



Guidelines for Prompting in Ranking Exams

Introduction

Many judges in a ranking exam have experienced the situation when a candidate who is doing well in the practical test omits a move or scrambles the sequence. Often this mistake of forgetting is due to the candidate being nervous or insufficiently prepared. Because it is one of our fundamental requirements that candidates for a rank be able to complete the stipulated forms in the Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan curriculum, the judging panel, however sympathetic, is not allowed to assist in that situation.

However, if the candidate is unable to remember the entire sequence due to age, cognitive problems or medical conditions, assistance should be provided. The Association policy allows a candidate to be “prompted” during the performance and by that means successfully complete the routine. In such cases where prompting is warranted, students would have the satisfaction of having their hard work rewarded.

Current statement of policy on prompting as stated in the instructions for filling in the candidate’s application form

Prompting: Individuals above the age of seventy or anyone who has diminished cognitive abilities or specific memory challenges may request assistance in performing the sequence of the form. Prompting may be provided by a recorded voice calling the names of the movements or by a designated forms examiner judge. This type of assistance is provided only to the individual(s) who have requested it in writing, in advance. Your teacher must validate your request.

Definitions: Prompting versus cueing

Prompting is the step-by-step verbal directions provided for the entire routine to lead a candidate through the sequence of movements.

Cueing is a verbal reminder or hint given at a specific place in a routine when a candidate forgets the next posture. Cueing is not allowed during a ranking examination. Deductions are made for the fault of forgetting.

Implementing prompting in a ranking test

1. Duties of the sponsor and the presiding judge

The sponsor and the presiding judge are responsible for planning and organizing arrangements for prompting prior to the ranking event.

- a. Train the forms examiner in prompting and documenting the candidate’s performance of the routine.
- b. Review the abbreviated names of movements candidates may wish to use for prompting to ensure they conform to the official list(s); annotate the form judges worksheets accordingly.
- c. Review any pre-recorded set of prompts for conformity to standard.
- d. Schedule candidates who will be prompted by a forms examiner separately from candidates who are not eligible for prompting.

2. Duties of the Forms Examiner Judge

The forms examiner judge performs the function of prompting, in addition to the other responsibilities of the forms examiner. A separate forms examiner may be responsible for documenting the candidate's performance.

- a. Read aloud the sequence of moves for each form, following the standardized names of movements as published in the official "Forms Judge's Worksheet: Lists for Hand Form, Saber, Sword" from the Judges and Ranking Handbook or the approved annotated list (see 1.b. above).
- b. Read at a pace that matches the candidate's performance, with sufficient anticipation to serve the purpose of prompting or reminding the candidate of the next move and without affecting the quality of the candidate's performance.
- c. Rehearse with the individual candidate if possible.

3. Scoring Judges

- a. Prompting has no effect on the scoring range or final score for a candidate at any rank.
- b. If there is a disparity between the pace of reading and performing, the candidate is not penalized by deductions.

4. Candidate's responsibility

- a. When submitting the application for ranking the candidate must include, in writing, a

request for prompting with an explanation of why it is required. This request must be validated by the candidate's teacher and submitted a month before the ranking event.

- b. If possible, schedule time to practice prompting with the prompting forms examiner
- c. The candidate is required to know the routines and to perform the routines to the standard of the rank being tested.
- d. The candidate follows the prompts as read by the forms examiner and simultaneously demonstrates the quality of continuity.

5. Candidate's options

- a. The candidate may request prompting for any or all routines required by the standards of the ranking examination. Once the prompting request is approved, the candidate is not obligated to have prompting for all routines.
- b. The candidate may provide a list of the moves using abbreviated names in order to keep the appropriate pace. No additional prompts, cues, or instructions are allowed.
- c. The candidate may use a discreet personal recording device, such as an iPod, Zoom, Roland or MP3 player, on which the approved prompts are recorded. The candidate must use a personal headphone to hear the prompts during his or her performance. The recording must be played at a volume that does not distract or influence other candidates being evaluated at the same time.