



THE NATIONAL HAMSTER COUNCIL HANDBOOK

www.hamsters-uk.org

**FULLY REVISED EDITION
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NOTES

- i The National Hamster Council Handbook consists of four sections, viz.
 - Section A - The Constitution
 - Section B - Show Rules and Regulations
 - Section C - Exhibition Standards
 - Appendix
- ii Where mention is made of the "constitution" or "the Handbook", this will include everything contained in the documents known collectively as the Handbook i.e. "The Constitution", "Show Rules and Regulations", "Exhibition Standards" and "Appendix".
- iii Whenever an amendment is made to this document, it will be detailed in the pages of the NHC Journal, and every member should amend their copy of the Handbook accordingly.
- iv In the case of large-scale amendments, the Council may issue a new sheet(s) and, in this case, the sheet(s) should replace the original in the Handbook.
- v In the case of standards for "new" varieties, when these standards are first granted (i.e. provisional standards); the details will only appear in the pages of the NHC Journal.
- vi All new members must receive a copy of the Handbook on taking full membership of an NHC affiliated club, via that club's secretary. This Handbook shall be up-to-date; i.e. shall contain full details of all amendments to date.

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SECTION A

THE CONSTITUTION

THE NATIONAL HAMSTER COUNCIL ARTICLES OF CONSTITUTION

TITLE

1. The title of the organisation shall be "The National Hamster Council", which may be abbreviated to "NHC" or the "Council".

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Hamster Council will promote interest in the keeping, breeding and exhibition of all species of pet hamsters and, in particular, ensure by public education and guidance that the Hamster Fancy grows and prospers.

OBJECTS

2. The objects of the Council shall be: -
 - (a) To protect, further and co-ordinate the interests of the Hamster Fancy and owners and breeders of all species of hamster kept for pet or exhibition purposes.
 - (b) To influence, advise and co-operate with the public and with other associations and bodies on matters relating to all species of hamster.
3. To achieve these objects, the Council will: -
 - (a) Affiliate clubs with similar objectives.
 - (b) Arrange that its affiliated clubs shall, between them, administer the whole of the U.K. wherever possible.
 - (c) Attract members to its affiliated clubs.
 - (d) Regularly publish a journal of news, items of interest etc to members of its affiliated clubs.
 - (e) Encourage the dissemination of accurate information on matters relating to hamsters in publications, on radio, television, internet etc.

- (f) Examine, recognise and adopt names for new varieties of hamster.
- (g) Adopt and publish show rules and exhibition standards for competitive exhibition of recognised varieties of all species of hamsters.
- (h) Appoint "National Hamster Council" show judges.
- (i) Arbitrate on disputes concerning affiliated clubs.
- (j) Provide a final appeal body for individual members of affiliated clubs.

COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL HAMSTER COUNCIL

- 4. The Council shall consist of: -
 - (a) All officers of the Council (including any co-opted officers).
 - (b) The specified number of delegates from each NHC affiliated club.
 - (c) The Chairperson of the Standards Committee.
- 5. Throughout this document, the term "Council" or "NHC" shall refer to the composition stated above.

AFFILIATION

- 6. Application for affiliation may be made by any club which: -
 - (a) Has objectives similar to that of the Council.
 - (b) Is prepared to administer an area, which shall be agreed upon by the Council and the committee of the club applying for affiliation.
 - (c) Supplies the Council with a copy of the said club's constitution on application for affiliation.
- 7. Affiliation shall be granted and continued on condition that every affiliated club: -
 - (a) Administers an area agreed upon in accordance with Para 7(b), this area being liable to revision by discussion AND ultimately agreement between the Council and the club's committee, and is in the best interests of the Hamster Fancy, in accordance with Para 3(b).
 - (b) Supplies the Council for approval copies of any additions or amendments made to its constitution within 30 days of the additions or amendments being made.
 - (c) Observes Show Rules and Exhibition Standards and all other rules and/or regulations adopted by the Council.

- (d) Distributes copies of the Council Journals.
 - (e) Accepts and upholds any and all decisions or rules made by the Council's arbitral or appeal bodies.
 - (f) Abides by any and all majority decisions of the Council.
 - (g) Has after a period of one year, satisfied the Council that it has complied fully with all the preceding paragraphs of this article.
 - (h) Pays the affiliation fee required per active full membership subscription.
- 8. Application for affiliation shall be held to indicate acknowledgement of, and agreement to observe, these conditions of affiliation and all other articles and rules of the Council.
 - 9. Ignorance of any article or rule shall not excuse an affiliated club being bound by that article or rule. Failure by an affiliated club to comply with these conditions may lead to that club being disaffiliated by the Council.
 - 10. If a club disaffiliates for any reason whatsoever, the affiliation fees paid for the remainder of the year shall be forfeited to the Council.
 - 11. If a club becomes disaffiliated, one or more of the remaining affiliated clubs may be requested temporarily or indefinitely to administer the area of the disaffiliated club in accordance with Para 3(b) and 7(a). Expenses shall be recoverable from the NHC to the end of the financial year, i.e. cost of journals, postage and stationery.
 - 12. The Council reserves the right to refuse, suspend or discontinue the affiliation of any club.

DELEGATES

- 13. Each affiliated club shall be entitled to appoint four delegates to the Council.
- 14. Any officer, no matter how many offices they hold, is entitled to one vote only but will count as the number of officers for the quorum.
- 15. If any delegate is elected or appointed an officer of the Council, they are no longer entitled to a delegate vote and the Affiliated Club concerned shall be entitled to elect or appoint another delegate in replacement.
- 16. The secretary of each affiliated club shall supply the Council Secretary with the name(s) and address(es) of the club's delegate(s) within 30 days of election or appointment, and likewise any change in delegates.

OFFICERS

- 17. The officers of the Council shall be elected bi-annually by the adult full

members of each affiliated club. Each adult full member shall be entitled to one vote only, irrespective of the number of clubs to which they belong.

18. The following officers shall be elected: -

Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor, Public Relations Officer, Web Editor, Animal Welfare Officer, Prefix Officer.

19.

- (a)** Nominations shall be made in writing, signed by the proposer and the seconder, and sent to the Council Secretary by 31 December. All nominations must be accompanied by a written statement signed by the proposed, stating their willingness to serve, if elected.
 - (b)** The post of President shall be that of a "figure head" and where possible should be held by a person of stature and fame. This post is optional and if thought necessary will be elected by members of the Council.
 - (c)** No officer or committee member of any national body relating to hamsters (other than the NHC), or of any hamster club not affiliated to the NHC may hold office on the Council. Also no member of any affiliated NHC club may be elected as an Officer on the NHC Committee for a minimum of 24 months, if they have held an Officer post or been a Committee Member with any other Hamster Club/Organisation not affiliated to the National Hamster Council.
 - (d)** On nomination, candidates must supply the Council Journal Editor with a brief CV for publication in the NHC Journal.
- 20.** The Council Secretary shall prepare a list of valid nominations in the form of a voting paper and send a copy to every voter eligible under Para 17. Each voting paper will be numbered and the appointed scrutineer will be advised by each club secretary - or the person appointed by the club to send out voting papers - of the sequence of numbers sent out to members of that club.
- 21.** A scrutineer shall be appointed by the Council to receive and count votes. The scrutineer shall make his or her report in writing and the officers elected shall take office on 1 April. The result of the ballot shall be published in the March issue of the Council Journal.
- 22.** The offices of Secretary, Treasurer, Editor must be held by different persons, and in the case of Secretary and Treasurer, these shall not be held by members of the same family, or persons residing in the same household. The Editor, however, MAY be held by a member of the same family, or person residing in the same household as the Secretary or Treasurer.
- 23.** The Council are empowered by a simple majority vote of all the members of the Council to fill any vacancy occurring during the term of office of the Council.

24. The Council shall appoint an auditor, who must not be an officer or delegate of the Council, and who need not be a member of an affiliated club. This person shall audit the Council's accounts at least every 12 months, and on the departure (for whatever reason) of an elected treasurer.

MANAGEMENT

25. The business of the Council shall be conducted by the elected officers and delegates of the affiliated clubs. Each person who holds office (except the President), or who is a delegate, shall be entitled to one vote only, irrespective of the number of offices that person holds, with the exception of the casting vote under Para 26.
26. In all Council votes, if the number of votes FOR equals the number of votes AGAINST, the chairman shall have the casting vote.
27. Council business shall be conducted by post, email or at meetings (actual or virtual) called by the NHC Secretary. When a postal or email vote is required, (for this to take place, the proposer and seconder must be members of the Council from different clubs), this shall be conducted by the Secretary who shall send out a copy of the resolution to be voted upon to each official and delegate, and who shall be responsible for the publication of the resolution and the result of the vote in the NHC Journal.
28. In all postal or email votes, the numbered voting papers shall be returned to the Secretary within 14 days of despatch, or such other period as the Secretary deems necessary in case of postal or other difficulties.
29. Voting papers and emails received by the Secretary after the required date stated on the voting papers, or papers not returned, shall be counted as abstentions. The Secretary shall, in the first possible edition of the NHC Journal, record how Council members voted.
30. It is hereby stated that the NHC is the right and proper body to make any and all interpretations of any and all material contained in the document known as the NHC Handbook. Decisions thus made shall be binding on all parties.
31. The Council shall arrange and maintain wherever possible: -
Indemnity for the Council against third party and public liability claims arising as a result of activities at shows and/or displays organised and/or arranged by the Council. The affiliated clubs will arrange their own similar insurance cover which will be paid for by the affiliated clubs themselves.

THE COUNCIL SECRETARY SHALL: -

- 32.
- (a) Conduct and record Council correspondence.
 - (b) Record the proceedings of the Council and keep safely the past records and documents of the Council.

- (c) Forward to the Treasurer all monies received on behalf of the Council.
- (d) Keep a register of NHC judges.
- (e) Publish in the Journal minutes of all Council meetings except those items considered by the Council to be confidential. These items shall not be published but recorded and full details sent to every member of the Council.
- (f) Issue full minutes of all NHC meetings, results of postal ballots etc to all officers and delegates of the NHC within 14 days of said meeting, ballot etc.
- (g) The Council shall refund legitimate expenses incurred by members of the Council in pursuit of their duties at the discretion of the Council.

THE COUNCIL TREASURER SHALL: -

33.

- (a) Have charge of all monies belonging to the Council.
- (b) Be responsible for payment of bills for any NHC approved expense, and for collection of payments from affiliated clubs.
- (c) Prepare an annual balance sheet showing Council income and expenditure to 31st March, have this audited and signed by an auditor appointed under Para 24, and send full copies to all members of the Council.

THE COUNCIL EDITOR SHALL: -

34.

- (a) Be responsible for the collection and editing of material for publication in the Council Journal. The editor shall not edit copy sent for inclusion in the Journal by officials and delegates of the NHC, provided they are writing in their official capacity (except as in paragraph c).
- (b) Be responsible for the printing of the Journal.
- (c) Publish all material received regarding any species of hamster, but must edit all potentially libellous comments, bad language etc. The editor must not publish any comments of a personal nature.
- (d) Accept and include advertisements in Council publications, collect the fees fixed by the Council for such advertisements and forward them each month to the NHC Treasurer. All cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the NHC.
- (e) Publish in the Journal articles and letters which criticise the Council and its affiliated clubs, provided always that such articles and letters bear the full name(s) of the author(s), and provided always that any published editorial comment upholds the policy of the Council.

- (f) At their own discretion, spend a sum to be agreed by the Council on prizes and inducements for junior members of affiliated clubs to contribute material for publication in the Council Journal.
- (g) Forward to the Treasurer by the end of each NHC financial year an account of postal expenses etc, and the Treasurer shall then reimburse them for these expenses.
- (h) Show reports sent for publication in the Journal shall be published as soon as possible.

THE COUNCIL PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER SHALL: -

35.

- (a) Publicise, in the appropriate manners and methods, the existence and role of the NHC and the Hamster Fancy in general.
- (b) Advise the Council on all matters regarding the image and public perception of the Council, its affiliated clubs and the hamster fancy in general.
- (c) Co-ordinate the production and promotion of all of the Council's publications, ensuring that all such publications reflect the 'professional' approach and attitude of the Council, its affiliated clubs, and the Hamster Fancy as a whole.
- (d) Ensure that the Council's Constitution, Exhibition Standards, and Show Rules are produced in a format which correctly reflects the required image of the Council, its affiliated Clubs and the Fancy in general, and ensure that this document is kept up-to-date and produced in a manner and form which allows for regular updating at minimum cost and disruption to the Council, its affiliated clubs, and the fancy as a whole.
- (e) Advise the Council and its affiliated clubs on the PR implications of specific actions and the general conduct of the Council and its affiliated clubs.
- (f) Operate an ongoing pro-active and reactive PR campaign on behalf of the Council and the hamster fancy.
- (g) Provide assistance and guidance to NHC affiliated clubs on all PR related matters.
- (h) Advise the Council and its affiliated clubs on their responsibilities under data protection and copyright laws and regulations.
- (i) Co-ordinate all sponsorship of the Council, its publications and other business, ensuring that all such partnerships are in the best interests of the Council, its affiliated clubs, and the Hamster Fancy in general.

THE COUNCIL WEB EDITOR SHALL: -

36.

- (a) Advise the Council on all matters regarding the NHC website and new

developments that may affect the NHC internet image.

- (b) Maintain the NHC website.

THE COUNCIL ANIMAL WELFARE OFFICER SHALL:-

37.

- (a) Advise the Council on all matters pertaining to animal welfare influencing NHC affiliated events
- (b) Keep a record of animal welfare issues reported to him or her by the clubs, judges and members
- (c) Report to the Council where there is a serious breach of the Code of Conduct or a regular pattern emerges of minor infringements.
- (d) If a person at a show is concerned about the welfare of any animal they should speak to the Show Secretary or Show Manager about the problem. After the show the Show Secretary or Show Manager should make a report for the Welfare Officer to file.

THE COUNCIL PREFIX OFFICER SHALL:-

- 38.** Keep record of all registered prefixes.

NOTE

The duties of the officers can be temporarily amended or altered by a vote of the full Council. All documents and publications produced by or on behalf of the NHC must carry a full copyright notice on behalf of the Council.

MEETINGS

- 39.** The Council shall meet, either physically or virtually, whenever necessary for the proper conduct of Council business, and at least every two years, provided always that the cost of the meeting can be met from Council funds without financially preventing or hindering the work of the Council for the remainder of the year, unless the officers and delegates, or their clubs, are prepared to pay the cost of the meeting after a statement of Council funds has been made to the secretaries. The venues for the NHC meetings shall be in a suitable central location.

40.

- (a) A Council meeting may be called by the Chairman or Secretary when necessary, or by the written request to the Secretary by not less than half the total number of officers and delegates.
- (b) The Secretary shall publish a reminder of the forthcoming meeting asking for items for the agenda, 60 days prior to the date of the meeting.

- 41.** The Secretary shall give each officer and delegate a minimum of 42 days notice of the time, date and place of a Council meeting, and the main items for

discussion and publish the same in the Journal 30 days prior to the meeting.

42. Further questions, resolutions and items for the Agenda may be submitted in writing to the Secretary no later than 21 days prior to the date of a Council meeting, who shall then prepare and send to each officer and delegate a copy of the complete Agenda at least 14 days before the meeting.
43. The Council may invite any person(s) to attend any part of a Council meeting.
44. The quorum for a Council meeting shall be a simple majority of the Council at the time.
45. Each officer and delegate who attends a Council meeting shall be paid return travelling expenses to the place of the meeting from their home, expenses to be claimed in writing at the meeting and to be paid by the Treasurer from Council funds within 14 days of the date of the meeting, unless the officers and delegates have agreed to pay their own expenses.
46. Any amendment agreed by the Council on any matter on the day of the meeting, in a postal ballot, or any matters raised under Any Other Business, must be published in the next Journal, to take effect not less than 60 days after publication. If 25 adult members' signed objections (i.e. the signatures of 25 adult objectors) are lodged with the Council Secretary before the date specified (this date to be not less than 45 days after publication), the amendment/decision will not come into effect, but will be referred to the next meeting of the Council, or a postal ballot may be held on the issue. At least 25 of these objections must be identical and be valid and all shall clearly state their objection(s) and form of redress required.

PUBLICATIONS

47. The secretary of each affiliated club shall: -
 - (a) Be responsible for the submission to the Council Editor (by a date decided by the Council), of news, information or items of interest to members of that club for publication in the Council Journal that month, together with an order for the number of Journals required. All club members shall receive the number of copies of the NHC journal to which their membership entitles them. In the case of more than one member residing in the same house, the one copy shall suffice.
 - (b) Ensure that payment is sent promptly for the previous month's Journals, in accordance with the bill sent to him or her. This will automatically ensure that news and orders for subsequent issues of the Journal are accepted by the editor..
 - (c) Should any Club affiliated to the National Hamster Council not pay monies due for Journals within three months of delivery then a penalty charge may be incurred. The Penalty charge will be decided and reviewed by the National Hamster Council. Should any Club experience difficulty in payment they must notify the National Hamster Council Treasurer within the payment period.
48. The net cost of publishing each issue of the Council Journal shall be borne by

the individual Clubs.

- 49.** The NHC Handbook shall be produced and funded by the Council.

FINANCES

- 50.** The work of the Council shall be financed by: -
- (a)** Affiliation fees. This amount to be reviewed by the Council and this figure to be published in the Journal as soon as possible.
 - (b)** Fees for the registration, renewal and transfer of prefixes
 - (c)** Donations
 - (d)** Proceeds from other projects initiated by the Council or clubs.

ARBITRATION

- 51.** The Council, or any technical persons, whom the Council may appoint, may act as arbiters upon any dispute submitted to the Council for arbitration.
- 52.** The Council shall have the power to make rules for the conduct of such arbitration.
- 53.** Before arbitration, both parties to the dispute shall sign a declaration worded by the Council agreeing to abide by the decision of the Council or that of any arbiters appointed by the Council.

APPEALS

- 54.** Any individual member(s) of an affiliated club may appeal to the Council against any decision made by the affiliated club or by an officer of an affiliated club or by an officer or delegate of the Council, provided that: -
- (a)** The appeal is made in writing, signed by the appellant(s), and gives full details including names, dates and places of the matter on which the Council decision is requested.
 - (b)** A sufficient number of complete and accurate copies of the appeal are also supplied to the Council for forwarding to every person or club named in the appeal.
 - (c)** The appeal is accompanied by a written statement signed by the appellant(s) agreeing to accept the Council's decision on the appeal as final and binding.

COMPLAINTS

- 55.** The Council will not investigate any complaint involving an affiliated club made by any member(s) of that club until that complaint has been made in the proper manner to the club(s) concerned.
- 56.** If the decision of the club(s) is considered unsatisfactory or if no satisfactory

decision is made, the complaining member(s) may then bring the matter to the notice of the Council as an appeal in accordance with Para 53, or both parties may submit the matter for arbitration in accordance with Para 50, 51, and 52.

PREFIXES

- 57.** The Council reserves the right to register prefixes.
- 58.** A prefix shall not be recognised unless properly registered with the Council, and no member of an affiliated club except the person in whose name the prefix is registered, shall be allowed to use it.
- 59.**
- (a)** A prefix may be registered on application to the Council if accompanied by the appropriate registration fee. Each fully paid-up member shall be entitled to apply for a prefix. The applicant must have been a member of an affiliated club for at least 12 months prior to application. Registration shall be valid for a full 12 months from the date of registration. In the application, the full required prefix and the name and address of the applicant should be clearly printed in block capitals.
- (b)** The registration shall only be valid while payments are made up to date. A registration shall become invalid if unpaid for 3 months after the renewal date. Re-registration will then become necessary. Those members who have held the same current Prefix continually for 5 years or more are eligible to purchase exclusive rights to that Prefix in perpetuity. This fee to be fixed by the Council.
- (c)** The official register of prefixes shall be published in the March and September Journals each year.
- (d)** Unless properly registered such a prefix may not be used at any shows or displays held by the NHC or its affiliated clubs.
- 60.** There shall be an annual renewal fee, to be set by the Council at their discretion.
- 61.** This registration in no way implies approval or inspection by the Council, or signify they are a recognised breeder.
- 62.** The Council refuses to recognise or accept any prefix once the holder ceases to be a member of an affiliated club or if that prefix, or one substantially similar, is already registered to a member(s) of an affiliated club. Any prefix that has lapsed may not be re-allocated to another person for a minimum period of 5 years.

NHC JUDGES

- 63.** **In this section, all references to judging, showing and stewarding are species specific.**
- (a)** Before applying to train as a NHC Judge, all applicants must be at least 18 years

of age and have a minimum of 4 years continuous membership of an NHC affiliated club. The applicant must have been a recognised club judge for a minimum of 2 years and, during this time, have judged at least six times.

- (b) The application form for the proposed trainee judge must indicate their club membership, and date joined, together with the dates and venues of the shows judged. The application form must be signed by the applicant, the Club Secretary and all relevant Show Manager(s).
- (c) Upon successful application, the trainee judge will be issued with a pack of three report forms by the Chair of the Standards Committee. The trainee will then be required to officiate at three shows as book steward to an NHC Judge. Whenever possible, these shows must be in different areas and under different NHC Judges. Details of these shows must be entered in the appropriate section of the trainee judge's application form.
- (d) After officiating at the above three shows as a Book Steward, the trainee must judge at a further three shows under the supervision of an NHC Judge. Each supervising NHC Judge must submit to the Standards Committee Chairman a completed report, countersigned by the trainee. The NHC Judge must indicate their view as to advisability or otherwise of the appointment of the trainee as an NHC Judge and may make suggestions or constructive comments. When a trainee NHC Judge is being assessed, a separate book steward, if required, must be provided by the officiating Club. The assessing NHC Judge may show if they wish.
- (e) If the trainee fails to satisfy the assessing NHC Judge as to their ability to judge a show, the trainee must judge a further show under the direct supervision of that qualified NHC Judge until they pass.
- (f) A register will be kept and a certificate issued on registration.
- (g) NHC Judges should judge at least one show organised by an NHC affiliated club per year.
- (h) All proposed registrations to become an NHC Judge must be put to the NHC Standards Committee for final approval.
- (i) The Council reserve the right to withdraw, suspend or refuse recognition of NHC Judges by a simple majority vote of the entire Council.

CLUB JUDGES

- 64.** Club judges shall be appointed by the individual club(s).

ALTERATIONS TO RULES AND EXHIBITION STANDARDS

- 65.** No alteration or additions to the Council's articles of Constitution, Show Rules, Exhibition Standards or other rules or regulations shall be made except by a two thirds majority vote of officers and delegates.

THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

66.

- (a)** The Standards Committee shall be appointed for the following;-
 - i. The recognition of new colours and management of old colours.
 - ii. Advise the Council on all matters regarding the exhibition of all species of hamsters.
 - iii. Advise the Council on all matters regarding the training and appointment of all Council recognised Judges.
 - iv. Advise the Council on all matters regarding the limitation of the spread of disease at shows, exhibition and other events organised by the Council or its affiliated Clubs.
- (b)** The Committee shall be a separate entity to the Council, although it may contain officers and delegates of the Council, provided that these people meet the criteria detailed in Para 65(e).
- (c)** The Standards Committee must, wherever possible, be chaired by a Council recognised Judge. The Chairperson must meet the criteria as laid down under rules 19(c) and 65(e), such appointment to be made by a majority vote of the Council. This appointment must take place in the alternate year to that of the election of the Council and will last for two calendar years. The Chairperson of the Standards Committee can attend all NHC meetings but will only be allowed a vote on matters directly concerned with the Standards Committee, with the exception of the appointment of their successor.
- (d)** The Standard Committee shall consist of a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 9 people, excluding the chairperson, to be appointed for a two-year period. Wherever possible the Standards Committee shall consist of equal numbers of people from all NHC affiliated Clubs. At least 66 percent of these should be Judges of Syrians or Other Species of hamster.
- (e)** The affiliated clubs shall be responsible for the appointment of suitably qualified persons to the Standards Committee. The appointed persons, up to 4 in number, must all meet at least three of the following criteria, at least 2 must meet (i) below and 50 percent must meet rule 19(c) : -
 - i. Must be a Council recognised Judge or recognised as a judge by at least one NHC affiliated hamster club.
 - ii. Must be involved in regular breeding of at least one species of hamster
 - iii. Must regularly exhibit at least one species of hamster.
 - iv. Must regularly officiate as a judge (or trainer) at shows held under the auspices of the NHC.
 - v. Must be conversant with the genetics involved in the breeding of at least one species of hamster, or be prepared to learn these.
- (f)** At the Chairperson's discretion, persons with expertise in areas relating to the Standards Committee may be invited to attend and contribute to Standard Committee meetings in a non-voting capacity.

- (g) The Standards Committee must hold a minimum of two meetings a year, either physically or virtually

CLUB BOUNDARIES

67.

- (a) **The Midland & Southern Hamster Club** shall administer all shows in Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Cornwall, Derbyshire, Devon, Dorset, Essex, Gloucestershire, Greater London, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Hertfordshire, Huntingdon, Kent, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Rutland, Somerset, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, Worcestershire and Wales, and in accordance with their constitution.
- (b) **The Northern Hamster Club** shall administer all shows in Cumbria, County Durham, Isle of Man, Lancashire, Northumberland, Nottinghamshire, & Yorkshire in accordance with their Constitution.
(Scotland & Northern Ireland are administered by the NHC directly.)

NB. All these areas are subject to article 6(a) of the NHC Constitution. Shows may be held in another Club's area provided that written permission has been given by the administering Club.

- (c) Overseas members and those living outside an administered area may join the club(s) of their choice.

68.

- (a) An affiliated club may enrol members from any area but applicants should normally be enrolled in the club administering the area in which he/she resides. An applicant may however elect to have full membership of another club if he/she wishes.
- (b) An affiliated club enrolling member who are already members of an NHC affiliated club shall require of the member(s) an annual subscription of not more than 50 percent of that levied on the club's full members. These members will then become "Associate Members"
- (c) A member may only be a "Full Member" of one NHC affiliated club at any time, but may hold associate membership of every affiliated club if s/he wishes.
- (d) All NHC affiliated clubs are free to recruit and keep any members which they choose and, by the same token, to refuse membership to individuals and/or organisation providing that the latter step is taken in the best interests of the Fancy, and that the person(s) whose membership is under question is invited and allowed to attend every meeting at which the matter is to be discussed and, at those meetings, he/she/they must be allowed to present their own case to all members of the relevant committee and/or club.

CIRCLES

- 69.** The NHC will allow and encourage the establishment of hamster circles with the full agreement of the parent club within whose area they wish to operate. Membership of the circle shall be limited to members of the parent club and the circle shall make a report to the parent club annually. Circle shows will not normally be held within 7 days of the parent club's shows without prior consultation and agreement.

DISSOLUTION

70.

- (a)** The NHC may only be dissolved by a unanimous vote of the full (entire) Council after detailed consultation with all NHC affiliated clubs and their members.
- (b)** Upon dissolution, the assets of the Council, after clearance of all of the Council's debts (including bona fide expenses incurred by members of the Council) shall be divided among its affiliated clubs. This division shall be directly proportionate to the affiliation fees paid by the clubs over the previous 12 months.

FINAL

- 71.** Council decisions shall be binding on every member of every NHC affiliated club, and the Council shall exercise all powers not specified or limited in this Constitution, but within the scope of the Objects clause.

SECTION B

SHOW RULES AND REGULATIONS

THE NATIONAL HAMSTER COUNCIL SHOW RULES & REGULATIONS

TYPES OF SHOWS

1. National Hamster Council Shows, if run, are organised under the auspices of the NHC.
2. Open club shows are shows arranged by mutual agreement between club secretaries.
3. Club shows are shows organised primarily for the members of a club.
4. The Council shall allow clubs to utilise the services of two judges at a show, if the relevant club wishes.

NOTE. No NHC affiliated Club(s) should book shows on the same weekend if at all possible except where they have both been invited by a third party, i.e. Public shows.

STRAIGHT CLASSES

5. The names of the straight classes shall be taken in full from the appropriate Exhibition Standards.
6. A straight class may be split into two sexed classes, e.g. golden male and golden female.
7. All exhibitors must enter each exhibit in its appropriate straight class before it can be entered in any duplicate class. It is the responsibility of each exhibitor to ensure that all their exhibits, to the best of their knowledge;
 - (a) show only the natural colour for the species or mutation(s) listed in Appendix C(1).
 - (b) do not have any other species of hamster in their background
 - (c) have no hamsters in their ancestry that do not meet criteria (a) and (b)
 - (d) are a minimum of 8 weeks for Syrian, Chinese and Roborovski, and 6 weeks for Winter White and Campbell.
8. A straight class may contain only one shade or variety, with the following exceptions: -
 - (a) A straight class shall be open to all sub-varieties of the colour or variety named, for which standards exist, unless otherwise stated on the schedule, e.g. "white" shall include "black-eyed white", "dark-eared white" and "flesh eared white"

etc, and "dominant spot" shall include golden, cream, cinnamon and ruby-eyed dominant spots etc, but "dark-eared white and "golden dominant spot" shall be confined to those colours only.

- (b) "Any other colour" classes shall be open to any shade or variety not covered by the other straight classes, provided that there is a standard for them.

DUPLICATE CLASSES

- 9. A duplicate class may contain any shade or variety.
- 10. The organising clubs are responsible for their own policy regarding the types of classes at their shows, within both the NHC and the club's constitution. The following are examples of some of the duplicate classes that may be held: -
 - (a) **"NOVICE"** - for exhibitors who are in their first year of exhibiting.
 - (b) **"BREEDERS"** - for exhibits owned and bred by the exhibitor, or for exhibits owned and bred by a partnership, school, family or group membership of an affiliated club provided that the exhibits are entered under the joint names of the partnerships or under a prefix registered in the joint names of the partnership or the collective name of the school or group.
 - (c) **"CHALLENGE"** or **"GRAND CHALLENGE"** - for any exhibitor.
 - (d) **"NHC DIPLOMA CLASS"** - for any exhibitor who is a member of an affiliated club.
 - (e) **"SUPPORTERS"** - for any exhibitor: cards only awarded. All entry fees retained by the organising club or by the Council if this class is held at an NHC Show.
 - (f) **"JUNIOR CLASS"** - shall be open to exhibits of any shade or variety owned by exhibitors aged 5 and over and under 16 years of age when their last subscription was paid.

OTHER CLASSES

- 11. **"NON-STANDARD"** - shall be open to all colours and varieties for which no standard exists. Entries to this class may not be entered in any other class.
- 12. **"PETS"** - a class that shall be held at the discretion of the affiliated club concerned. Entries to this class may not be entered in any other class.

ENTRY FEES

- 13. At all shows held under NHC Rules, the entry fees for all classes shall be set by each club. Block entries may be used at the discretion of each club.
- 14. At any show held under NHC Rules, no entry can be made later than thirty minutes before the time scheduled for judging to commence, or at a time

specified by the club on its schedule and in all advertisements etc for the show.

15. The receipt for the entry fee shall be the official pen label, bearing the pen number and the numbers of the classes entered.
16. No refunds of entry fees shall be made; all entries must be paid for (subject to any Club rule stating otherwise).
17. In each class, the judge shall place best exhibits in the following order: first, second, third and reserve and at the Club's discretion, very highly commended, highly commended and commended. The judge shall withhold, at his or her own discretion any award(s) not merited by the exhibits but not position i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc. **Late Arrivals.** May be accepted at the discretion of the Judge and Show Secretary
18. It is recommended that cards be given for placed exhibits and should be signed by the show Secretary and shall state the name and date of the show, the name or registered prefix of the exhibitor, the pen number, the placing in and name of and number of entries in the class concerned, or the reason for the special award, and the name(s) of the judge(s). "Special Prizes" may also be awarded in addition to or instead of, the "normal".
19. The **"BEST IN SHOW"** award(s) shall be given to the best hamsters (excluding non-standards and pets) exhibited in the shows, regardless of the classes in which that hamster is or is not entered.
20. The prize money shall be at the discretion of the organising club.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

21. The show secretary shall be responsible for sending a brief show report including a completed results sheet to the editor of the NHC Journal within one calendar month of the date of the show. If any Show results are not received within 3 months of the Show, a reminder will be sent to the Show Secretary.

SCHEDULES

22. Show schedules should show: -

- (a) Contact details of the Show Secretary.
- (b) The date of the show and the last date for receipt of entries.
- (c) The time at which judging will begin.
- (d) The number of and full correct name for, each class in accordance with Rules 5 to 12 (inclusive).
- (e) The entry fees required and prizes awarded, where applicable.

- (f) The name(s) of judges(s).

SHOW PENS

23.1 Each Syrian exhibit shall be shown in a standard show pen (only one animal per pen) of the following specifications: -

- (a) The show pen shall be made of 0.375"(9mm) plywood with 0.25"(6mm) ply ends and with 14 gauge wire front and fittings and edged with thin metal.
- (b) The external measurements of the pen shall be 8"(203mm) long, 6"(152mm) high and 6"(152mm) deep. The wooden top shall extend only 2.5"(64mm) from the back, and the wooden front shall rise only 1.75"(45mm) from the bottom; both top and front pieces being edged with tin.
- (c) The wire front shall be braced by four crossbars punched 0.375"(9mm) centre to centre, across the top 1.75 "(45mm) from the top and shall be bent through a right angle on 0.5"(12mm) radius midway between the two middle crossbars. The wire front shall be hinged 0.25"(4mm) from the top edge of the wooden front piece with a wire fastener in the centre of the top crossbar.
- (d) A semicircular handle, 2.5"(64mm) in diameter, shall be fitted to the wooden top of the pen and held by two wire eyelets, fixed 2"(51mm) from the back and 2.75"(75mm) from the sides. A prize card holder, 1.5"(38mm) long tapering from 0.125"(3mm) wide at the top closed end, to approx. 0.5"(12mm) wide at the open end, shall be fixed to the wooden top of the pen, with the open end in line with the handle eyelets, and driven into the wooden top midway between the right hand handle eyelet and the right hand side of the pen. All wire ends inside the pen shall be cut off or flattened flush with the interior surfaces.
- (e) The wire front, including the attached fastener and the whole of the interior of the pen shall be painted with non-poisonous white gloss paint, and the fittings and the whole of the exterior shall be painted with gloss black paint.

23.2 Russian and Chinese Exhibits shall be shown in a standard show pen (each pen must only contain animals of the same species, up to a maximum of two animals) of the following specifications: -

- (a) The show pen shall be made of 0.375"(9mm) waterproof plywood front, and top, and 0.25"(6mm) waterproof plywood sides, base and back with 16 gauge 0.5"(12mm) x 1"(25mm) welded mesh front and 16 gauge fittings.
- (b) The external measurements shall be 8"(203mm) long, 5"(119mm) high and 6"(152mm) deep, with the front sloping backwards from a point 1.5"(38mm) above the front of the base to a point 2.125"(53mm) forward of the back. The angled corners being curved to 1"(25mm) diameter. The wooden front shall rise only 1.125"(28mm) and the wooden top extend only 1.875"(47mm) from the back.

- (c) The weldmesh front is 7"(178mm) x 5"(119mm) and hinged 0.2"(5mm) above the centre of the top of the wooden front with a wire fastener in the centre of the top 0.875"(23mm) from the top front edge.
- (d) A semicircular handle, 2.5"(64mm) in diameter, shall be fitted to the wooden top of the pen and held by two wire eyelets, fixed 1.625"(42mm) from the back and 2.75"(70mm) from the sides. All wire ends inside the pen shall be cut off and flattened flush with the interior surface.
- (e) The pen shall be finished inside and outside with varnish to give a mahogany finish.

EXHIBITS

- 24. No person may touch an exhibit, show pen or box at the show without the consent of the owner except the judge(s) and the show secretary and his or her appointed stewards.
- 25. No exhibitor or official may handle or indicate his or her exhibits during, except with the judge's permission.
- 26. The floor of the show pen shall be covered with clean sawdust or shavings, as white as possible, excepting longhaired exhibits, which must be shown on paper or wood based litter. All bedding and conspicuous foodstuffs shall be removed from each show pen prior to judging, and that one piece of fruit or vegetable must be placed by the owner in each show pen before benching the animal. A dog biscuit, supplied by the club, will be placed in each show pen prior to benching. Show pens should not be stacked on the bench in the interests of hygiene whenever possible.
- 27. No identification marks shall be visible on any part of the show pen, except for the official label stuck on the top of the pen in the back left hand corner bearing the pen number and the number of the classes entered, and a 2"(51mm) x 1"(25mm) label which may be stuck underneath the pen bearing the owner's name and address. Hire pens are to be made easily distinguishable by an "H", 3"(75mm) high marked in white on the back of the pen.
- 28. Should an exhibitor/breeder knowingly have stock with any contagious infection, disease or sickness, they shall not enter or sell any stock at a show held under NHC rules.
- 29. The Judge's hands, (and judging grid, if used), shall be disinfected with a suitable antiviral preparation provided by the National Hamster Council. This shall occur between each individual show pen. Judges must consult the guidelines issued by the Standards Committee, available to all club and NHC judges from the Chairman of that Committee on request.
- 30. Wherever the organising club has authority to implement the rule, there shall be NO SMOKING in vicinity of hamsters i.e. in same room as the hamsters are

benched and/or judged etc.

31. The judge(s) alone shall be responsible for the disqualification or reclassification of any exhibit.
32. Any exhibit disqualified as suffering from a disease which the judge(s) believe(s) to be contagious, or through evidence of parasitic infestation, shall immediately be replaced in the owner's box and placed away from the other exhibits and boxes. If the owner is present, he or she must remove the diseased hamster from the show. Any other hamsters/animals brought by that exhibitor to the show will be checked for signs of disease and/or parasitic infestation by competent person(s) other than the exhibitor. Once an exhibitor's hamsters have been checked, if more than one hamster is found to have a suspected infectious disease or infestation, all of that exhibitor's hamsters must be removed from the venue and the matter reported to the NHC Welfare Officer within 48 hours. This includes any on the sales table or the Pet Class. All of those exhibitor's susceptible animals, plus any that may have been in close proximity prior to the show, must also be removed. The Show Secretary's decision is final.
33. The decision of the judge(s) in all matters concerning the placing of exhibits or the interpretation of the NHC exhibition standards at the show at which they are officiating shall be final.
34. A person may not exhibit in any class where the Judge is: (a) the person (b) a member of the person's household (c) in partnership (whether formal or informal) with the person.
35. The judge(s) shall not be informed of the owner of any exhibit until judging is complete.

SALE OF STOCK AT EVENTS

36. Vendors may only offer for sale, hamsters that, to the best of their knowledge,
 - (a) show only the natural colour for the species or mutation(s) listed in Appendix C(1).
 - (b) do not have any other species of hamster in their background.
 - (c) have no hamsters in their ancestry that do not meet criteria (a) and (b)All animals offered for sale must be at least 5 weeks of age and in good health. Vendors must issue details of parentage with every hamster sold, which must include as a minimum, individual identification, date of birth and description of parents and grandparents, where known. Clubs may have their own additional rules that apply
37. At NHC events the vendor may offer for sale only stock which, to the best of their knowledge, complies with paragraph 36. Also the vendor shall provide a suitable carrying box or container for every animal that they offer for sale.

REGULATIONS FOR AMENDING EXHIBITION STANDARDS

PRINCIPLES

38. The need for stable exhibition standards is paramount to hamster breeding. Amendments to existing standards shall only occur after a two-year period and then as and when necessary. Constructive criticism shall always be encouraged and welcomed.
39. The allocation of points for the various features (colour, markings, type, fur, size, etc) shall be the same for all standards of the same species.

PROCEDURE

40. Notice that amendments may be submitted shall be published in the Council Journal two issues prior to the meeting of the Standards Committee.
41. Amendments shall be sent to the standards committee within 14 days of the publication of the notice.
42. Amendments must be suitably worded and properly proposed and seconded with the signature of the proposer and seconder.
43. Amendments must be framed to conform to the general layout of existing standards.
44. Proposed amendments shall be published in the issue of the Council Journal prior to the meeting of the Standards Committee.
45. Objections to any proposed amendments so published must be sent to the Standards Committee Chairman within 14 days of publication.
46. The Standards Committee shall meet (**Actually or virtually**) not less than 21 (and not more than 60) days after publication of the proposed amendments to decide whether the Exhibition Standard should be amended as proposed.

COMPLAINTS

47. The decision of the Standards Committee shall be final, except in the following circumstances: -
 - (a) An amendment will be reconsidered upon written application (signed by each person) of not less than 25 full adult members of affiliated clubs.
 - (b) In the event of serious disagreement, or instead of a properly requested reconsideration, the standards committee may arrange a national ballot on the controversial amendment.

REGULATIONS FOR THE RECOGNITION OF NEW VARIETIES

PRINCIPLES

48. The proposed new variety shall be sufficiently distinct from any standardised variety so that, when placed side by side, no possibility of confusion can arise.

49. The proposed new variety shall be capable of true breeding (e.g. be capable of the demonstration that litters of the variety shall consist entirely of that variety) with the following exceptions: -
- (a) Sterility in one or both sexes shall not necessarily disqualify, since there is every likelihood that the sterility may be corrected by selective breeding.
 - (b) A distinctive impure form of a dominant lethal (e.g. as in the yellow mouse) shall not necessarily disqualify.
50. A mutation that might at a later date be combined with other mutations shall be preserved for its potential value.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICANT

51. Applications for recognition of a new mutation or variety shall be sent to the NHC, who shall then send full details to all members of the Standards Committee and the Council.
52. The applicant shall be prepared to furnish the following particulars: -
- (a) Name and address of applicant
 - (b) Date and place of discovery or creation of proposed new mutation or variety.
 - (c) Full information on parentage/production of the proposed new mutation or variety. In the case of a suspected new mutation, evidence shall be provided that the new variety is the result of a natural mutation and not cross-species hybridisation.
 - (d) Proposed name(s) for the new variety (established usage in other fancies to be adopted where possible)
 - (e) A proposed exhibition standard for the new variety
 - (f) If possible, a genetic description of the variety's breeding.
53. Prior to a Standard being accepted as permanent, a representative living specimen of three generations, both male and female (if possible), must be shown to the Chairperson and at least 2 members of the Colour Standards Committee.

OBJECTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

54. One month's notice will be given in the Council Journal that a proposed new variety is to be considered by the Standards Committee.
55. In order to permit objections to the recognition of the proposed new variety or

amendments to the proposed name(s) and Standard, the proposed name(s) and Standard(s) will be published simultaneously with the notice.

56. Objections and amendments must be received by the Standards Committee chairman at least 7 days before the announced date of the meeting of the standards committee. Any amendments agreed by the Committee on the day of the meeting must be published in the next Journal and take effect not less than 60 days after publication. If 25 adult member objections, signed by each objector, are received by the NHC Secretary, by the date specified (not less than 45 days after publication), then the amendment will not come into effect, but will be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

PROCEDURE FOR STANDARDS COMMITTEE

57. In order to reach a decision, the Committee shall be guided by the above and by the objections and amendments submitted.
58. If the applicant does not wish to propose a suitable name or standard, the Committee will do so. In the case of proposed new mutations, the Standards Committee after discussion shall vote as to whether or not they believe the variety to be caused by a natural mutation. Should the result of this vote be in the affirmative, they shall recommend to the Council that the mutation be added to Appendix C(1) or C(2) as soon as possible.
59. Although the Committee will consider sympathetically any name(s) proposed, in the interests of uniformity of naming of varieties among the fancies, the Committee cannot be bound to accept any name(s) proposed.
60. The decision of the Committee to recognise a new variety shall be final, but a rejected variety may be resubmitted after an interval of not less than 12 months, together with any new evidence in favour of recognition.
61. All new varieties shall be given an initial trial period of two years, the provisional standard to be stated in the NHC Journal. During the trial period, the new variety may be exhibited in the appropriate straight and duplicate classes, at all shows. If, in the opinion of the Standards Committee, the new variety keeps the required standard, at the end of the two-year trial period is over, the standard shall then become permanent.
62. National Hamster Council recognises only those natural mutations listed in Appendix C(1) or C(2).

SECTION C

EXHIBITION STANDARDS

NATIONAL HAMSTER COUNCIL EXHIBITION STANDARDS (SYRIAN)

ALLOCATION OF POINTS FOR ALL STANDARDS

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Colour and markings | 30 points |
| | Type | 25 points |
| | Fur | 20 points |
| | Size | 10 points |
| | Condition | 10 points |
| | Eyes and ears | 5 points |
2. All judges must use this system and the judge's decision is final.

PENALTIES FOR ALL STANDARDS

3. The penalties shall be as defined in the following table;

ABNORMALITY

Totally missing limb, eye, ear,
foot or tail

Any physical deformity believed
by the judge to be hereditary

Suspect disease or intractability

Evidence of parasitic infestation

Excess fat

Sores, wounds, or scars

Dirty or damaged show pen

Fruit/vegetables - deviation from Rules

PENALTY

Mandatory
disqualification

Mandatory
disqualification

Mandatory disqualification

Mandatory disqualification

Minus 5 points maximum

Minus 10 points maximum

Minus 10 points maximum

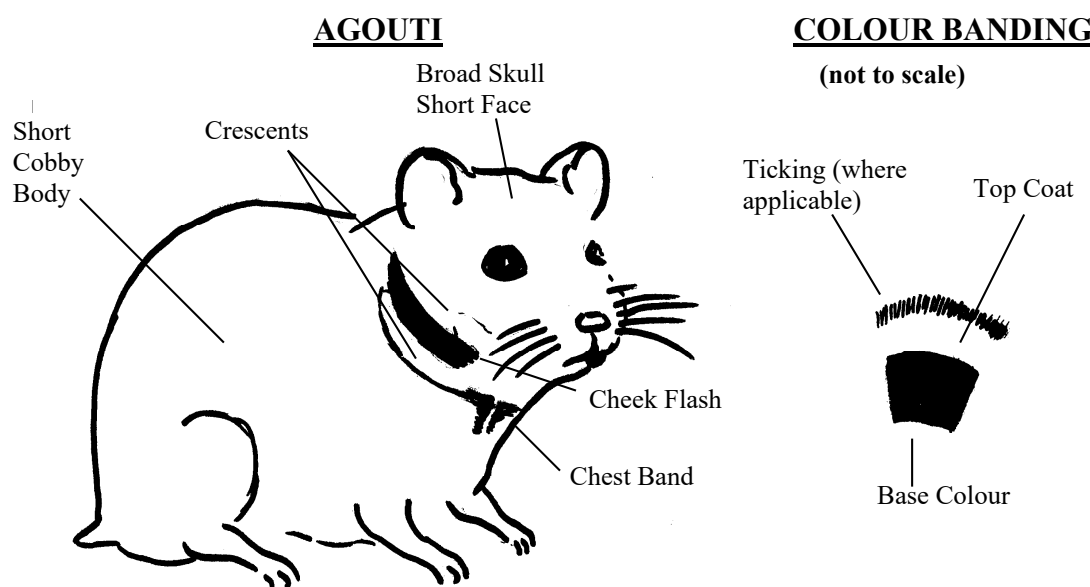
Minus 2 points maximum

4. Type, fur, size, condition, eyes and ears shall be the same for all shades and varieties as follows: -
5. **TYPE (25 points)** - The body shall be broad and cobby. The head shall be large in proportion to the body with a broad skull, short face and blunt nose. The head shall be well set into the body, the profile showing a smooth curve from nose over head, to nape of neck.
6. **FUR (20 points)** - The fur shall be soft and very dense. Special attention shall be paid to the density of the belly fur. In longhaired hamsters, the coat shall be as long and dense as possible, but allowance must be made for sex, i.e. males must have longer fur than females, and the females shall not be penalised for having shorter fur. The length of fur must be taken into account when judging all classes.

7. **SIZE (10 points)** - The hamster shall be as large as possible, but not fat. Allowance shall be made for sex; i.e. female hamsters in general are larger than males.
8. **CONDITION (10 points)** - The hamster shall be fit, curious when well awake and tame to handle. The flesh shall be firm with no surplus fat. The coat shall have a healthy sheen and the hamster shall be quite clean.
9. **EYES AND EARS (5 points)** - The eyes shall be large, prominent and widely set. The ears shall be large, set well apart and carried erect and unfolded when the hamster is alert.

(PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL REFERENCE TO COLOUR OF FUR, EYES AND EARS IS SO FAR OMITTED).

COLOUR AND MARKINGS (30 points)



EYE COLOUR

10. The following sequence of eye colours shall apply (in increasing order of darkness):

1. Bright clear pink	5. Ruby
2. Red	6. Garnet
3. Claret red	7. Dark brown
4. Claret	8. Black
11. In patterned varieties 15 points shall be allocated for colour and markings and 15 points for pattern.
12. Where base colour is indicated this applies to the whole animal, excluding the belly fur.
13. White feet shall be permissible on all colours, however all other white markings, other than those specified in the Standard, shall be penalised.

14. Where used in the standard, the word “flesh” refers to the hamster’s natural skin tone allowing for any fine covering of hair if applicable.

AGOUTI VARIETIES

BEIGE (bbdgdg)

TOP COAT - Soft pale grey with brownish tone, carried approximately one third of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Slate grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory

CRESCENTS - White with base colour

TICKING - Lightly and evenly ticked with dark beige/brown

CHEST BAND - Dark beige/brown

CHEEK FLASHES - Dark beige/brown

EYE COLOUR - Very dark brown, almost black

EAR COLOUR - Very dark beige

NOTES.

BLONDE (Lglgpp)

TOP COAT - Creamy blonde carried approximately one third of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Light grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory

CRESCENTS - Ivory

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Creamy blonde, with an orange tint

CHEEK FLASHES - Light grey

EYE COLOUR - Claret red

EAR COLOUR - Flesh grey

NOTES - Tends to have orange tinted muzzle.

CINNAMON (pp)

TOP COAT - Rich russet orange carried approximately one third of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Slate blue

BELLY FUR - Creamy ivory, with a blue under colour

CRESCENTS - Ivory

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Rich russet orange

CHEEK FLASHES - Brown

EYE COLOUR - Bright claret red

EAR COLOUR - Flesh brown

NOTES.

GOLDEN, DARK ++ (Wild type agouti)

TOP COAT - Rich dark mahogany red carried approximately one third of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Dark slate grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory, with grey under colour

CRESCENTS - Pale ivory, almost white

TICKING - Heavily and evenly ticked with black, dorsal line and hair on scalp intensely shaded. Face to be swarthy with black eye rings.

CHEST BAND - Rich dark mahogany red

CHEEK FLASHES - Black

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black

NOTES.

GREY, DARK (dgdg)

TOP COAT - Pearly grey carried approximately one quarter of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Dark slate grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory, with a grey under coat colour?

CRESCENTS - Ivory

TICKING - Heavily and evenly ticked with black, shaded as for dark golden, i.e. face to be swarthy with black eye rings

CHEST BAND - Very dark slate grey

CHEEK FLASHES - Black

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black

NOTES.

GREY, LIGHT (Lglg)

TOP COAT - Buttermilk-grey, carried approximately one third of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Dark slate grey

BELLY FUR - Buttermilk, with grey base-colour

CRESCENTS - Buttermilk

TICKING - Heavily and evenly ticked with dark grey, almost black, shaded as for dark golden

CHEST BAND - Dark brown/grey

CHEEK FLASHES - Dark grey, almost black (concentrated ticking)

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey

NOTES.

GREY, SILVER (SgSg)

TOP COAT - Light Silvery Grey

BASE COLOUR - Dark Slate Grey

BELLY FUR - Light Silvery Grey to the roots-no ticking

CRESCENTS - Light Silvery Grey

TICKING - Heavy and evenly ticked with Black (excluding belly fur)

CHEST BAND - Mid Grey

CHEEK FLASHES - Concentrated Black ticking

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Very dark Grey almost Black

NOTES - This gene has been found to be extremely dominant. Caution should be exercised when breeding these animals.

HONEY (ppTo - male, ppToTo - female)

TOP COAT - Light cinnamon orange to the roots

BASE COLOUR - Light cinnamon orange

BELLY FUR - Ivory, almost white

CRESCENTS - Ivory, almost white

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Light cinnamon orange

CHEEK FLASHES - Cinnamon

EYE COLOUR - Claret red

EAR COLOUR - Flesh grey

NOTES.

LILAC (dgdgpp)

TOP COAT - Soft pale grey with pinkish tone

BASE COLOUR - Soft pale grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory

CRESCENTS - Ivory with a pinkish tone

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Soft pale grey with pinkish tone

CHEEK FLASHES - Warm grey

EYE COLOUR - Claret red

EAR COLOUR - Pinkish grey

NOTES.

RUST (GUINEA GOLD) (bb)

TOP COAT - Rich orange brown

BASE COLOUR - Brownish grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory, with pale grey under colour

CRESCENTS - Ivory

TICKING - Light and even ticking of brown
CHEST BAND - Deep rust brown
CHEEK FLASHES - Deep rust brown
EYE COLOUR - Very dark brown, almost black
EAR COLOUR - Dark grey with a hint of pink

SMOKE PEARL (dgdgTo = male; dgdgToTo = female)

TOP COAT - Pale greyish cream to the roots
BASE COLOUR - Pale greyish cream
BELLY FUR - Ivory, almost white
CRESCENTS - Ivory, almost white
TICKING - Heavy and even black ticking
CHEST BAND - Pale greyish cream
CHEEK FLASHES - Black - not solid but concentrated ticking
EYE COLOUR - Black
EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black
NOTES.

YELLOW (To = male; ToTo = female)

TOP COAT - Rich dusky yellow carried well down
BASE COLOUR - Ivory yellow
BELLY FUR - Ivory
CRESCENTS - Ivory
TICKING - Heavy and even black ticking overall
CHEST BAND - Rich dusky yellow
CHEEK FLASHES - Black - not solid but concentrated ticking
EYE COLOUR - Black
EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black
NOTES.

SELF VARIETIES

BLACK (aa)

TOP COAT - Black

BASE COLOUR - Black

BELLY FUR - Black

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Black

NOTES - Genetic details; This is a melanistic black, produced by a simple recessive gene, and is capable of true breeding. The genotype for this colour is "aa".

CHOCOLATE (aabb)

TOP COAT - Dark chocolate brown carried well down

BASE COAT - Mid brown

BELLY FUR - Dark chocolate brown

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHESTBAND - Absent

CHEEKFLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Very dark greyish brown.

NOTES - The top colour should be the rich chocolate of plain Bournville chocolate.

COPPER (UUeebbpp)

TOP COAT - Rich clear copper to the roots

BASE COLOUR - Rich clear copper

BELLY FUR - Rich clear copper

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Garnet

EAR COLOUR - Copper grey

NOTES.

CREAM, BLACK-EYED (ee)

TOP COAT - Deep rich cream to the roots

BASE COLOUR - Deep rich cream

BELLY FUR - Deep rich cream

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black

NOTES.

CREAM, RED-EYED (eepp)

TOP COAT - Deep rich pinkish cream to the roots

BASE COLOUR - Deep rich pinkish cream

BELLY FUR - Deep rich pinkish cream

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Claret red

EAR COLOUR - Peach grey

NOTES.

CREAM, RUBY-EYED (eeruru)

TOP COAT - Warm pastel cream to the roots

BASE COLOUR - Warm pastel cream

BELLY FUR - Warm pastel cream

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Ruby

EAR COLOUR - Flesh

NOTES.

DOVE (aapp)

TOP COAT - Dove grey with a deep lilac tone, to the roots.

BASE COLOUR - Dove grey with a deep lilac tone.

BELLY FUR - Dove grey with a deep lilac tone.

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Claret red

EAR COLOUR - Flesh grey

NOTES

IVORY, BLACK-EYED (eeLglg or eedgdg)

TOP COAT - Pale greyish cream to the roots

BASE COLOUR - Pale greyish cream

BELLY FUR - Pale greyish cream

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black

NOTES.

IVORY, RED-EYED (eeLglgpp or eedgdgpp)

TOP COAT - Pale greyish cream to the roots

BASE COLOUR - Pale greyish cream

BELLY FUR - Pale greyish cream

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Garnet

EAR COLOUR - Pinkish grey

NOTES.

MELANISTIC YELLOW (ToToaa = Female, Totoaa = Male)

TOP COAT – Black tipping to each hair carried $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way down to rich dusky yellow

BASE COLOUR - Ivory yellow.

BELLY FUR – Ivory yellow undercoat with black tips to each hair

CRESCENTS - Absent.

TICKING - Absent.

CHEST BAND - Absent.

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent.

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black

MINK (Uuepp or Uuepp)

TOP COAT - Warm mid brown with an orange tinge. The eyes shall be ringed with fine pinkish cream hairs.

BASE COLOUR - Deep, rich pinkish cream.

BELLY FUR - Warm mid brown with an orange tinge.

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Claret red

EAR COLOUR - Flesh grey

SABLE (U ee)

TOP COAT - Dark Sable Brown, carried well down. The eyes shall be ringed with deep rich cream hairs.

BASE COLOUR - Deep rich cream

BELLY FUR - Dark Sable Brown

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black

NOTES. Fading of the top colour, (“gingering”), immediately around the tail root is permissible. Other deviations from the required colour shall be penalised.

WHITE, BLACK-EYED (eeDsds or eeWhwh or ???)

TOP COAT - White to the roots

BASE COLOUR - White

BELLY FUR - White

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark Grey, almost Black

NOTES.

WHITE (ALBINO), DARK EARED (cdcd)

TOP COAT - White to the roots

BASE COLOUR - White

BELLY FUR - White

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Red

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey, almost black

NOTES - Eyes darken with age

WHITE (ALBINO), FLESH EARED (cdcdpp)

TOP COAT - White to the roots

BASE COLOUR - White

BELLY FUR - White

CRESCENTS - Absent

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Absent

CHEEK FLASHES - Absent

EYE COLOUR - Bright clear pink

EAR COLOUR - Flesh

NOTES.

PATTERNED VARIETIES

Care must be taken when breeding patterned animals as some patterns contain the anophthalmic or white bellied gene, (Wh).

DOMINANT SPOT (PIEBALD) (Dsds or ss)

1. The dominant spot shall have the appearance of a white animal with coloured spots. The spots shall be sharply defined and evenly distributed over the top surface of the animal.
2. The belly fur shall be white.
3. The white areas shall be white to the roots.
4. The coloured spots shall conform to the recognised corresponding full coloured variety.
5. Eye colour: as for the full coloured variety, also ruby/red eye or eyes permissible.
6. Ear colour: as for the full coloured variety, also flesh or partly flesh coloured permissible.

NOTES

WHITE BAND (BaBa or Baba)

1. The white banded animal shall have the appearance of coloured animal with a superimposed white band. The white band shall completely encircle the body and be centrally placed and not skewed. The width shall be approximately one third of the body length, completely unbroken with sharply defined and parallel margins.
2. The belly fur shall be white.
3. The white areas shall be white to the roots.
4. The coloured areas shall conform to the recognised full colour variety.
5. Eye colour: as for the full coloured variety, also ruby/red eye or eyes permissible.
6. Ear colour: as for the full coloured variety, also flesh or partly flesh coloured permissible.

NOTES

BANDED DOMINANT SPOT (BaBaDsDs, BabaDsds or rdrd)

1. The Banded Dominant Spot hamster shall have the appearance of a dominant spot or piebald animal with a broad white band superimposed. The white band shall extend from the neck to the hips, ideally 2/3 of the body length, and contain no coloured markings. The head and the rump shall conform to the Dominant Spot or Piebald standard, (i.e. give the appearance of the white animal with coloured markings).
2. Coloured areas shall conform to the relevant colour standard. White areas shall be white to the roots.
3. Belly fur shall be white to the roots.
4. Eye colour shall be as for the full coloured variety. Red or ruby eye or eyes are also permissible.
5. Ear colour shall be as for the full coloured variety. Mottled ears are also permissible.

TORTOISESHELL AND WHITE (TotoBaba, TotoBaBa, or TotoDsds)

1. A tortoiseshell is a sex-linked bi-coloured animal. The standard calls for a tricoloured animal which is produced by combining the tortoiseshell with a white pattern gene. The coat colour shall consist of a balanced pattern of coloured, yellow and white patches. These patches shall be clear and distinct with no brindling.
2. The Yellow based patches shall be clearly defined and of a colour appropriate to the hamster's standard colour. Where the Yellow based colour is also recognised as standard, any Yellow patches must conform to the standard. In other cases the Judge may use discretion when judging non-standard yellow patches
3. The belly fur shall be white.
4. Eye colour: as stipulated for the full colour variety; also red/ruby eye or eyes permissible.
5. Ear colour: as stipulated for the full colour variety; also flesh or partly flesh coloured permissible.

NOTES - Sex linked.

TORTOISESHELL (Toto)

1. Overall Appearance: A tortoiseshell is a bi-coloured animal which consists of a balanced pattern of coloured and yellow patches. These patches shall be clear and distinct with no brindling.
2. The Yellow based patches shall be clearly defined and of a colour appropriate to the hamster's standard colour. Where the Yellow based colour is also recognised as standard, any Yellow patches must conform to the standard. In other cases the Judge may use discretion when judging non-standard yellow patches

ROAN (Whwh)

1. Overall Appearance: The Roan shall have the appearance of a white animal ticked with colour. The ticking shall be heavy around the head and give an evenly marbled appearance over the remainder of the top coat. The white areas shall be white to the roots. **The coloured areas shall conform to the recognised coloured variety** allowing for slight dilution.
2. The belly fur shall be marbled with colour.
3. **Eye Colour:** As for the full coloured variety also ruby or red eye or eyes permissible.
4. **Ear Colour:** As for the full coloured variety also flesh or partly flesh coloured ears permissible.

COAT VARIETIES

LONG HAIR

1. The colour and markings shall conform to the recognised colour standard, allowing for the dilution effect of the long-haired gene; this is particularly noticeable on the ticking of agouti varieties, but will also affect other varieties.
2. The fur shall be soft, very dense, and evenly long over the entire top surface of the body, excluding the face, where it shall be shorter. Special attention shall be paid to the density of the belly fur. The coat shall be as long and dense as possible, but allowance must be made for sex, i.e. males must have longer fur than females, and the females shall not be penalised for having shorter fur.

NOTES This coat type may be combined with satin and/or rex.

SATIN

1. The colour and markings shall conform to the recognised colour standard, allowing for the effect of the satinisation.
2. The fur shall be soft and dense, and have a glossy, satin sheen.

NOTES This coat type may be combined with long hair and/or rex.

Under no circumstances should two satins be mated together, as this will result in "double satinisation" and, eventually, almost naked hamsters. A satin must only be mated with a non-satinised variety.

REX

1. The colour and markings shall conform to the recognised colour standard, for diluting effect of the rex gene; this is particularly noticeable on the ticking of agouti varieties, but will also affect other varieties.
2. The coat shall be soft and dense, and evenly "frizzy".
3. The whiskers shall be curly.

NOTES This coat type may be combined with satin and/or long hair.

NATIONAL HAMSTER COUNCIL EXHIBITION STANDARDS (RUSSIAN AND CHINESE)

ALLOCATION OF POINTS FOR ALL STANDARDS

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Colour and markings | 30 points |
| | Type | 25 points |
| | Fur | 20 points |
| | Size | 10 points |
| | Condition | 10 points |
| | Eyes and Ears | 5 points |

Colour to include: - Top coat, Ticking if present, Under coat, Belly fur, Colour of feet, Eye colour, Ear colour, Arches and stripes. Type to include: - Head, Body, Legs and Tail.

Fur to include: - Overall coverage of fur as per Standard.

2. All judges must use this system and the judge's decision is final.

PENALTIES FOR ALL STANDARDS

3. The penalties shall be as defined in the following table:-

<u>ABNORMALITY</u>	<u>PENALTY</u>
Totally missing limb, eye, ear, foot or tail	Mandatory disqualification
Any physical deformity believed by the judge to be hereditary	Mandatory disqualification
Suspect disease or intractability	Mandatory disqualification
Evidence of parasitic infestation	Mandatory disqualification
Excess fat	Minus 5 points maximum
Sores, wounds, or scars	Minus 10 points maximum
Dirty or damaged show pen	Minus 10 points maximum
Fruit/vegetables - deviation from Rules	Minus 2 points maximum
Suspected Hybrid	Mandatory disqualification
Note: Judges must be happy that the exhibit is not just a poor quality example of that species but is actually a Hybrid.	

4. Type, fur, size, condition, eyes and ears shall be as defined for each species.

RUSSIAN CAMPBELL

5. **TYPE (25 points)** - The body should be broad and cobby. The head shall be in proportion to the body with a broad skull, short face and blunt nose. The head shall be well set into the body. The legs and tail should be scarcely visible. The eyes and ears should be set well apart.
6. **FUR (20 points)** - The fur should be soft, short and very dense giving a woolly impression. This also applies to the soles of the feet. The inside of the ears should be a little hairy.
7. **SIZE (10 points)** - Adult range 10-12 cms.
8. **CONDITION (10 points)** - The hamster should be fit, curious when awake and

tame to handle. The flesh should be well toned with no surplus fat. The coat shall have a healthy sheen and be clean.

9. **EYES AND EARS (5 points)** - The size of eyes and ears should be in proportion to the animal. The eyes should be rounded and not bulge. The ears should be erect, rounded and visible above the fur. Where used in the standard, the word “flesh” refers to the hamster’s natural skin tone allowing for any fine covering of hair if applicable.
10. **COLOUR (30 points)** - Where base colour is indicated this applies to the whole animal, excluding the belly fur.

ALBINO

TOP COAT - White

BASE COLOUR - White

BELLY FUR - White

FEET - White

EYES - Bright clear pink

EARS - Flesh

ARCHES - None

SPINAL STRIPE - None

NOTES - Dirty or stained fur to be heavily penalized

ARGENTE

TOP COAT - Light cinnamon carried approx. 1/3 down

BASE COLOUR - Smoky grey

BELLY FUR - Creamy white with smoky grey

FEET - Creamy white undercolour

EYES - Red

EARS - Pale flesh

ARCHES - There are three prominently marked arches between the belly and top colour

SPINAL STRIPE - An even smoky grey stripe full length from between the eyes to the base of the tail

BLACK (aa)

TOP COAT - Jet black to the roots.

BASE COLOUR - Jet black.

BELLY FUR - Jet black.

FEET - Black.

EYES - Black.

EARS - Black.

ARCHES - None.

SPINAL STRIPE - None.

NOTES - Silvering, and white patches will be heavily penalised.

DOVE (aapp)

TOP COAT - Warm mid brown to the roots.

BASE COLOUR - Warm mid brown.

BELLY FUR - Warm mid brown.

FEET - Warm mid brown

EYES - Claret red.

EARS - Flesh.

ARCHES - None.

SPINAL STRIPE - None.

NOTES - Silvering, and white patches will be heavily penalised.

NORMAL

TOP COAT - The tip of the hair should be ticked dark brown giving an overall appearance of buffish brown, with cream carried approx. 1/3 down

BASE COLOUR - Very dark slate grey

BELLY FUR - Off white with slate grey undercoat

FEET - Off white

EYES - Black

EARS - Grey brown

ARCHES - There are three prominently marked arches between the belly and the top colour. Between the buffish brown and off white there is a line of pale amber

SPINAL STRIPE - An even black stripe full length from between the eyes to the base of the tail

OPAL

TOP COAT – Soft smoky blue grey, carried one third of the way down

MID COLOUR - Band of creamy ochre

BASE COLOUR - Slate grey

BELLY FUR - Off white with slate grey undercolour

FEET - Off white

EYES - Black

EARS - Grey blue

ARCHES - There are three prominently marked arches between the belly and the top coat. Between the blue and off white there is a line of creamy ochre

DORSAL STRIPE - An even dark slate blue stripe full length from between the eyes to the base of the tail.

RUSSIAN WINTER WHITE

11. **TYPE (25 points)** - The overall build should be oval in shape. The head should be broad and set well into the body. The head should be softly curved and the forehead slightly domed (Roman nose). The legs and tail should be scarcely visible. The eyes and ears should be set well apart.
12. **FUR (20 points)** - The fur should be soft, short and very dense. This also applies to the soles of the feet. The inside of the ears should be a little hairy.

13. **SIZE (10 points)** - Adult range 8-10 cms.
14. **CONDITION (10 points)** - The hamster should be fit, curious when awake and tame to handle. The flesh should be well toned with no surplus fat. The coat shall have a healthy sheen and be clean.
15. **EYES AND EARS (5 points)** - The size of eyes and ears should be in proportion to the animal. The eyes should be rounded and not bulge. The ears should be erect, rounded and visible above the fur.
16. **COLOUR (30 points)** - Where base colour is indicated this applies to the whole animal, excluding the belly fur.

NORMAL

TOP COAT - Dark brown carried approx. 1/3 down with heavy black ticking giving an overall impression of greyish brown

BASE COLOUR - Dark slate blue

BELLY FUR - White with blue tinged undercolour

FEET - White

EYES - Black

EARS - Grey with darker edging

ARCHES - There are three prominently marked arches between the belly and the top colour. The white of the arches is lightly and evenly ticked with black

SPINAL STRIPE - An even black stripe full length from between the eyes to the base of the tail

NOTES

PEARL

TOP COAT & BASE COLOUR - The pearl should have the appearance of a white animal lightly and evenly ticked with colour. There shall be a slight shading of the dorsal stripe, full length from between the eyes to the base of the tail. The colour should correspond to the recognised colour variety.

BELLY FUR - White

EYES - As for full coloured variety

EARS - As for full coloured variety

NOTES - Dirty or stained fur should be heavily penalized

SAPPHIRE

TOP COAT - Smoky grey with a blue tinge

BASE COLOUR - Steel blue

BELLY FUR - Off white with blue tinged base colour

FEET - Off white

EYES - Black

EARS - Pastel grey with small area of off white behind the ears

ARCHES - There are three prominently marked arches between the belly and the top colour. The off white of the arches should be lightly and evenly ticked with smoky grey

SPINAL STRIPE - An even steel blue stripe full length from between the eyes to the

base of the tail

NOTES

FOOTNOTE FOR THE WINTER WHITE - The standards for Winter Whites are for their full summer coats. Any sign of winter moult will be heavily penalized.

ROBOROVSKI

17. TYPE (25 points) - The body shall be broad and cobby, with rear legs appearing to be set wider apart than front legs. Carriage should be low and sturdy. The head shall be well set into the body, with no perceptible neck. The skull shall be broad with a short face and wide muzzle. The eyes and ears shall be set well apart.

18. FUR (20 points) - The fur shall be soft, smooth and very dense. This also applies to the soles of the feet.

19. SIZE (10 points) - Adult range, 6 to 8 cms long.

20. CONDITION (10 points) - The hamster shall be fit, curious when awake and tame to handle. The body shall be well fleshed but with no surplus fat. The coat shall have a healthy sheen and be clean.

21. EYES AND EARS (5 points) - The eyes shall be large and prominent, rounded but not bulging. The ears shall be rounded, carried erect when the animal is alert, and clearly visible above the fur.

22. COLOUR (30 points) - Where base colour is indicated, this applies to the whole animal, excluding the belly fur.

NORMAL

TOP COAT - Warm sandy brown carried 1/3 down. Very lightly and evenly ticked with dark brown.

BASE COLOUR - Slate Grey

BELLY FUR - White

FEET - White

EYES - Black

EARS - Flesh with a dusting of fine fur on the top edge conforming to the Standard colour.

MARKINGS - Arches and spinal stripe are absent. The boundary between top colour and belly fur shall be a sharply defined line with no brindling along the animals' flanks with a slight downward curve between the front and back legs and again over the tail root. The "eyebrow" markings and the whisker beds shall be pure white and clearly defined.

NOTES - "Open" coat, showing under colour, to be heavily penalised.

FOOTNOTE FOR THE ROBOROVSKI - Due to the small size of this species, Roborovski's Hamsters shall be exhibited in Syrian Show Pens.

CHINESE

23. TYPE (25 points) - The build should be long and slender, firm but not thin.

The head is set apart from the body on a short neck. The eyes should be set well apart and form an equilateral triangle with the nose. The back legs and tail are noticeably visible.

- 24. **FUR (20 points)** - The fur should be short and dense with a smooth appearance. The feet are finely haired.
- 25. **SIZE (10 points)** - Adults should have an approximate length of: 10cm female, 12cm male.
- 26. **CONDITION (10 points)** - The hamster should be fit, curious when awake and to handle. The flesh should be well toned with no surplus fat. The coat shall have a healthy sheen and be clean.
- 27. **EYES AND EARS (5 points)** - The eyes should be round and not too prominent. The ears shall be large in proportion to its head and rounded.
- 28. **COLOUR (30 points)** - Where base colour is indicated this applies to the whole animal, excluding the belly fur.

NORMAL

TOP COAT - Brown with chestnut tinge carried approx. 1/3 down. Lightly ticked with dark brown

BASE COLOUR - Slate grey

BELLY FUR - Off white with slate grey under colour

FEET - Off white

EYES - Black

EARS - Dark brown with off white rims

SIDES - Well defined straight line from nose over the cheeks and along the sides

SPINAL STRIPE - Even black stripe from the forehead to the tip of the tail

BLACK EYED WHITE

TOP COAT - White

BASE COAT - White

BELLY FUR - White

FEET - White

EYES - Black

EARS - Flesh

MARKINGS - None

Notes - Dirty or stained fur to be heavily penalised

PATTERNED VARIETIES

Care must be taken when breeding patterned animals as some patterns contain the anophthalmic or white bellied gene, (Wh).

DOMINANT SPOT (CHINESE)

1. The dominant spot should have the appearance of a white animal with coloured spots or patches. The spots should be sharply defined and evenly distributed over the top surface of the animal. (A concentration of colour around the spinal area is permissible.) The Belly Fur should be white to the roots.
2. **MARKINGS** - (Sides and Spinal Stripe) - As for full Standard variety but may be broken with white spots/patches.
3. **EYE COLOUR** - As for full Standard variety
4. **EAR COLOUR** - As for full Standard variety, light coloured patches permissible

MOTTLED (RUSSIAN CAMPBELL)

TOP COAT - The entire animal shall be covered by distinct patches of coloured and white fur, giving the effect of a white animal with coloured patches. The patches, including those on the belly shall conform to the relevant Standard. The patches shall be clear and distinct with no brindling of coloured or white hairs.

BASE COLOUR - As for standard colour. White patches to be white to the roots.

EYES - As for standard colour. Red or ruby eye or eyes also acceptable.

EARS - As for the standard colour. Mottled ears are also permissible.

MARKINGS – Where coloured patches extend down the flanks, or over the spine, the coloured patches shall conform to the expectation of the relevant Standard.

NOTES: There is evidence that certain individuals of this colour carry the anophthalmic (eyeless) gene. This produces eyeless, toothless white pups when inherited from both parents. When breeding, care should be taken to avoid pairings likely to produce such young.

COAT TYPES

SATIN COAT

1. The colour and markings shall conform to the recognised colour standard, allowing for the effect of the satinisation.
2. The fur shall be soft and dense, and have a glossy, satin sheen.

APPENDIX A

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

The Certificate of Merit awards are reliant on the honesty of Exhibitors, therefore the membership of anyone found to be giving false information will be reviewed.

The Judge may only award a Certificate of Merit to a hamster that they consider to be an excellent example of their species. A Hamster must be entered in the Grand Challenge Class to be able to qualify for a Certificate.

At each show the Judge may award Certificates of Merit to those animals which they consider worthy of Champion status at that moment in time.

Poor presentation or dirty staging may be disregarded when awarding Certificates of Merit.

The number of Certificates of Merit awarded may be decided by the Judge, but must reflect the overall quality of the animals present.

Certificates of Merit must only be awarded to animals which, in the Judge's opinion, represent an overall excellent example of the species.

All Judges must use the NHC Standards and the points system when deciding whether or not any individual hamster is an excellent example of the species or variety.

When two or more hamsters share the same marks, the Judge may use their discretion as to which, if any, they award Certificates of Merit.

Any animal which wins three Certificates of Merit under at least two different Judges shall be awarded the title of "NHC Champion" by the NHC Chairman.

Any animal which wins five Certificates of Merit under at least three different Judges shall be awarded the title of "NHC Grand Champion" by the NHC Chairman.

Each Certificate of Merit will be completed at the show. The Judge will enter all information that they are aware of and the Show Secretary and exhibitor will then fill in the remainder. No changes or alterations are to be made to the Certificate of Merit.

For a hamster to be awarded Champion or Grand Champion status the owner must send the relevant Certificates of Merit to the person co-ordinating the Championship certification, (currently Mrs. Susan Washbrook). The co-ordinator will return these to the exhibitor, together with a Certificate recognising the hamster's new status.

Rosettes will be awarded to Champion and Grand Champions. Rosettes will normally be presented at shows; where members require rosettes to be posted the member shall pay postage costs.

Where possible, the coordinator will also send a copy of the Certificates to the breeder of the hamster if different from the exhibitor.

Championship or Grand Championship status may only be awarded to individually identified hamsters owned by members of a National Hamster Council affiliated club.

Hamsters achieving Champion or Grand Champion status, (together with the names of their owner and breeder); will be listed in the National Hamster Council Journal as soon as possible.

Any member wishing to have Certificate and Rosette posted to them, should send appropriate monies, in advance, to cover postage & packing to the Co-ordinator

NOTE: The success of these awards depends entirely on the HONOUR and HONESTY of ALL Exhibitors

APPENDIX B

OLD COLOUR STANDARDS

CINNAMON FAWN (ppruru)

TOP COAT - Pastel orange carried approximately one third of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Light grey

BELLY FUR AND CRESCENTS - White

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Pastel orange

CHEEK FLASHES - Pale grey

EYE COLOUR - Ruby

EAR COLOUR - Flesh

NOTES: Adult males are infertile.

GOLDEN, LIGHT

TOP COAT - Light fawny gold

BASE COLOUR - Slate grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory, almost white

CRESCENTS - Ivory, almost white

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Light fawny gold

CHEEK FLASHES - Dark grey, almost black

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Grey

NOTES

GOLDEN, NORMAL

TOP COAT - Bright chestnut carried approximately one third of the way down

BASE COLOUR - Dark slate grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory, almost white

CRESCENTS - Ivory, almost white

TICKING - Lightly and evenly ticked with mahogany

CHEST BAND - Bright chestnut

CHEEK FLASHES - Dark grey, almost black

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Very dark grey

NOTES

FAWN, RUBY EYED (ruru)

TOP COAT - Clear bright fawn

BASE COLOUR - Light slate grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory, almost white

CRESCENTS - Ivory, almost white

TICKING - Absent

CHEST BAND - Fawn

CHEEK FLASHES - Fawn

EYE COLOUR - Ruby

EAR COLOUR - Pale grey

NOTES

SEPIA (No specific genotype)

TOP COAT - Light tawny beige

BASE COLOUR - Pale grey

BELLY FUR - Ivory, almost white

CRESCENTS - Ivory, almost white

TICKING - Lightly and evenly ticked with very dark, almost black ticking

CHEST BAND - Light tawny beige

CHEEK FLASHES - Almost black - not solid but concentrated ticking

EYE COLOUR - Black

EAR COLOUR - Dark grey

NOTES

APPENDIX C (1)

NHC RECOGNISED NATURAL MUTATIONS

CHINESE HAMSTER

Dominant Spot, Sapphire

CAMPBELL'S RUSSIAN HAMSTER

Albino, Argenté, Black Eyed Argenté, Mottled, Black, Opal, Satin, Rex, Umbrous, Platinum

WINTER WHITE RUSSIAN HAMSTER

Sapphire, Marbled, Pearl

ROBOROVSKI HAMSTER

Brown Locus, Husky, Pied, Blue

SYRIAN HAMSTER

Anophthalmic White, Banded, Black, Cinnamon, Cream, Dark Eared White, Dark Grey, Dominant Spot, Light Grey, Longhair, Piebald, Recessive Dappled, Rex, Rust/Guinea Gold, Satin, Silver Grey, Umbrous, Yellow, Polywhite, Extreme Dilute, Russian Shadow

APPENDIX C (2)

NHC RECOGNISED NATURAL MUTATIONS THAT MAY NOT BE SHOWN OR REHOMED AT NHC AFFILIATED EVENTS

SYRIAN HAMSTER

Hairless

APPENDIX D

NHC CODE OF PRACTICE

The NHC promotes a high standard of hamster care & welfare. Membership of an NHC affiliated club means members automatically agree to follow their clubs' rules & those of the Constitution.

In addition, by joining an NHC affiliated club, members also agree to follow the separate NHC Codes of Practice.

Failure to adhere to any of these could mean expulsion from your club.

Housing

The hamster must be housed in a secure enclosure. The hamster must be unable to escape and be protected from potential predators.

The enclosure must be sited away from draughts and heat sources, (including direct sunlight), in an environment where the temperature remains relatively constant. The environment must be frost proof and temperatures should not rise above 25°C.

To prevent fighting, each mature Syrian hamster must be caged singly, (except for a female housed with the un-weaned pups that she is suckling). Other hamster species may be housed in compatible groups of their own species.

The design of the cage must be suitable and safe for hamsters. Particular care must be taken to ensure that the hamster is unable to fall from a height or become trapped in small spaces.

The enclosure must be large enough to allow the hamster to exercise and to establish separate toilet, feeding, food storage and nesting areas.

Environmental enrichment, (e.g. wheels, boxes and tubes of suitable size), should be supplied to encourage activity.

For reasons of hygiene, and to encourage natural burrowing behaviour, the floor of the enclosure must be covered in a layer of a suitable absorbent substrate.

Sufficient safe bedding material must be supplied to enable the hamster to build a nest adequate for the ambient temperature conditions.

Feeding

The basis of the hamster's diet must be a balanced hamster mix, containing hard foods suitable for keeping teeth in trim. The amount required per day will vary with the hamster's species; an egg cupful is adequate for an adult Syrian hamster.

Some vegetables and fruits, (not citrus fruits or onion but see full list on NHC website), can be given in small quantities, 2-3 times a week and all uneaten fresh food removed frequently (or regularly). It must be well washed before feeding to remove dirt and pesticides.

To prevent impaction of the cheek pouches, foodstuffs that are sticky or that melt must not be given.

Fresh, clean drinking water must be available in the enclosure at all times.

Handling

Handling should, ideally, take place in the late afternoon or evening, when the hamster is naturally awake and alert.

Hamsters should never be handled more than a few inches above a surface or the floor, in case of falls.

To remove food odours, (with consequent risks of nipping), hands should be washed before handling hamsters. As with any animal, hands must be washed after handling hamsters, for reasons of hygiene.

When taming a hamster, handling “little and often” is recommended, to help the hamster learn the owner’s scent and voice.

Health

Bedding and cage litter must be changed at intervals sufficiently frequent to maintain a hygienic environment. Where possible, it is recommended that the interval between cleanings should be at least a week, since cleaning disrupts the animals’ natural scent marking and hoarding behaviours, which may cause psychological stress.

All cages and equipment must be cleaned regularly, preferably with an animal safe disinfectant.

At all events, provision will be made to minimise risk of transfer of pathogens between hamsters and between hamsters and humans. This may be by barrier methods or by the use of animal safe disinfectants or cleansers.

Hamsters must be checked at regular intervals for signs of illness or disease. If and when these symptoms are found, prompt action must be taken to alleviate the source of the problem, seeking veterinary attention where necessary.

Breeding

The NHC does not agree with breeding hamsters purely for sale or profit.

Exhibitors should not breed hamsters, except for show purposes or for the continuation of a bloodline.

Stock used for breeding must be healthy and of good temperament. The individuals should have no known genetically inherited illnesses or disease in their ancestry. Pairings believed likely to result in pups with birth defects must be avoided.

Syrian females must be given a recovery period of at least six weeks after weaning a litter and should not rear more than three litters in their lifetime.

The hybridisation of any species of hamster is strongly discouraged by the National Hamster Council.

Careful thought must be given before breeding as to provision of suitable homes for any surplus youngsters.

Syrian hamster females should be aged between four and eight months when mated for the first time.

Records must be kept of all hamsters kept by an exhibitor. Each record should contain, as a baseline; species, age, sex, colour, parentage and history, (breeding and medical)

Re-homing

Only regular exhibitors who are members of an appropriate club may re-home animals at shows and other events organised by that club.

All hamsters re-homed must be accompanied by details of ancestry, a description, (species, age, sex, and colour), care information and breeder's contact details.

Hamsters re-homed must be healthy and fully weaned. They must be no younger than five weeks of age and no older than ten months.

Exhibition and transport

No hamster may be transported, exhibited or otherwise confined in any container that does not allow the animal to stretch out at full length, turn around or sit upright on its haunches.

The travelling or exhibition container must be sufficiently well ventilated for the animals' needs. There must always be provision for air circulation around the air vents, whether the container is in transit or at an event venue.

Suitable quantities of hard food and moisture supplying fruit or vegetable must always be available to hamsters in transport or exhibition pens.

Any animal believed by any Official exhibiting signs of illness, injury or disease must be returned to the owner as soon as practicable. The owner will be encouraged to seek advice, including veterinary attention if necessary.

Where any exhibitor suspects an infectious disease, that person must seek qualified medical advice (under the Animal Welfare Act 2006) and not expose their hamsters to other hamsters until the problem is resolved or a recommended period of quarantine has been completed.

Club Officials and owners will monitor ambient conditions, (temperature, noise, etc) at all venues, and take such action as may be needed to keep them at an appropriate level. During travel, this responsibility falls to the person transporting the animal(s).

Any handling of hamsters at events will be by persons recognised by the club as competent to do so, or under the direct supervision of such a person.

When the health or welfare of any hamster(s) at an NHC affiliated event is, or is likely to be, compromised, the situation must be brought to the attention of the Show Secretary or their appointed NHC Welfare Representative. They will then be required, on behalf of the NHC, to take reasonable steps to prevent or alleviate any animal suffering. The person(s) shall be selected on a show by show basis.

APPENDIX E

RE-HOMING – CODE OF PRACTICE

1. Hamsters may not be re-homed at any NHC event, (or those organised by NHC affiliated clubs), to any individual under the age of 16 years old.
2. Hamsters for re-homing must be fully weaned, not less than 5 weeks old and a maximum of 10 months old. The document accompanying each hamster must indicate it's actual or approximate date of birth.
3. The vendor must check that each hamster they offer for re-homing is in good health and correctly sexed. The Sales Manager or designated representative must ensure that all hamsters for re-homing are in good health and correctly sexed.
4. Each cage or container must hold hamsters of the same species. Males and females must be in separate cages or containers, (with the exception of breeding pairs of Dwarfs.)
5. The cage or container on the Sales Table should be of a size appropriate to the number of hamsters it contains. The hamsters must be able to stand in a normal position, lie down at full length and turn around.
6. The cage or container on the Sales Table must contain appropriate absorbent substrate plus dry food. A piece of fruit or vegetable must be provided for moisture in the absence of a water bottle
7. For each hamster for re-homing, the vendor must supply a secure, ventilated container, marked with the vendor's name or initials and be of a size suitable for the hamster to stand up, lie down at full length and turn around. It must contain appropriate absorbent substrate, dry food and a piece of fruit or vegetable to provide moisture.
8. Each hamster for re-homing must be accompanied by a document showing the vendor's name and contact information, and the hamster's details; species, sex and description. The document must also include details for the hamster's parents and

grandparents, (where known). A Hamster Sales Record Sheet must also accompany each hamster and be completed with details of the new owner.

9. The NHC “Caring for your hamster” leaflet **MUST** be given to the new owner of each hamster re-homed.

10. Vendors may only offer for sale, hamsters that, to the best of their knowledge,

(a.) show only the natural colour for the species or mutation(s) listed in Appendix C(1).

(b.) do not have any other species of hamster in their background

(c.) have no hamsters in their ancestry that do not meet criteria (a) and (b).

Hamsters not meeting these criteria may be re-homed for welfare reasons but must be clearly labelled as “unsuitable for breeding or exhibition” and, (where possible), segregated from other hamsters on the Sales Table.

11. The condition of hamsters for re-homing, (including their environment), must be monitored throughout the day by the Sales Manager or other designated person. This person must ensure that suitable measures are taken to protect the welfare of these hamsters throughout the event.

The Sales Manager has the right to refuse any hamsters/items for sale at his/her discretion.

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