
Accidents at BHS Assessments Policy

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1.2	4	Revised terms and definitions as appropriate	13.03.2024
	5	Updated the disclaimer statement	
	5	Updated Section 5 guidance re: when a candidate's emergency contact is contacted	
	7	Updated Section 10 responsibilities of assessors	
	8	Added Section 11 communication following an accident	
	8	Updated Section 12 regarding in-house assessments	

Please note: This document is uncontrolled once printed. Please check with the BHS Education Team for the most up to date version.

If you have any questions about the information in this document, or require any further clarification please contact the BHS Education Team.

1. Introduction

The British Horse Society (BHS) is committed to making sure all its activities are conducted fairly, transparently, objectively and free from bias.

Health and safety is vital to our activities. On the rare occasion of an accident at a BHS assessment, safety is a priority.

This document has been created in line with the approach taken by British Riding Clubs, other competitive equestrian disciplines and guidance produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

This policy will detail the management of the rider health and welfare following an accident during an assessment.

2. Scope and applicability

This policy applies to:

- BHS assessments. This includes qualifications awarded by the BHS and BHSQ.

This policy is for:

- Candidates
- Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers and Assessor Mentors
- Approved assessment centres (and their workforce)
- BHS employees
- Others as relevant

This policy does not apply to regular riding situations, including lessons or training, whether training on your own horse or within a riding centre.

3. Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this policy is to give relevant guidance for the welfare of candidates, demonstration riders and participants following an accident at a BHS assessment.

This document will:

- Detail the process to follow following an accident during a BHS assessment.
- Provide guidance to if/when a candidate or others can make judgments on continuing with assessment.
- Provide guidance if/when refunds or transfers can be applied and how this is communicated.

It is useful to refer to the following documents and policies when reading this:

- BHS Health and Safety Policy
- [Terms and Conditions for BHS Assessments](#)
- Your training centre or coach may have a health and safety policy that you may wish to view

4. Terms and definitions

An **accident** is an unexpected event which results in injury or illness of a person.

Near miss: An unexpected event which does not involve injury or illness to a person or horse.

A rider is considered to have **fallen** when there is separation between them and the horse/pony, which would necessitate remounting or vaulting into the saddle.

A **ridden assessment** is any riding activity taking place during a candidate's BHS assessment. This includes flatwork, dressage, show jumping and cross country activities. It begins from the point of mounting the horse and concludes when the rider has dismounted. It includes any activity within the ridden assessment session including warm up and cool down of the horse, regardless of whether this is assessed activity.

A **non-ridden assessment** is any activity taking place during a candidate's BHS assessment that does not involve the candidate riding. For example, stable management, lungeing, coaching or professional discussion activities.

Approved assessment centre is any location where a BHS Education assessment is taking place.

Candidate is anyone taking a BHS assessment.

A **demonstration rider** takes part in a ridden coaching session during a BHS coaching assessment.

A **participant** refers to anyone taking part in a stable management coaching session during a BHS coaching assessment.

An **Assessor** is contracted to make assessment decisions at BHS assessments. For the purpose of this document this also includes the role of Internal Quality Assurer and Assessor Mentor, as applicable.

A **First Aider** is in attendance at all BHS Assessments. Assessors are first aid trained to the requirements set out in the [Accredited Professional Coach membership](#).

5. The BHS's approach to managing an accident during an assessment

Disclaimer: The BHS Education Team (which includes BHS Assessors and BHS Approved Assessment Centres) provide BHS assessments as a service. The health of the candidate/participant/demonstration rider is that individual's own responsibility. They should seek medical attention if they feel they need it as the duty of care for themselves. It is the candidate/demonstration rider/participant's responsibility (or parent or carer or accompanying responsible adult if under 18 years of age) to comply with this policy. For candidates/demonstration riders/participants under 18 we advise that they are accompanied to the assessment by a parent, carer or responsible adult.

At any point during an assessment should doubt exist as to the health and/or safety of the candidate, an assessor or assessment centre personnel has the right to stop the candidate at any time. The candidate understands the risks involved in participating and does so voluntarily.

In the event of an accident the assessor will manage the incident and the care and aftercare, if required, of the casualty. The assessor may delegate specific tasks to nominated first aiders. The casualty will be assessed by a first aider. The first aider will call or arrange a call to 999 if further medical intervention is required from a doctor or paramedic. The assessor will inform the casualty's 'emergency contact' as soon as is practicably possible.

If a doctor or paramedic is on site, the casualty must follow the doctor or paramedic's instructions.

If a doctor or paramedic is not present, the casualty must follow the guidance below and is strongly advised to seek independent medical advice from their own GP or NHS 111 if any doubt exists to their health and/or safety. It should be noted that first aiders are not medically trained and cannot recommend treatment or advise if the candidate/demonstration rider is fit to continue.

Guidance on if/when the candidate can decide to continue with any part of their assessment is detailed in sections 6, 7 and 8.

Guidance on if/when the demonstration rider can decide to continue with any coaching session/s is detailed in section 6 and 9.

6 An accident that results in loss of consciousness, concussion or suspected concussion

If an accident results in loss of consciousness, concussion or suspected concussion the following suspension from any further BHS assessment activity (whether ridden or non-ridden), whether or not confirmed by a medical professional, will apply.

- no loss of consciousness but with brief symptoms of concussion (symptoms resolving within 15 minutes) = minimum of 7 days mandatory suspension
- any loss of consciousness, however brief, or symptoms of concussion persisting after 15 minutes = minimum 21 days mandatory suspension

The day of injury counts as the first day of suspension.

If the candidate has further BHS assessments booked within a suspension they can apply for a medical refund or transfer as per the *Terms and Conditions for BHS Assessments*. On these occasions, medical evidence will not be required if confirmation of the accident is provided by the assessor.

7. A candidate riding accident that does not result in loss of consciousness, concussion or suspected concussion

7.1. Continuing with a ridden assessment

To ensure the health and welfare of the candidate, if a candidate has fallen at any time during their ridden assessment they are not permitted to remount. The candidate will be withdrawn from the ridden assessment and any further ridden assessment that day.

If the assessor has sufficient evidence to make a clear judgement against the assessment criteria as either competent or not yet competent, the result will stand.

If a candidate has fallen before the assessor has sufficient evidence to make a clear judgement against the assessment criteria the BHS may offer a free or discounted resit. Please refer to Section 11 for further guidance.

If the candidate is involved in an accident which does not result in a fall, it is their decision (or parent or carer of a candidate under 18 years of age) whether they wish to continue with the remaining assessment.

7.2 Continuing with non-ridden assessment/s

Following a fall or other riding accident if a candidate has non-ridden sections or units of a BHS assessment to complete it is their decision (or parent or carer of a candidate under 18 years of age) whether they wish to continue.

If they do not wish to continue, the candidate can apply for a medical refund or transfer as per the *Terms and Conditions for BHS Assessments*. On these occasions, medical evidence will not be required if confirmation of the accident is provided by the assessor via the 'Accident and Near Miss Report Form'.

8. Non-riding accident that does not result in loss of consciousness, concussion or suspected concussion

Following a non-riding accident, if a candidate has sections or units of a BHS assessment to complete it is their decision (or parent or carer of a candidate under 18 years of age) whether they wish to continue with the remaining assessment.

If they do not wish to continue the candidate can apply for a medical refund or transfer as per the *Terms and Conditions for BHS Assessments*. On these occasions, medical evidence will not be required if confirmation of the accident is provided by the assessor via the 'Accident and Near Miss Report Form'.

9. Accident to a demonstration rider/participant in a coaching assessment

A coaching session within a coaching assessment is considered a training session (for the rider) for the purposes of this policy. If the assessment centre has a policy whereby any rider fall results in the rider not permitted to remount then their policy shall be followed. If the centre does not have a rider fall policy or statement then the guidance below will be followed.

If an accident to a demonstration rider/participant results in loss of consciousness, concussion or suspected concussion refer to section 6.

If a demonstration rider is involved in a fall which results in:

- medical intervention required from a doctor or paramedic,
- severe pain,
- potential head or back injuries,
- excess bleeding,
- or any other significant concern

the demonstration rider will not be permitted to remount and will not continue with any further participation in the assessment.

If a participant is involved in an accident which results in:

- medical intervention required from a doctor or paramedic,
- severe pain,
- potential head or back injuries,
- excess bleeding,
- or any other significant concern

the participant will not be permitted to continue with any further participation in the assessment.

If a fall or accident does not result in the above, it is the demonstration rider/participant's decision (or parent or carer if under 18 years of age) whether they wish to continue with any further participation.

10. Responsibilities

10.1 Assessors

It is the assessor's responsibility to stop an assessment in the event of an accident and to assess the casualty. The assessor may then delegate specific tasks to nominated first aider/s whilst retaining overall responsibility themselves.

It is the assessor's responsibility to ensure all incidents of accidents and near misses that occur during an assessment, including falls are correctly documented and reported to the BHS Education Team, in line with assessor guidance which can be found on the Assessor Hub. The 'Accident and Near Miss Report Form' must be received by the BHS Education Team within 48 hours of the assessment. This form is completed for any candidate, demonstration rider, participant, assessor or other that is involved in an accident or near miss.

Further guidance for assessors is available in the assessor guidance.

10.2 Approved assessment centre

It is the Approved assessment centre's responsibility to ensure all falls are correctly documented and reported according to their Health and Safety Policy.

11. Communication following an accident

The BHS may contact a candidate, a candidate's parent or carer (if under 18), assessor/s, centre workforce or any other witness following an accident to discuss further, if required by the BHS.

12. Re-sitting a riding assessment following a candidate fall

If a candidate falls as a consequence of rider error, poor judgement or lack of balance and security then a free or discounted resit will not be offered.

If a fall occurs because of an incident or accident that is not the result of rider error, poor judgement or lack of balance and security, a free or discounted resit may be offered.

The decision regarding a free or discounted resit will be made by the BHS. It will be communicated to the candidate within 15 working days of the assessment. The candidate will not receive a decision on the day of the assessment. The BHS cannot offer free or discounted resits if a rider fall occurred at an in-house Stage 1 assessment. The BHS cannot apply a free or discounted resit to be used when booking an in-house Stage 1 assessment.

If a free or discounted resit is offered, the candidate must book this within 12 months of notification, but taken no earlier than any suspension (see Section 6), if applicable. If the candidate requires an extension to this deadline they can request this to the BHS Education Team in writing/email. The BHS Education Team will decide if an extension is appropriate, depending on the circumstances.

If no resit has been booked within 12 months, and the candidate has not contacted the BHS Education Team with an extension request the free or discounted resit offer will be withdrawn.

13. Record keeping

The BHS will follow guidance set out in the BHS Health and Safety Policy regarding record keeping for accidents and near misses.

The BHS Education Team will maintain records of free or discounted resit decisions for audit and monitoring purposes. This includes:

- Candidate name
- Candidate BHS membership number

- Type of assessment, date and Approved assessment centre
- Decision of free or discounted resit offered
- The assessment or unit/s the resit applies to and how much discount given
- Communication to candidate
- Expiry date of resit offer (if applicable)
- Extension requests and subsequent decision, if applicable

Records will be maintained securely.

Personal data outlined above will be held up until the expiry date of the resit offer. Please see the BHS Privacy notice ([BHS.org.uk/privacy](https://www.bhs.org.uk/privacy)) for further information about how we use personal data.