Questions and Answers for the proposed 2022 and 2023 Qualification Change

What is the immediate change with the qualification system?

- The new proposed qualification system moves from “qualification points” to number of shows or “participations”.

How does this affect me?

- In the past, you received qualification points based on the number of horses you beat (which included yourself). Qualification points were awarded through sixth place.
- In addition, a first or second place at a local recognized AHA Show qualified you to compete at your Regional Championship Show in that section.
- With the new system, you need to be adjudicated at a specific number of AHA Recognized Shows to obtain a qualification within that section (Open qualifications still exist for certain disciplines).

How do I qualify for a Regional Championship Show?

- **2022** – be entered, shown, and judged (adjudicated) at one AHA regional qualifying show in the same section that you wish to enter at that region’s championship show.
  - Example 1: being adjudicated in both a Country English Pleasure class and Country Pleasure Driving class qualifies you for both classes at the regional level, irrespective of the number of horses you beat in each class.
- **2023** – most sections increase to two AHA regional qualifying shows; see chart for the few exceptions.

How do I qualify for a National Championship Show?

- **2022** - be entered, shown, and judged (adjudicated) at two AHA qualifying show in the same section that you wish to enter at that region’s championship show or earn a Top 5 in the same section at a Regional Championship Show.
  - Regional shows do count as a competition participation, whether a Top 5 is earned or not.
- **2023** - increases to three AHA qualifying shows or earn a Top 5 in the same section at a Regional Championship Show.

What is an example of how this would work?

- Using the points chart from the 2020 AHA Handbook, previously if trying to qualify for your Regional Championship Show in Country English Pleasure AAO, you would have needed to
obtain 5 qualification points in the qualifying section. This means you would have needed to beat a least 4 other horses (the 5th point would be yourself).

- Using the same premise as above for the proposed system in 2022, you would need to go to one AHA Recognized Qualifying show and be judged in that qualifying section. It would not matter where you place within the class to earn a qualification. For 2023, you would need to participate in one additional qualifying show for a total of two shows (if your two shows were not obtained in 2022).

- Note that a Top Five placing in 2022 at a Regional Championship will automatically qualify you for Nationals in 2022 and 2023. Also, the participation at the Regional Championship in 2022 counts as a participation for that Regional and Nationals in 2023. Please remember that the qualification must be in that qualifying section.

- **Note that if a horse/rider/driver/handler competes at one qualifying show and the corresponding Regional Championship Show on an annual basis, the horse/rider/driver/handler will be qualified for that Regional and National Championship Show(s) as long as it is in the appropriate qualifying class(es) and section(s).**

**Will “Open Show” qualifications still exist?**

- Yes, they still exist for those classes outlined in Chapter 15 of the current AHA Handbook. These disciplines will be changing from a point or score system to a participation system. If you were adjudicated, that “Open” qualification counts.
- Scores will still be important for the Achievement Award Program.

**What is meant by adjudicated?**

- In a class where horses compete together, adjudicated means a horse/rider/driver/handler must have been entered, shown, and judged (perform at all required gaits both ways of the ring and remain in the ring until excused by the judge.) In other words, finishing the class.
- In a class where horses compete individually, adjudicated means a horse/rider must have been completed the individual requirements of the class.
- Horses which are excused before the class is complete (judge’s card turned in) or disqualified are not considered “adjudicated”.
- In Working Western classes, a “zero score” does count for participation, but a “no score” does not.

**Does the qualification period change?**

- Yes, but only for the 2022 competition year, which is considered a transitional year. Because we will start new with participation qualifications, shows from 2021 will not count towards 2022 or 2023 qualifications.
- After the 2022 competition year, we will revert to the long-established qualification period which is the previous year plus the current year.
- This means for the 2023 competition year, anything obtained in 2022 will count towards a horse/rider/driver/handler qualification.

**Do I only have to show in one class at a show to be qualified for all the classes I want to show in at Regionals/Nationals?**
• No, you must show in the “number” of classes you want to show in at Regionals/Nationals and in the appropriate section(s).
• An Open Horse will need to qualify by participating in an Open class (includes Ladies, Gentlemen, Stallions, Mares and Geldings)
• A Junior Horse will need to qualify in a Junior Horse class.
• An Amateur Rider will need to qualify by participating in any and as many of the classes desired in the amateur classes in that section.
• The Open and Junior Horse qualification is a change which aids greatly in tracking, while the amateur portion remains as it was: an amateur can qualify in an AO, AAO, AT, AAT, JT, JO.
• Leveling classes qualify in their respective class (AO, AAO, AT, AAT, JO, JT).

Do Regional Pre-shows, Value Shows and Concurrent Shows count?
• All Recognized AHA Shows count, including Regional Pre-shows and Value Shows.
• Concurrent shows will still count as two shows and may be run as concurrent for the same region or a combination of two separate regions (same as before).

How will participation be tracked?
• Competitions will be reporting all horses/riders/drivers/handlers in each class. Software vendors will change their reports to reflect the needs of AHA, as they do with other rule changes that affect results.
• Qualification views are available on the AHA website under the horse/rider/driver /handler competition record (same as before).

Do I need separate participation qualifications for each National Show?
• No, just like the previous points system, once you are qualified in that class in that section the qualification is good for Youth Nationals, Canadian Nationals, Sport Horse Nationals and U.S. Nationals if the class is offered.
• Example: If an owner obtains a participation qualification (or a Top Five at a Regional) that qualification can be used in a JO/JT class at Youth Nationals, an AT/AO class at Canadian Nationals and an AAO class at U.S. Nationals if the ownership rules are met.

If I qualify the horse and sell it does the new owner have to re-qualify the horse?
• If the horse were qualified in an Open, Jr. Horse or Amateur (JT/JO/AT/AO/AAT/AAO) the qualification follows the horse.
• Ownership rules still apply for “Owner’ Classes (same as it was before).

If an amateur class is not offered, will the corresponding open class qualify for AO if the horse is handled/ridden/ driven by an amateur rider in the open class?
• No, TBA’s slots may be utilized in this instance to obtain an Amateur class.

In the hunter/jumper division, will the requirement be to qualify at each height or will one division qualify you for all heights?
• Classes must be at the corresponding fence heights or higher to the AHA Working Hunter, Hunter Hack, or Jumper Championship class for which qualification is being obtained. (OPEN 102.2)
In the hunter/jumper division, will USHJA Outreach Program classes count or only those classes that are also part of a USEF licensed competitions and/or AHA Value Shows?

- For open shows to count, they must have USEF or EC Recognition and judges must be USEF or EC rated in the Working Hunter and Jumper Division in order for results to be recorded. (OPEN 102.4) USHJA Outreach Program classes at an open show will not count.

Do academy classes count towards participation?

- No. Academy classes have never been considered qualifying classes.
- Classes which do not have a corresponding AHA class code will not count. (QUAL 102.3)

If multiple people are sharing a horse, does each person have to earn the required qualification for the class each wishes to enter at a regional or national level?

- Participation qualifications would need to be earned for each class, although not necessarily by each person.
- A person under the USEF AR110.4 “family definition” or “two distinct non-family owners” can qualify the horse in an Amateur or Amateur Owner class.

Do you need a qualification for each class? For example, if I want to go in Western Pleasure Open, AAOTR and AATR Select does my horse have to show in any 3 Western Pleasure classes or would it be at 3 separate shows, no matter how many WP ATR/AOTR classes entered?

- All three participations could be earned at one competition if sufficient division of classes were offered.

To show at a Regional Championship Show do I have to participate at a show approved by the Region?

- Yes, this requirement remains as it is. (QUAL 103.1)

If the participation system is not approved, what will happen for 2022?

- The AHA Board of Directors would consider the options and decide. A likely option would be to resume the same qualifying point structure in effect pre-Covid.