in launchers is acceptable if wild game is unavailable. The set-up must comply with the law regarding treatment of game and release of game. Caged game cannot be used, because it's not possible to simulate a flush - unless the cage has a string attached, to release the bird.

If considered desirable by the handler to prevent chasing at the flush, the dog may trail a 10m long-line. However, a short chase at the flush of up to 50 yards, is acceptable at grade 4.

An instructor may assess their own student for this component of the test, but must video the encounter with game and submit this to the Gundog Club for verification.

The candidate's 'best' encounter with game in one training session is the recommended submission. Especially when dealing with wild game, many factors which are not the fault of the dog may conspire against a static 3 second point, first time.

The video must cover the dog initially winding the game, until the handler regains control of the dog, after the flush. The instructor should suggest a mark on their scoresheet for this component and the mark will be upheld or reviewed by the Gundog Club.

The rest of the test is to be carried out as normal – with an assessor that has not trained the dog or student within the last year.

Retrieving

Steadiness and delivery to hand are required for good marks. Speed and style are desirable.

General Behaviour

The dog should remain off lead and obediently under control throughout each section of the test (a lead may be replaced between different sections if appropriate to allow the next section to be set up and at the discretion of the assessor) and should remain at heel when not hunting or retrieving. Heelwork is not expected to be precise, but the dog must be clearly under control and not forging ahead of the handler. Extra points are available for excellent behaviour.

Excessive noise by the dog (or handler) or excessive cues by the handler are undesirable and will lose marks.

Test procedure guidelines at Grade Four HPR

1. HUNTING

The dog will hunt in front of the handler through moderate but not punitive cover, whilst the handler walks forwards for approx 10 minutes.

The dog should hunt with intent and purpose, demonstrating breed appropriate range/coverage of the ground. No verbal cues are permitted. Use of a turn whistle must not be excessive and must be appropriate (and no use of the turn whistle is appropriate).

During the time the dog is hunting the following are evaluated:

Stop to whistle, then retrieve

When the dog is the furthest away from the handler during the hunting (the furthest distance that particular dog is typically reaching), the handler is instructed to sit the dog to whistle. A dummy is thrown to land 40 yards from the dog, the assessor will instruct the handler to send the dog out for the retrieve. The dog will be cast from where he has stopped (i.e. remote from the handler).

Stop to fall and shot (and retrieve)

A dummy is thrown and a shot is fired. The dog is expected to stop to this 'fall and shot'. The stop whistle may be blown when the dummy is thrown, to assist in stopping the dog. Further use of the whistle to keep the dog steady, once it has come to a stop, will lose marks.

The shot is to be fired from a starting pistol, and the dummy thrown to land 40 yards from the dog.

The assessor will instruct the handler to send the dog out for the retrieve. The dog will be cast from where he has stopped (i.e. remote from the handler).

When the assessor is ready, they will instruct the handler to set the dog hunting again.

End of hunting and recall

The dog to be recalled by the handler, at the end of the hunt up.

2. POINTING

The dog is either hunting freely, or is walked up on long-line, into an area which is known to contain either wild game, dizzied game, or game in launchers/bird releasers. The dog is not under assessment until catching wind of the game - quartering/hunting is not being assessed in this exercise.

The dog should point the game for at least 3 seconds.

The dog may stalk the game, or ride in on the game, but must static point for at least 3 seconds during the encounter. If the dog stalks the game in a point until the game flushes (with no static point), some marks will be awarded for the demonstration of some pointing instinct due to recognition that young dogs lack experience, and may put undue pressure on game - but a static point is needed for full marks.

After 3 seconds:

On wild game, the judge will give the handler the cue to flush. On dizzied birds or launchers, the

judge will launch the bird or wake the bird. Both will simulate a flush.

After the flush:

The dog may give a short chase of 50 yards max. If this option is chosen, the dog must be able to be recalled off the chase before 50 yards is reached.

Alternatively, the handler may take hold of a long-line (or a handle lead) when the dog points and use it to restrain the dog after the flush. If this option is chosen, it should take no longer than 5 seconds before the dog sits, after the flush. Repeated cues after the initial sit whistle/word will lose marks. In this option, the dog should be wearing a harness, as a correction at the flush is inappropriate.

3. RETRIEVING

Marks

Dummies will be hand thrown, and marks accompanied by a single shot from a starting pistol. Any cover will be deep enough to conceal the dummy and free from overly harsh or prickly vegetation. (e.g. no stinging nettle beds or dense brambles)

Mark across water

A single short mark with shot, to fall a max of 40 yds from the dog, on the other side of a small area of water. (The swim need not be more than a few metres, but the dog must swim.) The dog must enter water, exit, pick dummy, re-enter and swim back with retrieve.

The mark must be 5-10 yds from the water's edge and the dog must be sent from at least 5yds from the water's edge on the opposite bank. The dummy should be visible to the dog on emerging from the water (not in deep cover).

Blinds

Left or right blind with distraction mark

Dog to be sent for a single dummy at around 30 yards distant. A second distraction mark to be thrown at a minimum of 90 degrees, before the dog is sent for the blind. Only the blind is to be picked, not the distraction.

Hunt an area

Three dummies to be dropped in advance, in an area of deep cover, immediately in front of handler/dog. Cover should not be punitive (no thorns or nettles) but dummies should be concealed from view. Area to be approx 10 yards square and marked for handler's benefit with 4x small flags.

A single shot is fired. The dog must then find at least two dummies. Maximum time allowed: 5 minutes. Full marks awarded to dog which persists in hunting and does not look back to handler for encouragement. Marks deducted for lack of confidence, returning without dummy, seeking reassurance or help from handler.

Blind 'back' retrieve

Single blind 'back' at 30 yards behind the dog.

The handler is to give directions from a distance of 20 yards from the dog. The cover should be ankle-length and not punitive.

4. General Behaviour

These extra points are to be allocated at the assessor's discretion, for excellent behaviour. Total possible points: 10

5. Scoring for G4 HPR

Total maximum points available for the complete test: 300

Dogs must pass each section – so 70% must be achieved for hunting, and pointing, and retrieving.

6. Eliminating faults

Aggressive behaviour by the dog

Harsh or inappropriate handling

Proposed scoresheet for G4 HPR

HUNTING

HUNTING ABILITY

	Mark	Max
Quartering pattern/ground coverage	_____	20
Speed / style / enthusiasm	_____	15
TOTAL FOR HUNTING ABILITY		25

QUIET HANDLING

	Mark	Max
Dog is responsive to handler	_____	10
Dog is responsive to recall	_____	10
TOTAL FOR QUIET HANDLING		20

STOP TO SHOT & FALL

	Mark	Max
Rapid response / immediate stop	_____	20
Dog remains still	_____	10
TOTAL FOR STOP TO SHOT AND FALL		30

1st 40 YARD RETRIEVE (CAST)

	Mark	Max
Speed/enthusiasm	_____	5
Accurate marking	_____	5
Effective/persistent gamefinding	_____	5
Delivery	_____	5
TOTAL FOR 40YD RETRIEVE		20

	Mark	Max
STOP TO WHISTLE		
Rapid response / immediate stop	_____	15
Dog remains still	_____	5
TOTAL FOR STOP TO WHISTLE		20

	Mark	Max
2nd 40 YARD RETRIEVE (CAST)		
Speed/enthusiasm	_____	5
Accurate marking	_____	5
Effective/persistent gamefinding	_____	5
Delivery	_____	5
TOTAL FOR 40YD RETRIEVE		20

	Mark	Max
RECALL AT END OF HUTING		
Rapid response	_____	5

	Mark	Max
SUMMARY: HUNTING		
HUNTING ABILITY	_____	25
QUIET HANDLING	_____	20
STOP TO SHOT & FALL	_____	30
1st 40 YARD RETRIEVE (CAST)	_____	20
STOP TO WHISTLE	_____	20
2nd 40 YARD RETRIEVE (CAST)	_____	20
RECALL AT END OF HUTING	_____	5
TOTAL FOR HUNTING	_____	140

POINTING

	Mark	Max
3 second static point on game	_____	25
After flush: recall after short chase or dog sits on cue within 5 seconds of flush	_____	25
TOTAL FOR POINTING	_____	50

RETRIEVING

MARK ACROSS WATER: On land, on the other side of a narrow area of water, not in deep cover.

		Max
Steadiness at heel	_____	4
Attitude to water	_____	4
Accurate marking	_____	4
Effective/persistent hunting, holding the area of fall	_____	4
Retrieving style/delivery	_____	4
TOTAL SCORE FOR THE MARK ACROSS WATER	_____	20

LEFT OR RIGHT BLIND WITH DISTRACTION

MARK : Single blind at 30 yards, dog cast left or right, with a distraction mark thrown

		Max
Speed/enthusiasm	_____	5
Handling/response to command	_____	5
Effective/persistent hunting, holding the area of fall	_____	5
Retrieving style/delivery	_____	5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THE SHORT BLIND WITH DISTRACTION	_____	20

HUNT AN AREA: Two out of three dummies to be retrieved from a single area of deep cover, at 20 yards

		Max		Max
		1st		2nd dummy
		dummy		
Speed/enthusiasm	_____	5	_____	5
Handling/response to command	_____	5	_____	5
Effective/persistent hunting, holding the area of fall	_____	5	_____	5
Retrieving style/delivery	_____	5	_____	5
TOTAL SCORES FOR 'HUNT AN AREA'	_____	20	_____	20

SINGLE BLIND BACK at 30 yards behind the dog.

	Max
Speed/enthusiasm _____	5
Handling/response to command _____	5
Effective/persistent hunting, holding the area of fall _____	5
Retrieving style/delivery _____	5
TOTAL SCORE FOR THE SHORT BLIND WITH DISTRACTION _____	20

SUMMARY RETRIEVING

MARK ACROSS WATER: On land, on the other side of a narrow area of water, not in deep cover. _____	20
LEFT OR RIGHT BLIND WITH DISTRACTION	
MARK : Single blind at 30 yards, dog cast left or right, with a distraction mark thrown _____	20
HUNT AN AREA: Two out of three dummies to be retrieved from a single area of deep cover, at 20 yards _____	40
SINGLE BLIND BACK at 30 yards behind the dog. _____	20
TOTAL FOR RETRIEVING _____	100

OVERALL MARKS

	Mark	Max		
TOTAL FOR HUNTING	<hr/>	140	98	REQUIRED TO PASS
TOTAL FOR POINTING	<hr/>	50	35	REQUIRED TO PASS
TOTAL FOR RETRIEVING	<hr/>	100	70	REQUIRED TO PASS
	<hr/>	290		

DISCRETIONARY POINTS:

	Mark	Max
Up to ten extra points can be awarded for exceptional performance throughout the test.	<hr/>	10
Up to ten point can be deducted for poor general behaviour throughout the test		-10

	Mark	Max
TEST TOTAL		300

POINTS ACHEIVED	Less than 203	203 - 237	238 - 270	Above 270
GRADE ACHEIVED:	not ready	PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION