

Syllabus and Guidelines

The
British
Horse
Society

For candidates preparing for

THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

STAGE ONE

Registered Charity Nos. 210504 and SC038516

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SYLLABUS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR STAGE 1

EQL LEVEL 1

Certificate in BHS Horse Knowledge and Care

This is a qualification where candidates must understand the basic principles of horse care and, working under supervision, be able to safely and efficiently undertake routine daily tasks involving horses in the stable and at grass. This qualification will offer the learner a sound foundation which will provide them with the knowledge and skills to progress into employment and future learning and development.

The qualification is assessed through external, independent assessment and will test candidates' practical skills and knowledge. EQL requests that candidates treat the Assessors, Exam Centre staff and fellow candidates with courtesy and respect, are neatly turned out and have a common sense approach throughout the examination. In all sections handling of the horses is important, candidates must be aware of the horse's behaviour and character and handling must be safe and efficient at this level. Candidates must appear confident and will be expected to demonstrate competent use of time.

Candidates must be physically fit in order to carry out yard work efficiently without undue stress and strain and show an efficient use of time as required by industry. Candidates will be expected to give practical demonstrations, be involved in discussions of selected tasks and topics and show they have the required knowledge and understanding through oral questioning. They will work in groups of around six candidates.

Entry Requirements

This qualification is suitable for candidates in all age ranges, however there is a minimum age of 14 years. It is envisaged that candidates under the age of 15 years may not have accrued the required skills/knowledge for this qualification. Candidates must also be a Gold or Junior Gold member of The British Horse Society.

Training and Learning

Training should be via a number of methods including formal learning, practice and revision. The number of credits and guided learning hours will help candidates and their trainers to gauge how much training and preparation they will need. Each credit equals 10 hours of learning time.

The Exam Day

Candidates should arrive in good time to familiarise themselves with the surroundings, so they are seated and prepared for the briefing which usually starts at 8.30am (check confirmation letter for the exact time). The purpose of the briefing is to explain how the day is run, to meet other candidates, Assessors and to answer any questions the candidates might have about the day. Each candidate will be given a programme and asked to fill in an emergency contact form.

During the briefing the candidates will be divided into groups and given their numbers and a name label. The programme for the day and any housekeeping will be discussed with the candidates. Any questions and queries should be raised at this time.

Before the start of the exam the Chief Assessor will introduce the Assessors and explain which units each one will be covering.

Stage 1

Level 1 Horse Knowledge and Care is split into three units. Each unit can be taken individually or all on the same day.

UNIT 1 - Brushing off horses including putting on and taking off equipment

UNIT 2 - Horse Husbandry, Identification and Handling

UNIT 3 - The Principles of Caring for Horses

UNIT 1

Brushing off horses including putting on and taking off equipment

9 credits/80 guided learning hours

Unit purpose and aims

Learners will be able to safely and competently handle and secure a horse in the stable. They will be able to use grooming equipment as required. They will be able to put on, assess and take off various items of equipment to include a variety of rugs and tack for riding. Learners must show an efficient use of time for this level as required by industry and display a sound foundation on which to improve their stable management skills for future progression.

Learner Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Be able to work safely and efficiently	1.1 Use safe handling and working procedures, maintaining health, safety and welfare of self, others and horses at all times
	1.2 Use safe lifting and/or carrying procedures and recognise potential hazardous situations
	1.3 Maintain a clean working environment for self, others, horses and equipment
	1.4 Use time efficiently according to industry practice
2. Be able to put on a headcollar and tie up the horse correctly and prepare the stable for work	2.1 Enter the stable and approach the horse safely and correctly
	2.2 Put on and adjust a headcollar correctly, ensuring the horse's comfort and safety
	2.3 Tie up the horse according to good practice
	2.4 Prepare the stable for work
	2.5 Safely handle the horse in the stable
3. Be able to brush off/quarter a horse	3.1 Select appropriate items from the grooming kit
	3.2 Pick out the horse's feet and comment on the condition of the shoe using correct terminology
	3.3 Brushing off/quarter the horse using an effective procedure
4. Know how to groom a horse	4.1 Outline and explain the use of items within a grooming kit
	4.2 Explain the reasons for grooming
5. Be able to put on and take off a tail bandage	5.1 Put on a tail bandage safely and efficiently
	5.2 Take off a tail bandage safely and efficiently
6. Be able to put on and take off rugs	6.1 Identify various rugs and their method of securing
	6.2 Rug up a horse with regard to safety
	6.3 Take off a rug with regard to safety

7. Be able to put on and take off a saddle, bridle and martingale/hunting breastplate	7.1 Use a safe and efficient method of putting on a bridle with a noseband
	7.2 Use a safe and efficient method of putting on a saddle with a correctly fitted numnah/saddle cloth
	7.3 Put on a martingale/hunting breastplate
	7.4 Check tack for safety and comfort
	7.5 Use a safe and efficient method of untacking
8. Know about tack and rugs	8.1 Identify parts of the saddle and bridle
	8.2 Discuss the quality of the tack used, recognising whether it is worn and/or damaged
	8.3 Explain the consequences of using worn or dirty tack
	8.4 Explain how to secure the noseband
	8.5 Explain how to clean tack
	8.6 Discuss the fitting of a rug on the horse and identify any faults

PROCEDURE FOR ASSESSMENT

This unit will take approximately one hour, working individually with a group of approximately six candidates. At the start of this section the Assessor will allocate each candidate a stable and horse. They will then ask the candidate to put on a head collar and tie up the horse with a quick release knot, prior to starting the tasks. Candidates should untie and take off the head collar at end of task and where appropriate during task, i.e. grooming the horse’s head and putting on the bridle. After tying up the horse and before commencing any tasks, candidates should ensure that they remove the water bucket and haynet from the stable and skip out as appropriate.

CANDIDATE GUIDANCE – skills and knowledge

Working safely and efficiently

Candidates will show safe working practice for themselves, the horse, equipment and others around them. This will include tying the horses safely and positioning themselves in a safe but practical position in the stable. Closing stable doors and placing equipment in a safe but convenient location is also important. A clean environment must be maintained by skipping out whenever there are droppings. Safe lifting and carrying procedures should be used. Potentially hazardous situations must be recognised, and if necessary, discussed with the Assessor.

Work should be carried out efficiently according to industry practice. A perfectly performed but extremely slow task would not be considered up to industry practice.

Handling horses

Put on, fit and care for headcollars, halters and lead ropes.
 Know how and where to tie up a horse in the stable.
 Prepare the stable for work by skipping out, removing the haynet and water bucket.
 Be practical and workmanlike.

The Assessor is looking for candidates who are confident, show correct handling techniques and demonstrate safe working practices. Candidates should be practical, effective and able to discuss and show a working knowledge of why they have carried out tasks in a particular way. Candidates should be able to show an efficient use of time when carrying out tasks and maintain a clean and safe environment while doing so. Candidates should show awareness of the horse's behaviour and recognise their temperament.

Grooming

Know how to brush off/quarter a horse.
Put on and take off a tail bandage.

Candidates will be asked to identify and discuss the use and purpose of items from a grooming kit, and explain why horses are groomed. Candidates will then effectively brush off or quarter their horse using a rubber curry, dandy and/or body brush with curry comb as appropriate, demonstrate picking out feet, be able to explain how to sponge eyes, lips, nostrils and dock, brush or finger out tail as appropriate. Candidates will also be asked to show how to apply a tail bandage and then remove and roll up the bandage appropriately.

Foot and shoeing

Recognise overgrown feet, risen clenches, and worn, loose or lost shoes.

Candidates will be asked to pick out a horse's feet into a skip, and discuss the day-to-day care of the foot. The Assessor will ask the candidate to comment on shoeing and discuss risen clenches, worn shoes, and so on.

Clothing

Recognise and know how to put on various types of rugs including stable and turn-out rugs/New Zealands.
Fit a roller/surcingle or cross surcingles and understand their various uses.
Take off horse clothing safely.

Candidates will be asked to put on various types of rug, including a light weight summer rug, stable rug, New Zealand/turn-out rug, with roller/pad or surcingle/crossed surcingles. Candidates will be asked how they would check the rug and fastenings for safety and comfort of horse, and how they would identify the faults. Candidates will demonstrate how to remove rugs safely and efficiently.

Saddlery

Put on a saddle, numnah and snaffle bridle (with appropriate cavesson, flash or drop noseband).
Put on a running or standing martingale or breastplate.
Check tack for safety and comfort of horse and rider.
Remove tack and understand immediate aftercare.
Recognise worn or ill-fitting saddlery, being aware of the dangers involved.
Name parts of the saddle and bridle.

Candidates will be asked to name the parts of the saddle and bridle, and then demonstrate how to put on a saddle, numnah and a snaffle bridle with appropriate noseband and martingale/breastplate. Candidates will be asked how they would check the tack for safety and comfort of the horse and rider, e.g. height/width of bit, tightness/looseness of throat lash/noseband. Candidates will be able to identify if the tack is worn or damaged. Candidates will demonstrate how to safely untack and put tack away.

The Assessor will ask candidates to discuss why and how to clean tack, and the consequences of using worn, ill fitting or dirty saddlery.

UNIT 2

Horse Husbandry, Identification and Handling

6 credits/55 guided learning hours

Unit purpose and aims

This unit provides the learner with the knowledge and skills to work safely and efficiently whilst undertaking routine daily tasks in the stable yard. They will be able to identify and recognise horses, keep their stables clean, and handle the horse safely and efficiently for an observer. Learners will show a safe and efficient method of working combined with confidence. These skills should show a sound foundation on which to progress to the next level.

Learner Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Be able to work safely and efficiently	1.1 Use safe handling and working procedures, maintaining health, safety and welfare of self, others and horses at all times 1.2 Use safe lifting and/or carrying procedures and recognise potential hazardous situations 1.3 Maintain a clean working environment for self, others, horses and equipment 1.4 Use time efficiently according to industry practice
2. Be able to skip out and set fair a bed	2.1 Skip out and set fair a bed safely and efficiently 2.2 Use stable tools safely and efficiently
3. Know about bedding and how to utilise it for the horse's comfort and safety	3.1 Describe a variety of bedding materials and give reasons for use with particular horses 3.2 Outline how to maintain different types of bedding for horses 3.3 Outline efficient, safe procedures for mucking out and bedding down 3.4 Describe how stable waste can be safely stored prior to disposal
4. Be able to correctly identify the points, colours and markings of a horse	4.1 Correctly indicate points of the horse 4.2 Describe coat colour using the correct terminology 4.3 Describe horse's markings using the correct terminology
5. Be able to hold and lead a horse for treatment or inspection	5.1 Hold a horse for treatment or inspection 5.2 Lead a horse safely and effectively in walk/trot 5.3 Turn the horse safely and correctly when leading in hand
6. Know how to use a haynet	6.1 State how to fill and weigh a haynet 6.2 Explain the potential dangers when using haynets
7. Be able to tie up a haynet	7.1 Tie up a haynet safely and efficiently

PROCEDURE FOR ASSESSMENT

This unit will take approximately one hour, working with a group of approximately six candidates. Working in small groups candidates will prepare a stable, either mucking or skipping out. Individually they will stand the horse up for inspection, and lead the horse in walk, turn and then in trot. The candidate will also be asked to show how they will hold the horse for treatment. They will be asked questions within the group on the subjects mentioned above. Candidates will be observed on their handling techniques and how they carry out tasks.

CANDIDATE GUIDANCE – skills and knowledge

Health and Safety - working safely and efficiently

Candidates will show safe working practice for themselves, the horse, equipment and others around them. This will include wearing gloves and fastened hat when leading the horse.

Any tools will be used carefully around other candidates and placed in a safe but convenient location. A clean environment will be maintained by skipping out. Safe lifting and carrying procedures should be used. Candidates must be fit enough to work efficiently according to accepted industry practice. A perfectly performed but extremely slow task would not be considered up to industry standard.

Potentially hazardous situations will be recognised and may be discussed with the Assessor.

Horse husbandry - looking after the horse's bedding

Know the types of bedding and why they would be used.

How to look after different types of bedding.

Skip out and tidy up bedding.

Muck out and put a bed down.

Describe how to build and maintain a muck heap.

Keep all areas swept and tidy.

Candidates will be asked to demonstrate and discuss how to skip/muck out, shake up and set fair a bed. The Assessor will ask them to comment on the bedding and discuss the various bedding materials. Candidates will be observed as to their handling of stable tools, tidiness and working practices. Candidates will look at and discuss how to build and maintain a muck heap.

Haynets and lifting

Candidates will be asked to demonstrate how to lift a sack of feed and/or bale of hay or straw and how to carry water, and recognise the potential hazards of doing these incorrectly. Assessors will also ask candidates to demonstrate how to fill, weigh and tie up a haynet safely and correctly, and to explain the potential dangers when using haynets.

Identification and handling

Know the basic points of the horse, their colours and markings.

Show how to stand a horse up correctly for inspection in the stable and/or outside.

Demonstrate how to lead and turn horses at walk and trot.

Show how to hold a reasonably quiet horse for treatment, shoeing and clipping.

Candidates will be asked to describe the horse in front of them; for instance, sex, colour, markings and identify points of the horse.

Candidates will be asked to show how to stand up and hold a horse for treatment or inspection.

UNIT 3

The Principles of Caring for Horses

3 credits/25 guided learning hours

Unit purpose and aims

The learner will know the basic principles of caring for horses in the stable and at grass. They will know the basic principles of feeding and watering and how to work safely and efficiently, ensuring the horse's primary welfare. This knowledge will provide learners with a sound foundation on which to progress to the next level.

Learner Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Know the basic principles of health, safety and welfare when working with horses	1.1 Describe suitable clothes to wear when working with horses 1.2 Explain the importance of physical fitness in order to carry out yard work safely and effectively 1.3 Identify fire precautions 1.4 Describe basic accident procedure for the workplace 1.5 Describe rules and good manners for taking horses out on a public highway 1.6 Outline the role of the BHS and other organisations in promoting horse and rider safety and welfare
2. Know the signs of good and ill health in a horse and understand basic behaviour and welfare	2.1 Identify what to look for at morning and evening inspections with regards to horse care and safety 2.2 Recognise the signs of good and ill health in a horse 2.3 Explain the importance for reporting when a horse is unwell 2.4 Describe the horse's lifestyle in the wild including the basic instincts for survival 2.5 Describe signs of dangerous horse behaviour in a variety of situations
3. Know how to maintain a horse in a safe grazing environment	3.1 Describe what to check for in a field every day 3.2 Describe acceptable safe methods for turning out, handling and catching a horse at grass 3.3 Describe a horse sick field 3.4 Give ways a horse sick field can be avoided or remedied
4. Know how to feed and water horses	4.1 List the rules of feeding and watering horses 4.2 Recognise feedstuffs and forage in general use and comment on quality 4.3 Explain the importance of cleanliness and the dangers of feeding poor quality foodstuffs 4.4 Outline a suitable daily feeding regime for a grass kept or stabled horse in light work throughout the year 4.5 Identify suitable methods of feeding and watering horses kept at grass and/or stabled

PROCEDURE FOR ASSESSMENT

This unit is classroom based and will take approximately 50 minutes. This unit is an assessment of candidates' theoretical knowledge. There will be approximately six candidates examined together. Some of the questions will be directed at individuals, some questions may be asked of the whole group in the form of a discussion.

CANDIDATE GUIDANCE – skills and knowledge

Health and Safety

Candidates will be able to describe suitable and unsuitable clothing for stable work and riding.

Candidates will be able to explain why it is important to be fit enough to enable them to carry out work in the yard safely and effectively.

Candidates will discuss fire precautions that should be taken in the workplace.

Candidates should know and be able to describe the correct procedure to follow in the event of an accident:

- keep calm and assess the situation
- get help as soon as possible
- use common sense
- do not move casualty, unless at risk
 - keep loose horse(s) away from casualty
 - keep casualty warm until help arrives
 - support casualty with comforting words
 - check horse(s) over
 - fill in accident form once casualty handed on to first-aider or medic
 - understand what should be written on an accident form

Candidates will discuss safety rules and good manners when riding or leading on the public highway.

Candidates will be asked to outline the role of The British Horse Society and other organisations concerning the promotion of horse and rider safety and welfare.

Horse health

Candidates will discuss the importance of inspections and what to look for, during inspections first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

Know the signs of good and ill health in horses and ponies and recognise when they are off-colour and the importance of an immediate report.

Horse behaviour

Candidates will describe the horse's natural life-style in the wild, and the actions caused by its' survival instincts.

Candidates will discuss dangerous horse behaviour in the stable, the school, the field and/or whilst out riding.

Grassland care

Candidates will describe why daily field checks are important and what to look for in and around the field.

Know how to turn out a horse, how to catch him and bring him in from the field safely.

Candidates should have a basic knowledge of how to recognise a “horse-sick” field and how it can be avoided/remedied; e.g. picking up droppings, not overgrazing, reducing damage in winter.

Watering and feeding

Candidates will be able to list the rules of feeding and watering.

Know and recognise the various types of fodder in general use, how to tell between good and bad quality. Recognise good, bad and acceptable hay and know the dangers of feeding poor quality foodstuffs.

Know the importance of cleanliness.

Discuss suitable feeding of horses and ponies, both stabled or grass kept in light work. (*Definition of 'light work'; daily walk, trot, canter where the horse is not stressed*)

Candidates will discuss suitable feed and daily quantity for:

- a) a stabled horse in light work
- b) a pony in light work kept at grass in winter

Discuss how to feed and water horses in the stable and the field, and the considerations that must be taken into account. Describe suitable feed and water containers and where they should be positioned.

SYLLABUS AND GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR STAGE 1

EQL LEVEL 1 Certificate in BHS Riding Horses

This is a qualification where candidates will be able to ride schooled horses in an enclosed environment in a balanced sympathetic manner. The qualification offers a firm foundation in the industry's accepted protocols in riding horses at this level. This qualification allows learners to progress and further develop their skills and ability in order to progress to higher qualifications (EQL Level 2 in Riding Horses) or enter into employment.

Candidates will normally ride two horses on the flat, in a group of up to six other riders in an enclosed space without assistance. Candidates will be required to show that they can maintain a balanced position in harmony with their horse and not be detrimental to its way of going with, without and with shortened stirrups. The riding includes work on the flat and over poles, in walk, trot and canter independently, and as a ride.

The qualification is assessed through external, independent assessment and will test candidates' riding skills and knowledge. EQL requests that candidates treat the Assessors, Exam Centre staff and fellow candidates with courtesy and respect, are neatly turned out and have a common sense approach throughout the examination. It is important that candidates are aware of the horse's behaviour and character and handling must be safe and efficient at this level.

Candidates who are considered to be below the standard may be asked to retire.

Entry Requirements

This qualification is suitable for candidates in all age ranges, however there is a minimum age of 14 years. It is envisaged that candidates under the age of 15 years may not have accrued the required skills/knowledge for this qualification. Candidates must also be a Gold or Junior Gold member of The British Horse Society.

Training and Learning

The number of credits and guided learning hours will help candidates and their trainers to gauge how much training and preparation they will need. Each credit equals 10 hours of learning time. Training should be via a number of methods including formal learning, practice and revision.

The Exam Day

Candidates should arrive in good time to familiarise themselves with the surroundings, so they are seated and prepared for the briefing which usually starts at 8.30am (check confirmation letter for the exact time). The purpose of the briefing is to explain how the day is run, to meet other candidates, Assessors and to answer any questions the candidates might have about the day. Each candidate will be given a programme and asked to fill in an emergency contact form.

During the briefing the candidates will be divided into groups and given their numbers and a name label. The programme for the day and any housekeeping will be discussed with the candidates. Any questions and queries should be raised at this time. Before the start of the exam the Chief Assessor will introduce the Assessors and explain which units each one will be covering.

Level 1 Riding Horses is a one unit qualification.

RIDING – Riding horses on the flat and over ground poles in the light seat

RIDING

Riding horses on the flat and over ground poles in the light seat

20 credits/180 guided learning hours

Unit purpose and aims

The learner will be able to ride schooled horses in an enclosed environment in a balanced sympathetic manner. The learner will have sound basic principles and skills in riding horses on the flat and over poles on the ground in the light seat, from which they can build on and improve their riding. The learner's balance and security should indicate a correct foundation for future progress.

Learner Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Be able to lead a saddled and bridled horse in hand	1.1 Lead a horse safely and effectively in walk 1.2 Lead a horse safely and effectively in trot 1.3 Turn the horse safely and correctly when leading in hand
2. Be able to mount and dismount a horse	2.1 Check saddle, bridle, girth and stirrups for safety prior to mounting 2.2 Mount a horse safely and correctly 2.3 Dismount a horse safely and correctly
3. Be able to safely adjust stirrups, girth and reins when mounted	3.1 Alter the stirrups using the correct technique 3.2 Check stirrup leathers are correctly rotated 3.3 Check and adjust the girth prior to riding away 3.4 Hold and adjust reins correctly
4. Be able to maintain a secure and balanced position that is independent of the reins, when riding with stirrups	4.1 Walk, trot and canter in a secure and balanced position 4.2 Use an appropriate technique to help ensure a correct strike off into canter 4.3 Use a suitable stirrup length for the work undertaken 4.4 Maintain a suitable rein contact for the work undertaken
5. Be able to maintain a secure and balanced position that is independent of the reins, when riding without stirrups	5.1 Walk and trot in a secure and balanced position without stirrups 5.2 Maintain a suitable rein contact for the work undertaken
6. Be able to maintain a balanced, light seat that is independent of the reins, in preparation for jumping and working over poles on the ground	6.1 Maintain a balanced position at trot/canter in the light seat, with stirrups of a suitable length 6.2 Maintain a balanced position when trotting over poles on the ground
7. Be able to show a basic understanding of the natural aids	7.1 Use natural aids for riding the horse forward 7.2 Use natural aids for riding circles, turns and straight lines

8. Be able to ride on the correct diagonal	8.1 Use the correct diagonal for rising trot
9. Be able to handle a whip that does not exceed 75cm/30inches	9.1 Safely and correctly handle a whip when leading in hand, mounting and dismounting
	9.2 Safely and correctly handle a whip when adjusting reins, stirrups and girth
	9.3 Safely and correctly handle or use a whip when riding, changing rein and working over poles on the ground
10. Be able to ride safely and in harmony with the horse and in conjunction with others	10.1 Show respect for the horse and build up a basic rapport when riding
	10.2 Show a working knowledge of the rules of the school when riding with others
11. Know the footfalls of the horse's normal gaits and whether the horse is balanced	11.1 State the beats of the horse's paces
	11.2 Identify the footfalls of the horse's paces
	11.3 Give an example of when a horse may be unbalanced

PROCEDURE FOR ASSESSMENT

Candidates will ride in a group of up to six candidates. The session will last approximately fifty minutes. They will ride two or three horses. Work without stirrups will be seen in walk and trot, and with stirrups over both a single and a line of trotting poles in the light seat. Canter work will be shown on both reins. Candidates may carry a stick of up to 75cms.

A commander will be in the school to call out the exercises to be ridden.

CANDIDATE GUIDANCE – skills and knowledge

Leading a saddled and bridled horse in hand. The horse must be seen to move actively and be turned in the correct direction. A whip should be carried safely in the left hand.

Checking saddlery for its fitting and soundness. A quick check of the saddled horse which will be standing in the school.

Mounting and dismounting from the ground or from a mounting block. Mounting should be quick and agile, with care taken how the weight is lowered onto the horse's back. When dismounting the candidate should land on the ground in a light and balanced manner. In both instances the whip should be in the left hand.

Taking up and adjusting stirrups and reins. Stirrups should be adjusted swiftly, with one hand, as suggested by industry standard without the feet being removed from the stirrup irons. Whilst altering equipment the whip will remain in the rein hand. Rein length will be adapted to the individual horse and exercises undertaken. The whip should be drawn through the hand to remain on the inside after a change of rein.

Checking and tightening girths. Girths to be adjusted for comfort and safety of horse and rider, within a time frame acceptable to the industry. When mounted the foot should be left in the stirrup when the leg is taken forward.

The correct basics in the ability to maintain a correct, secure and balanced position when riding with stirrups. Showing some ability to maintain a straight line from ear – shoulder – hip – heel, and move in harmony with the horse which is the result of a balanced position. Riding on the correct diagonal in trot.

The correct basics in the ability to maintain a balanced position when riding without stirrups. The same points as riding with stirrups, in addition to absorbing the movement of the trot without gripping, so the balance, security and steady hand are not compromised.

The correct basics in the ability to maintain a correct, balanced position in preparation for jumping, and working over poles on the ground. Showing some ability to ride the horse forward in light seat, with a steady lower leg and independent hand.

A basic but effective use of the natural aids, and appropriate technique to achieve a correct canter lead. In event of an incorrect strike off the candidate should trot and then try again for a correct canter.

EXAMPLE RIDING PLAN FOR STAGE 1 – not compulsory

Check tack and prepare to mount. Mount and adjust stirrups. Check girth.

As a ride, walk forward to the track and track (right/left). Ride at one horse length between each horse.

Ride prepare for working trot rising, ride TROT. (Allow the ride to trot at least once round the school to establish forwardness and a rhythm, before commencing the next exercise).

Leading file in succession at A or C ride one 20m circle and then go large and circle to the rear of the ride.

Change the rein on the long diagonal. Ride walk.

Lead file in succession trot, in the first corner you can establish canter and go large to the rear of the ride.

Change the rein down the centre line.

Ride walk, (or halt at the discretion of the commander), quit and cross stirrups. Ride (walk) trot sitting. Rear file in succession at E or B halt and then, as the ride closes up from behind, take sitting trot as lead file.

Ride in single file, a three loop serpentine from A to C.

Ride walk (halt if necessary) take back stirrups and then as a ride (walk and) trot once round the school. Walk, turn in and halt.

CHANGE HORSES

Ride walk, trot rising, rear file in succession turn across the school and take leading file on the other side of the school.

Ride in trot, leading file in succession establish canter in the first corner. On the next long side at E or B half circle to take the rear of the ride, returning to trot as rear file.

Ride walk and halt.

SHORTEN STIRRUPS TO ENABLE WORK IN PREPARATION FOR JUMPING

Explanation: riders need to be slightly inclined forward to become independent of the seat in the saddle for balance. Work in trot – rising and the ‘poised’ position in trot should show balance and control of the horse. In canter the seat should be light rather than in the saddle, but the rider should be balanced over their leg NOT in front of it, (shoulder, knee, toe in a vertical line is a good guideline).

Work on the flat and over poles will be asked for at Stage 1.

The ride now working with distances of between two and three horse’s lengths between them.

As a ride, walk and trot rising. Change the rein and repeat on the other rein.

On the short sides take a poised position, on the long sides rising trot.

In RISING TROT, turn down the three-quarter line and trot over the single pole. Repeat.

Ride walk. Change the rein down the centre.

Ride trot. Change the rein over the three trotting poles on one diagonal. In rising trot once, in poised position the second time.

Ride walk. In succession leading file trot and canter to rear in light seat. Change the rein and repeat the same exercise if required.