

SAVA/KUSA Hip and Elbow Appeals Procedure

Appeals Procedure:

An owner has the right to appeal the results of a HD grade given by a scrutineer. A second opinion may only be sought under the following conditions:

1. The original radiographs that were submitted for evaluation by the first scrutineer, are the only radiographs that may be resubmitted for evaluation by the second scrutineer. Additional radiographs may not be submitted.
2. An application for appeal can only be submitted to scrutineers on the panel of specialist veterinary radiologists approved by the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA).
3. On the application form for hip and elbow certification, the referring veterinarian must indicate that a second opinion is being sought in accordance with the prescribed appeals procedure.
4. A copy of the report/certificate issued by the first scrutineer as well as a copy of the original application form/declaration must be attached to the appeals application.
5. Proof of payment of scrutineers' fee must be provided.
6. If the result attained from the second scrutineer differs from the result attained from the first scrutineer, the best of the two results will be taken as the final result. The second scrutineer is required to inform the first scrutineer, the referring veterinarian and KUSA, of their evaluation and grade given.
7. The final result/grade will be recorded on the KUSA data base and will be noted as a re-evaluation. However, on the Certificate of Registration and Annex to the Certificate of Registration all that will appear is the final HD or ED grade.
8. A dog may not be submitted more than once for hip or elbow dysplasia grading.

Copies of all HD/ED Certificates issued by all of the scrutineers on the panel, are sent directly to the KUSA office, for recording on the KUSA data base and serve to verify the authenticity of HD /ED certificates submitted directly to KUSA by owners. Thus, if an owner were to submit the first set of radiographs to another scrutineer or a second set of radiographs to any of the scrutineers, including the original scrutineer, without indicating that a second opinion is being sought, this would be picked up by the KUSA office, as the KUSA office would receive two HD/ED certificates for a single dog. Such action would be deemed as dishonest and unacceptable and contrary to the KUSA Code of Ethics.

In such cases, it would be necessary to review and re-evaluate the entire process followed and would be necessary to eliminate any doubt as to the authenticity and accuracy of the results given.

The Chief Scrutineer would be asked to obtain the radiographs from the referring veterinarian(s) and will give a final opinion taking into consideration all the radiographs. A fee of R600 will be charged by the Chief Scrutineer for this service.

The result determined by the Chief Scrutineer will be considered as the final binding result and will be the result recorded on the Certificate of Registration. Should the owner opt not to follow this option, then the grade determined by the first scrutineer will be considered as the official result and will be the result recorded on the Certificate of Registration.

Hip and elbow dysplasia evaluation remains a subjective opinion and thus it is possible for a different grade to be attained from two different scrutineers for the same dog evaluated from the same radiographs. The margin of difference however, tends to be minimal. The scrutineers are specialist veterinary radiologists that have studied an additional 3-4 years in order to specialise.

Many factors such as the quality of the radiograph image, the positioning of the dog, the age of the dog, muscle mass and even possibly oestrus, can influence the final determination of the grade given. The objective of the scrutineers is to give a fair, unbiased and expert opinion on the status of the dog's hips, with the intention to minimise the possible transmission of unfavourable hip dysplasia genes to the progeny of the dog/bitch evaluated.