

Final Assessment: Guidance for Faculty

The certification decision

Deciding whether to pass or fail a student is the difficult duty of every teacher. We all continue to learn, and to strive for excellence, all our lives. It has been said that “striving for excellence is motivating; striving for perfection is demoralizing.” Your decision should never be based on the question, is this student perfect? None of us are perfect. Probably all our students, even if they do very well, will still need to achieve the expertise that can be obtained only through experience. We do, however, expect the KPA Certified Training Partner to be a skilled teacher. The question is, as one faculty member phrased it, would you now be confident in sending a new pet owner to this student?

You have had a chance to get to know each student, and to watch him or her working and learning—or failing to learn. You (and your other students) will probably already be concerned about the student who, for example, does not recognize key technical concepts, or the student who, when in doubt, still defaults to correction with animals or people. Subjective judgment, however, is always open to question. This scored assessment should enable you to identify—to yourself, to the student, and to KPA—those key learning goals that have not yet been met and thus stand in the way of certification.

Students who do not earn KPA certification during the course have nevertheless benefited significantly from their own efforts and from the experience. They will certainly be better trainers and teachers due to their participation in the program. Students still seeking KPA certification often have options for retesting and may have future educational opportunities as KPA programs grow.

Scoring

To pass the overall assessment (and thus be certified) students must earn a score of at least 90 points on *both* of the two assessments (Training and Teaching).

In each of the assessments, you will assess student preparation, poise, and technique. Each assessment is worth 100 points, divided as follows:

Preparation:	15 points
Poise:	20 points
<u>Technique:</u>	<u>65 points</u>
Total:	100 points

Each of these three areas is further divided into specific criteria, which you will score individually to arrive at the total points.

You have been sent, as a separate file, a blank scoring sheet for each of the assessments. There are also sample *Training Assessment* and *Teaching Assessment* forms filled out at the end of this document. These scoring sheets are used to *assess and score* student performance and to *record* student performance.

- ASSESS AND SCORE: Use the attached scoring sheets to assess student performance.
 - Each scoring sheet lists the criteria and their worth. It provides boxes for three possible evaluations, a box for your numerical point score, and a box for notes.
 - Simply check the box that reflects your view of the student’s performance on each criterion:
E = Excellent, G = Good, NI = Needs Improvement

- Anything less than a mark of Excellent should be reflected in a point score that is less than full value on that criterion. You may use any increment of scoring. For example, if a criterion is worth 5 points, you may assign 5, 4.8, 4.0, 3.2, and so on. We recommend keeping your math simple by using increments of 0.5, but you can be more finely detailed if you wish.
- You may choose to make preliminary scores as you observe the student, or you may simply use the check boxes and go back and assign scores after the student has finished. There is also a box in which to make notes.
- Note the different point values within each area.
- Take 5 minutes after each student finishes to jot down all your notes and thoughts and finish preliminary scores while the student's performance is still fresh in your mind.

2. RECORD:

- Please prepare a second copy of the assessment forms, containing only the final marks (E, G, NI) plus the point scores and point totals and any notes/comments you wish to communicate to the student.
- These forms should be completed with final grades and *sent to the director within one week after the day of testing but should, if possible, be delivered earlier.*
 - If you email, please send the director.
 - If you send in the mail please address to: KPCT 49 River Street, Suite 3 Waltham MA 02453: Attention KP Academy/Fran Davis.
- The Academy administration will communicate results and next steps to students via email with a copy to you.
- You are encouraged to touch base with students after results have been communicated to them.

Marking the forms

There's going to be a learning curve for everyone. How do I score? How much weight do I give to what criteria? What if I can't remember afterwards? Practice will make it easier. Meanwhile, here are some suggestions.

We might not react to errors while training, but we do make note of them for future reference; that's what we're doing here. This form allows you to make notes when something doesn't meet criteria, without having to decide on the spot how important that is in the overall picture.

A trainer who gets flustered at a mishap or by a question will undoubtedly become calmer with experience. A trainer whose repeatedly mistimed cues show that she or he doesn't really understand chaining is lacking a much more important skill. A trainer who, whether due to stress or from habit, defaults to leash corrections with dogs or arguments with people (even just once or twice) is also demonstrating a failure to assimilate some important fundamentals. This assessment system enables you to pass along students you feel are ready to start teaching as KPA graduates, and to hold back students that are not ready, in a way that accurately reflects competence and thus helps the student. Remember, it is up to you to judge how many points of the available total are lost for some particular lapse on any criteria. A student who gets less than 90 points on either assessment will not be certified, so a deduction of more than 10 points on either assessment is the cutoff point.

Between student assessment tests, take a few private minutes to jot down your overall impression and any special event or circumstances, without forcing a final judgment call at that time. As soon as possible after the workshop is over, while things are fresh in your mind (no longer than 24 hours later), you should sit down with all the assessments and review them while you decide on final points. When you have settled on



your scores, fill in the numeric scores for each student on a clean version of the assessment forms. Please check your math twice!

You will be sending KPA a copy of both your forms. You should keep a copy of both forms as well so you can discuss the results with students if they ask. Anyone who does not earn certification is entitled to an explanation of why the score was not satisfactory.

Thank you for undertaking this challenging job, and for your wonderful help to these students!