Skills Exercises for Llamas and Alpacas

Review the Handler’s Questionnaire Form
► You meet the team evaluator and the evaluator’s assistants.
► The evaluator reviews your handler’s questionnaire.
► You share with the evaluator how your animal signals to you that it needs a break or that it’s time to leave.

Accepting a Friendly Stranger
► You and the evaluator greet each other and shake hands.
► The evaluator looks at but doesn’t touch your llama/alpaca.
► Your llama/alpaca may change position but remains next to you.

Accepting Petting
► The evaluator approaches again and pets your llama/alpaca on the head, neck or back.
► You may ask your llama/alpaca to kush for petting (your choice).
► The evaluator walks around behind your team and then returns to his or her starting place.
► Your llama/alpaca willingly accepts petting while remaining next to you.

Appearance and Grooming
► The evaluator feels your llama/alpaca’s coat and looks at its eyes, ears, nostrils and lips.
► The evaluator picks up and holds each front foot separately.
► The evaluator lightly brushes your llama/alpaca on the neck and side of the body.
► The evaluator drops the brush; if your llama/alpaca startles, it recovers promptly.
► Your llama/alpaca may change position but accepts handling.

Out for a Walk ♦
► The evaluator explains what path to walk along.
► Your team will be asked to stop during the walk.
► Your llama/alpaca will walk on a loose lead with its attention on you.
► Your llama/alpaca may show interest in the environment but should not shy away; it is responsive to your cues and comfortable walking indoors.
Walk Through a Crowd ♦

- The evaluator explains what path to walk along.
- Three assistants will walk through the area that you’re walking through.
- You proactively navigate the crowd.
- Your llama/alpaca walks next to you on a loose lead with its attention on you; it may not approach for visits independently.
- Your llama/alpaca may show interest in the environment but should not shy away; it is responsive to your cues and comfortable walking indoors.

Reaction to Distractions

- The evaluator explains what path to walk along.
- There will be two distractions, a visual one in front of your team and an auditory one behind your team.
- Your llama/alpaca walks next to you on a loose lead with its attention on you.
- You support your animal as needed. Your llama/alpaca may express curiosity; if it startles, it recovers promptly.

Back Between Furniture

- The evaluator arranges furniture to make a path to back through approximately 6 feet in length.
- The path will be the width of a normal door frame to simulate entering and leaving a client’s room.
- You cue and guide your llama/alpaca forward along the path and then back along the same path.

Stay in Place ♦

- You cue your llama/alpaca to stay.
- You walk to the end of your llama/alpaca’s lead rope then turn to look back at your llama/alpaca.
- You pause 30 seconds and then return to your llama/alpaca.
- Your llama/alpaca may shift or change position of two hooves but stays.

Reaction to a Neutral Dog ♦

- Your team is standing with an evaluation assistant.
- A neutral dog team enters the room and makes a short visit with another assistant. You support your animal as needed.
- As the neutral dog team leaves their visit, the two teams approach each other and pass approximately an arm’s length apart.
- Your team visits with the other evaluation assistant as the neutral dog team leaves.
- Your llama/alpaca maintains its position next to you and does not show aggression or excessive fear.
Aptitude Exercises for Llamas and Alpacas

Overall Handling ♦

- The evaluator makes eye contact with your llama/alpaca and then exposes it to physical handling to assess its reaction to being touched in different areas; for example, the evaluator strokes your llama’s/alpaca’s neck, ears, back and side, and pats its rump and thighs.
- You facilitate the interaction and support your animal as needed. Your llama/alpaca accepts handling.

Exuberant and Clumsy Petting ♦

- The evaluator simulates petting by someone with limited mobility and poor motor skills.
- The evaluator also uses a high-pitched or squeaky voice and makes strange noises while interacting with your llama/alpaca.
- You facilitate the interaction and support your animal as needed. Your llama/alpaca willingly accepts petting.

Restraining Hug ♦

- The evaluator makes eye contact with your llama/alpaca and then leans over and gives it a full-body hug around the shoulders that restricts it for no more than 15 seconds.
- You facilitate the interaction and support your animal as needed. Your llama/alpaca willingly accepts the hug.

Staggering and Gesturing Individual

- An assistant wearing a hat/robe and using healthcare equipment staggers, gestures with the hands and moans until he or she is 6 feet from your team.
- The assistant stops, calls your team to approach and pets your llama/alpaca.
- You facilitate the interaction and support your llama/alpaca as needed.
- Your llama/alpaca willingly approaches and accepts petting.

Angry Yelling

- Two assistants begin yelling at each other approximately 6 feet away from your team. The yelling is not directed at your team.
- The assistants stop yelling and become neutral, and one assistant calls your team to approach.
- You facilitate the interaction and support your llama/alpaca as needed.
- Your llama/alpaca willingly approaches and accepts interaction.
Two-Fingered Tap

- While you and your llama/alpaca cross the room, the evaluator walks past you and gently taps your animal with two fingers on its side or back.
- You acknowledge the tap and support your animal as needed. Your llama/alpaca may startle but recovers quickly.

Crowded and Petted by Several People ✦

- Three assistants approach, one at a time, and begin touching your llama/alpaca, until all three are gathered closely around, attempting to attract your animal’s attention.
- One assistant will be using healthcare equipment to approach your team.
- You proactively manage the crowd, facilitating interactions and instructing the crowd to stand in safe positions during petting while supporting your animal as needed.
- Your llama/alpaca willingly accepts petting.

Leave It ✦

- The evaluator explains what path to walk along.
- The path will take your team past a toy, and your llama/alpaca will pass within two feet of the toy.
- Your llama/alpaca may not touch, pick up or mouth the toy. Looking and sniffing is acceptable.

Offered a Treat

- The evaluator walks toward your team with a treat in hand, saying, “May I give your llama/alpaca a treat?”
- You get to decide whether your llama/alpaca may have the treat. If you choose not to have the treat offered, this also means you will not allow treats to be given while visiting.
- If you allow the treat to be taken, you direct the evaluator how best to offer the treat; your llama/alpaca takes the treat gently.

✦ Indicates exercises used to determine a Complex team qualification rating