

Bulldogs

Breed Standard Update



The Executive Council has agreed to update the Bulldog Breed Standard to either the current UK or FCI Standard. This update is intended to bring New Zealand in line with the parent country and remove suggestions of extreme breed features.

The decision to update the Bulldog Breed Standards is based on the overriding health and welfare concerns associated with the current standards which are supported by strong scientific evidence as outlined in the Canine Health & Welfare Committee report.

The Bulldog breed is currently under significant pressure from regulatory and welfare groups, and Dogs NZ is making every effort to protect both the health and welfare of the breed, and the opportunities for the breed to thrive into the future.

The Dogs NZ Brachycephalic Working Group was established in early 2017 in direct response to the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) opinion piece on animal welfare issues associated with selective breeding.

In that document, brachycephalic dogs were mentioned several times with concerns from both NAWAC and the NZ Vet Association. Dogs NZ meet with NAWAC in May to demonstrate the progress made in addressing their concerns. The NAWAC document, and our actions toward addressing their concerns, will be a framework for how NAWAC advise the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) on potential regulations.

In short, if we can demonstrate that we take concerns about health and welfare seriously, and are taking scientifically validated, transparent, peer-reviewed steps toward addressing issues, then there is less risk of being regulated by MPI in the future.

Part of this review to ensure the health and longevity of our breeds involves reviewing Breed Standards. It is clear from work done at Cambridge University on brachycephalic obstructive airway syndrome (BOAS), that there are many points in the current NZ (outdated UK) Bulldog Breed Standard that promote features directly shown to increase severity of airway disease.

The Cambridge University research is the reason why UK and FCI standards were adopted by those organisations in November 2010, following an extensive review of all UK breed standards. The 'new' standard removes suggestions of extreme conformation features and state features that are directly related to animal welfare detriment but is otherwise consistent with the pre-2010 standard in other wordings.

There is clear evidence that the change in the UK Breed Standards have brought about an improvement in the health and well-being of Bulldogs and this is why Dogs NZ has decided to update the current NZ Standards. On the following pages is the current NZ Breed Standard together with the UK and FCI standards so that you can see the difference in wording and emphasis

Dogs NZ members were asked to vote on either adopting the current UK or FCI standard in a SurveyMonkey poll which closed on 9 June.

The final decision on which standard will be adopted will be made at the June Executive Council meeting with the new standard to be in effect on 1 August.

Steven Thompson
Director Secretary

Breed Standard Comparison

Dogs NZ Current in black. UK Current in Red FCI Current in Blue

The layout of the three standard is different. The following is a direct comparison of each statement or breed feature between the current NZ, UK and FCI standards and includes each standard in full but is laid out differently to allow for the direct comparisons to be made. To examine the breed standard layouts please consult each standard.

Introductions

A breed standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament, and appearance of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function with soundness essential.

Breeders and judges should at all times be mindful of features which could be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed.

In forming a judgment on any specimen of the breed, the general appearance, which is the first impression the dog makes as a whole on the eye of the judge, should be first considered. Secondly should be noticed its size, shape and make, or rather its proportions in the relation they bear to each other. No point should be so much in excess of the others as to destroy the general symmetry, or make the dog appear deformed, or interfere with its powers of motion, etc. Thirdly its style, carriage, gait, temper and its several points should be considered separately in detail, due allowance being made for the bitch, which is not so grand or as well developed as the dog.

A Breed Standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance including the correct colour of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed.

From time to time certain conditions or exaggerations may be considered to have the potential to affect dogs in some breeds adversely, and judges and breeders are requested to refer to the Breed Watch section of the Kennel Club website here <http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/services/public/breed/watch> for details of any such current issues. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure. However if a dog possesses a feature, characteristic or colour described as undesirable or highly undesirable it is strongly recommended that it should not be rewarded in the show ring.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY: The Bulldog was first classified as such in the 1630s though there is earlier mention of similar types referred to as bandogs, a term reserved today for a type of fighting dog. Used originally for bull-baiting, the Bulldog also fought its way through the dog pits but after 1835 began to evolve into the shorter faced, more squat version we now know. It entered the show ring in 1860 and the ensuing years saw a big personality change. A delightfully ugly dog with a pugilistic expression, which belies a loving, affectionate nature to family and friends. One of the oldest indigenous breeds, known as the national dog of Great Britain, and associated throughout the world with British determination and the legendary John Bull.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

The general appearance of the Bulldog is that of a smooth-coated, thick-set dog, rather low in stature, but broad, powerful and compact.

Smooth-coated, fairly thick set, rather low in stature, broad, powerful and compact.

Smooth-coated, fairly thick set, rather low in stature, broad, powerful and compact.

The head strikingly massive and large in proportion to the dog's size.

Head, fairly large in proportion to size but no point so much in excess of others as to destroy the general symmetry, or make the dog appear deformed, or interfere with its powers of motion.

Head, fairly large in proportion to size but no point so much in excess of others as to destroy the general symmetry, or make the dog appear deformed, or interfere with its powers of motion.

The face extremely short.

Face relatively short,

Face relatively short,

The muzzle very broad, blunt and inclined upwards.

muzzle broad, blunt and inclined upwards although not excessively so. Dogs showing respiratory distress highly undesirable.

muzzle broad, blunt and inclined upwards although not excessively so. Dogs showing respiratory distress highly undesirable.

The body short and well knit; the limbs stout and muscular. The hindquarters high and strong but rather lightly made in comparison with its heavily made foreparts. The dog should convey an impression of determination, strength, and activity, similar to that suggested by the appearance of a thick-set Ayrshire Bull.

Body fairly short, well knit, limbs stout, well muscled and in hard condition with no tendency towards obesity. Hindquarters high and strong. Bitches not so grand or well developed as dogs.

Body fairly short, well knit, limbs stout, well muscled and in hard condition with no tendency towards obesity. Hindquarters high and strong. Bitches not so grand or well developed as dogs.

CHARACTERISTICS: Conveys impression of determination, strength and activity.

TEMPERAMENT: Alert, bold, loyal, dependable, courageous, fierce in appearance, but possessed of affectionate nature.

Conveys impression of determination, strength and activity. Alert, bold, loyal, dependable, courageous, fierce in appearance, but possessed of affectionate nature.

Head and Skull

The skull should be very large - the larger the better - and in circumference should measure (round in front of the ears) at least the height of the dog at the shoulders.

Skull relatively large in circumference.

Skull relatively large in circumference.

Viewed from the front it should appear very high from the corner of the lower jaw to the apex of the skull, and also very broad and square.

Viewed from front appears high from corner of lower jaw to apex of skull; also broad and square.

Viewed from front appears high from corner of lower jaw to apex of skull; also broad and square.

The cheeks should be well rounded and extended sideways beyond the eyes. Viewed at the side, the head should appear very high, and very short from its back to the point of the nose.

Cheeks well rounded and extended sideways beyond eyes. Viewed from side, head appears very high and moderately short from back to point of nose.

Cheeks well rounded and extended sideways beyond eyes. Viewed from side, head appears very high and moderately short from back to point of nose.

The forehead should be flat, neither prominent nor overhanging the face; the skin upon it and about the head very loose and well wrinkled.

Forehead flat with skin on and about head slightly loose and finely wrinkled without excess, neither prominent nor overhanging face.

Forehead flat with skin on and about head slightly loose and finely wrinkled without excess, neither prominent nor overhanging face.

The projections of the frontal bones should be very prominent, broad, square and high, causing a deep and wide indentation between the eyes termed the "stop".

From the "stop" a furrow both broad and deep should extend up to the middle of the skull, being traceable to the apex. The face, measured from the front of the cheek-bone to the nose, should be as short as possible, and its skin should be deeply and closely wrinkled.

From defined stop, a furrow extending to middle of skull being traceable to apex. Face from front of cheek bone to nose, relatively short, skin may be slightly wrinkled.

From defined stop, a furrow extending to middle of skull being traceable to apex. Face from front of cheek bone to nose, relatively short, skin may be slightly wrinkled.

The muzzle should be short, broad, turned upwards and very deep from the corner of the eye to the corner of the mouth.

Muzzle short, broad, turned upwards and deep from corner of eye to corner of mouth.

Muzzle short, broad, turned upwards and deep from corner of eye to corner of mouth.

The nose should be large, broad and black, and under no circumstances should it be liver coloured or brown; its top should be deeply set back almost between the eyes.

Nose and nostrils large, broad and black, under no circumstances liver colour, red or brown.

Nose and nostrils large, broad and black, under no circumstances liver colour, red or brown.

The distance from the inner corner of the eye (or from the centre of the stop between the eyes) to the extreme tip of the nose should not exceed the length from the tip of the nose to the edge of the under lip.

Distance from inner corner of eye (or from centre of stop between eyes) to extreme tip of nose should not be less than distance from tip of the nose to edge of the underlip.

Distance from inner corner of eye (or from centre of stop between eyes) to extreme tip of nose should not be less than distance from tip of the nose to edge of the underlip.

The nostrils should be large, wide, and black, with a well-defined vertical straight line between them.

Nostrils large wide and open, with well defined vertical straight line between.

Nostrils large wide and open, with well defined vertical straight line between.

The flews, called the "chop" should be thick, broad, pendant, and very deep, hanging completely over the lower jaw at the sides (not in front). They should join the under lip in front and quite cover the teeth.

Flews (chops) thick, broad and deep, covering lower jaws at sides, but joining underlip in front. Teeth not visible.

Flews (chops) thick, broad and deep, covering lower jaws at sides, but joining underlip in front. Teeth not visible.

The jaws should be broad, massive and square, the lower jaw should project considerably in front of the upper and turn up.

Jaws broad, strong and square, lower jaw slightly projecting in front of upper with moderate turn up. Over nose wrinkle, if present, whole or broken, must never adversely affect or obscure eyes or nose. Pinched nostrils and heavy over nose roll are unacceptable and should be heavily penalised.

Jaws broad, strong and square, lower jaw slightly projecting in front of upper with moderate turn up. Over nose wrinkle, if present, whole or broken, must never adversely affect or obscure eyes or nose. Pinched nostrils and heavy over nose roll are unacceptable and should be heavily penalised.

Viewed from the front, the various properties of the face must be equally balanced on either side of an imaginary line down the centre of the face.

Viewed from front, the various properties of the face must be equally balanced on either side of an imaginary line down centre.
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Eyes

The eyes seen from the front, should be situated low down in the skull, as far from the ears as possible.

Seen from front, situated low down in skull, well away from ears.

Seen from front, situated low down in skull, well away from ears.

The eyes and “stop” should be in the same straight line, which should be at right angles to the furrow. They should be as wide apart as possible, provided their outer corners are within the outline of the cheeks.

Eyes and stop in same straight line, at right angles to furrow. Wide apart, but outer corners within the outline of cheeks.

Eyes and stop in same straight line, at right angles to furrow. Wide apart, but outer corners within the outline of cheeks.

They should be quite round in shape, of moderate size, neither sunken nor prominent, and in colour should be very dark - almost, if not quite, black, showing no white when looking directly forward.

Round, of moderate size, neither sunken nor prominent, in colour very dark – almost black – showing no white when looking directly forward. Free from obvious eye problems.

Round, of moderate size, neither sunken nor prominent, in colour very dark – almost black – showing no white when looking directly forward. Free from obvious eye problems.

Ears:

The ears should be set high on the head - i.e. the front inner edge of each ear should (as viewed from the front) join the outline of the skull at the top corner of such outline, so as to place them as wide apart, and as high and as far from the eyes as possible. In size they should be small and thin. The shape termed “rose ear” is correct, and folds inwards at its back, the upper or front edge curving over outwards and backwards, showing part of the inside of the burr.

Set high – i.e. front edge of each ear (as viewed from front) joins outline of skull at top corner of such outline, so as to place them as wide apart, as high and as far from eyes as possible. Small and thin. ‘Rose ear’ correct, i.e. folding inwards back, upper or front inner edge curving outwards and backwards, showing part of inside of burr.

Set high – i.e. front edge of each ear (as viewed from front) joins outline of skull at top corner of such outline, so as to place them as wide apart, as high and as far from eyes as possible. Small and thin. ‘Rose ear’ correct, i.e. folding inwards back, upper or front inner edge curving outwards and backwards, showing part of inside of burr.

Mouth

The jaw should be broad and square and have the six small front teeth between the canines in an even row. The canine teeth or tusks wide apart. The teeth should not be seen when the mouth is closed. The teeth should be large and strong. When viewed from the front, the under jaw should be centrally under the upper jaw to which it should also be parallel.

Jaws broad and square with six small front teeth between canines in an even row. Canines wide apart. Teeth large and strong, not seen when mouth closed. When viewed from front under jaw directly under upper jaw and parallel.

Jaws broad and square with six small front teeth between canines in an even row. Canines wide apart. Teeth large and strong, not seen when mouth closed. When viewed from front under jaw directly under upper jaw and parallel.

Neck

Should be moderate in length (rather short than long), very thick, deep and strong. It should be well arched at the back, with much loose, thick and wrinkled skin about the throat, forming a dewlap on each side, from the lower jaw to the chest.

Moderate in length, thick, deep and strong. Well arched at back, with some loose, skin about throat, forming slight dewlap on each side.

Moderate in length, thick, deep and strong. Well arched at back, with some loose, skin about throat, forming slight dewlap on each side.

Forequarters

The shoulders should be broad, sloping and deep, very powerful and muscular, and giving the appearance of having been “tacked on” to the body.

Shoulders broad, sloping and deep, very powerful and muscular giving appearance of being ‘tacked on’ body.

Shoulders broad, sloping and deep, very powerful and muscular giving appearance of being ‘tacked on’ body.

The brisket should be capacious, round and very deep from the top of the shoulders to the lowest part where it joins the chest, and be well let down between forelegs. It should be large in diameter and round behind the forelegs (not flat-sided, the ribs being well rounded).

Brisket round and deep. Well let down between forelegs. Ribs not flat-sided, but well rounded.

Brisket round and deep. Well let down between forelegs. Ribs not flat-sided, but well rounded.

The forelegs should be very stout and strong, set wide apart, thick, muscular, and straight, with well-developed forearms, presenting a rather bowed outline, but the bones of the legs should be large and straight, not bandy or curved.

Forelegs very stout and strong, well developed, set wide apart, thick, muscular and straight, bones of legs large and straight, not bandy nor curved and short in proportion to hindlegs,

Forelegs very stout and strong, well developed, set wide apart, thick, muscular and straight, bones of legs large and straight, not bandy nor curved and short in proportion to hindlegs,

They should be rather short in proportion to the hind-legs, but not so short as to make the back appear long, or detract from the dog’s activity, and so cripple him.

but not so short as to make back appear long, or detract from dog’s activity.

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The elbows should be low, and stand well away from the ribs. The pasterns should be short, straight and strong.

Elbows low and standing well away from ribs. Pasterns short, straight and strong.

Elbows low and standing well away from ribs. Pasterns short, straight and strong.

Body

The chest should be very wide, laterally round, prominent, and deep, making the dog appear very broad and short-legged in front.

Chest wide, prominent and deep.

Chest wide, prominent and deep.

The body should be well ribbed up behind, with the belly tucked up and not pendulous.

Body well ribbed up behind with belly tucked up and not pendulous.

Body well ribbed up behind with belly tucked up and not pendulous.

The back should be short and strong, very broad at the shoulders, and comparatively narrow at the loins.

Back short, strong, broad at shoulders.

Back short, strong, broad at shoulders.

There should be a slight fall to the back close behind the shoulders (its lowest part), whence the spine should rise to the loins (the top of which should be higher than the top of the shoulders), thence curving again more suddenly to the tail, forming an arch - a distinctive characteristic of the breed - termed “roach back”.

Slight fall to back close behind shoulders (lowest part) whence spine should rise to loins (top higher than top of shoulder), curving again more suddenly to tail, forming slight arch – a distinctive characteristic of breed.

Slight fall to back close behind shoulders (lowest part) whence spine should rise to loins (top higher than top of shoulder), curving again more suddenly to tail, forming slight arch – a distinctive characteristic of breed.

Hindquarters

The legs should be large and muscular, and longer in proportion than the forelegs, so as to elevate the loins.

Legs large and muscular, slightly longer in proportion than forelegs.

Legs large and muscular, slightly longer in proportion than forelegs.

The hocks should be slightly bent and well let down, so as to be long and muscular from the loins to the point of the hock. The lower part of the leg should be short, straight and strong.

Hocks slightly bent, well let down; legs long and muscular from loins to hock.

Hocks slightly bent, well let down; legs long and muscular from loins to hock.

The stifles should be round and turned slightly outwards away from the body. The hocks are thereby made to approach each other, and the hind feet to turn outwards.

Stifles turned very slightly outwards away from body.

Stifles turned very slightly outwards away from body.

Feet

The hind feet, like the fore feet should be round and compact, with the toes well split up and the knuckles prominent. The fore feet should be straight and turn very slightly outward, of medium size and moderately round. The toes compact and thick, being well split up, making the knuckles prominent and high.

Fore, straight and turning very slightly outward; of medium size and moderately round. Hind, round and compact. Toes compact and thick, well split up, making knuckles prominent and high.

Fore, straight and turning very slightly outward; of medium size and moderately round. Hind, round and compact. Toes compact and thick, well split up, making knuckles prominent and high.

Tail

The tail, termed the “stern”, should be set on low, jut out rather straight, then turn downwards.

Set on low, jutting out rather straight and then turning downwards.

Set on low, jutting out rather straight and then turning downwards.

It should be round, smooth and devoid of fringe or coarse hair. It should be moderate in length - rather short than long - thick at the root, and tapering quickly to a fine point.

Round, smooth and devoid of fringe or coarse hair. Moderate in length – rather short than long – thick at root, tapering quickly to a fine point

Round, smooth and devoid of fringe or coarse hair. Moderate in length – rather short than long – thick at root, tapering quickly to a fine point

It should have a downward carriage (not having a decided upward curve at the end), and the dog should not be able to raise it over its back.

Downward carriage (not having a decided upward curve at end) and never carried above back.

Downward carriage (not having a decided upward curve at end) and never carried above back.

Gait/Movement

From its formation the dog has a peculiar heavy and constrained gait, appearing to walk with short, quick steps on the tips of its toes, its hind-feet not being lifted high, but appearing to skim the ground, and running with the right shoulder rather advanced, similar to the manner of a horse in cantering.

Appearing to walk with short, quick steps on tips of toes, hind feet not lifted high, appearing to skim ground, running with one or other shoulder rather advanced. Soundness of movement of the utmost importance.

Appearing to walk with short, quick steps on tips of toes, hind feet not lifted high, appearing to skim ground, running with one or other shoulder rather advanced. Soundness of movement of the utmost importance.

Coat

Should be fine in texture, short, close and smooth (hard only from the shortness and closeness, not wiry).

Fine texture, short, close and smooth (hard only from shortness and closeness, not wiry).

Fine texture, short, close and smooth (hard only from shortness and closeness, not wiry).

Colour

The colour should be whole or smut (that is, a whole colour with a black mask or muzzle). The only colours (which should be brilliant and pure of their sort) are whole colours - viz., brindles, reds, with their varieties, fawns, fallows, etc., white and also pied (i.e., a combination of white with any other of the foregoing colours). Dudley, black and black with tan are extremely undesirable colours.

Whole or smut, (i.e. whole colour with black mask or muzzle). Only whole colours (which should be brilliant and pure of their sort) viz., brindles, reds with their various shades, fawns, fallows etc., white and pied (i.e. combination of white with any of the foregoing colours). Dudley, black and black with tan are extremely undesirable colours.

Whole or smut, (i.e. whole colour with black mask or muzzle). Only whole colours (which should be brilliant and pure of their sort) viz., brindles, reds with their various shades, fawns, fallows etc., white and pied (i.e. combination of white with any of the foregoing colours). Dudley, black and black with tan highly undesirable.

Weight and Size

The most desirable weight for the Bulldog is 25 kg. (55 lbs) for a dog and 22.7 kg. (50 lbs) for a bitch.

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Males: 25kgs. Females 23kgs.

Note/Faults

Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

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Any departure from the above points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

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DISQUALIFYING FAULTS. Aggressive or overly shy. Any dog clearly showing physical or behavioural abnormalities shall be disqualified.