Coach Handbook

Welcome to the BHS challenge awards!

We hope you'll enjoy delivering these awards and using them as a supportive and progressive learning tool for your participants. This handbook will guide you through everything you need to know, from planning to certification.

Once you've read this guide, and our other supporting materials, if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact the BHS Education Team.

Just a quick note: This handbook focuses specifically on BHS Challenge Awards. If you're looking for guidance on delivering our <u>Horse Explorer Leadership</u> <u>Awards</u> or <u>Pony Stars</u>, please refer to our dedicated resources for those programs.

1. Delivering the awards: Who can deliver and where?

To ensure the quality and consistency of our awards, only **BHS Accredited Professional Coaches** and **BHS Approved Riding Centres** are authorised to deliver and assess our recreational awards. It's really important to note that BHS recreational awards **cannot be delivered within non-BHS Approved Riding Centres**. This includes clients with horses on a working livery or loan agreement with the riding school. If you're ever in doubt about a venue, please don't hesitate to contact us before you start your course – we're always happy to advise.

Who can participate?

The Challenge Awards are open to anyone who wants to take part; they are not required to be BHS members. There are no age restrictions to the awards; please use your discretion as to the ability of your participant.

Delivering practical awards

The majority of Challenge Awards have a practical focus. This helps participants develop their skills and confidence in a safe and structured way with your support. Because of this, awards involving practical skill development must not be delivered online or via remote coaching.

Here are some suitable options for delivering these practical awards:

- 1. At a BHS Approved Riding Centre: These are ideal venues, especially if participants don't have their own horses or their horses aren't suitable.
- 2. At a participant's livery yard or hired facility: You can deliver at a participant's livery yard (even if it's not a BHS Approved Livery Yard) with their own horse(s).

FOR THE CHALLENGE. FOR THE LOVE.

This item is for use in the course of BHS business use only

- 3. Facilities like a British Riding Club ground are also suitable if you're coaching a BRC group.
 - o Quick tip: If you're hiring a facility, always double-check that the venue has its own public liability cover for hiring out their facilities for lessons. This is usually detailed on their policy schedule.

Important note: Delivering the silver Ride Safe Challenge Award

The silver Ride Safe Challenge Award has specific trainer requirements. The riding school or coach must have gone through the silver Ride Safe training with a BHS Ride Safe Advisor before they can deliver and assess the silver Ride Safe to their candidates.

To become a Ride Safe Trainer, you must meet the following criteria:

- Hold the Ride Safe Award (or BHS Riding and Road Safety)
- Attendance at a Ride Safe training session delivered by a Ride Safe Advisor.
- Minimum coaching qualifications of 'BHS Stage 3 Coach' and a BHS Accredited Professional Coach membership (your coaching status must remain current for your Ride Safe Trainer status to be valid).
- Minimum coaching qualifications of 'BHS Stage 3 Coach' and a BHS Accredited Professional Centre Coach membership (your coaching status must remain current for your Ride Safe Trainer status to be valid).

It's really important you take part in Ride Safe Training the Trainer, as it's essential you're up to date with all the latest Highway Code, and legislation changes relevant to your nation of delivery. You will also have access to exclusive Ride Safe Trainer resources to enhance your course delivery to your participants. If you would like to become a Ride Safe Trainer, you can <u>find your local Ride Safe Advisor</u>. In the 'Coach Type' selection click on Ride Safe Advisor to filter the options.

Classroom or online learning:

We also offer several Challenge Awards that focus solely on knowledge and don't require practical activity. Only these awards listed can be delivered via classroom or online learning. If you're delivering these from a riding centre, it must be a BHS Approved Riding Centre.

The knowledge based awards are:

- Horse Health
- Horse Knowledge Part One
- Horse Knowledge Part Two

- Breeding Part One: To breed or not to breed
- Breeding Part Two: Breeding and foaling
- Breeding Part Three: Care of the foal and young horse

Please remember, if any Accredited Professional Coach trains participants towards the Challenge Awards at a riding school that is not BHS Approved, the coach will be in breach of their BHS Accredited Professional Code of Conduct. Theory courses can be delivered in any appropriate classroom setting but if you are delivering it at a riding school or centre it must be a BHS Approved Centre.

Coaching Outside the UK and Ireland:

The same rules about BHS Approved Riding Centres apply. Additionally, please ensure you have the necessary insurance cover for the country you're in. You may also need to adapt some content to account for different husbandry practices outside of the UK.

2. Understanding the awards

Overview of awards

These awards are designed to be a fun, progressive, and flexible way for participants to develop their equestrian knowledge and skills.

There are 42 awards in total. 34 awards are what we refer to as 'core awards' that progress over five distinct levels: Introduction, bronze, silver, gold, and platinum.

Core awards: About the Horse and About the Rider

Our core awards are split into two key sections: **About the Horse** and **About the Rider**. Each section begins with an 'Introduction to...' award: *Introduction to Horse Care* and *Introduction to Riding*. While it's not compulsory to start with these, they're perfect for very novice participants who have little or no prior experience with horses. The core awards then progress through the bronze, silver, gold, and platinum levels, building skills and knowledge as participants advance.

The next couple of pages provides you with an overview of each award.

About the Horse - Introduction to horse care

KNOWING YOUR HORSE



Understand how to look after horses by developing your knowledge of basic anatomy and feeding. Know why they need to be fit and healthy for the activities you do together.

CARING FOR YOUR HORSE



Enhance your special relationship with horses.
Understand the best way to keep them in a
healthy condition by developing your grooming
skills and knowledge of horse psychology.

HANDLING YOUR HORSE



Develop techniques to boost your confidence when handling horses. Enhance your skills fitting tack correctly and comfortably, and loading a horse so you can go out and have fun together.

LUNGEING YOUR HORSE



Lungeing is important to horse health, fitness and happiness. Challenge yourself to lunge the horses you look after safely and with confidence.

About the Rider -Introduction to riding

RIDING



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Build your flexibility, balance and all round physical and mental fitness. Improve your riding experience, confidence and core strength, as well as the welfare of the horses you ride.

RIDING FLAT



Improve your balance and position.

Develop a feel for all the horses you ride
by practicing school movements and
riding without stirrups.

RIDING JUMP



Take on the challenge of leaving the ground. Improve your riding knowledge and develop your jumping skills, from riding over poles to jumping

a small course of fences in balance and harmony.

RIDING OUT SAFELY



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Gain the confidence and skills to ride safely on roads and when out and about. Know how to plan routes and prepare yourself and your horse to enjoy the countryside.



Horse Explorers vs Challenge Awards core awards, what's the difference?

The Horse Explorers and Challenge Awards do share some topics, and here's why.

When we first launched the Challenge Awards, they were designed with adult recreational riders in mind. However, we got lots of feedback from coaches who felt that younger clients could absolutely achieve these awards too. The only barrier was that the original booklets didn't quite resonate with a younger audience.

So, that's where Horse Explorers comes in! We created this range specifically for younger participants. The really important thing to remember is that the core content for the awards is exactly the same. The only difference is the accompanying participant booklet, which has a design and feel that's more appealing to younger riders.

The awards that you'll find in both the Horse Explorers and Challenge Awards series are:

- About the Horse bronze and silver
- About the Rider bronze and silver

This means when you head over to our online resource shop to order your participant packs, you'll have the flexibility to choose either the Challenge Awards design or the Horse Explorers design for any of these awards.

Stand-Alone Awards

In addition to our core awards, we offer 8 fantastic stand-alone awards that allow participants to delve deeper into specific areas of interest:

Horse Health:

- A must for every horse owner or anyone who spends a lot of time around horses! This award covers recognising common health conditions, first aid procedures, and gives participants an opportunity to practice basic treatments. It's also beneficial for those training towards their BHS Stage assessments.

Horse Knowledge (Part 1 and Part 2):

- A progressive two-part theory course. Participants receive two booklets and coaches have accompanying PowerPoint presentations. These awards provide a solid foundation for progressing onto the practical Bronze About the Horse awards.

First Pony Guide:

Ideal to help anyone thinking about getting their first horse or pony. Through a combination of theory and practical sessions, participants will learn the basics of pony care, from potential costs and livery options to essential practical skills like safe handling, mucking out, and tacking up.

Mounted Games:



A fun, practical award that introduces participants to the world of games on horseback. No specialized equipment is required, and it's suitable for all riders, from novice to experienced. Participants learn the skills needed for a variety of games while having a great time!

Breeding Challenge Awards (Part One, Part Two and Part Three):

Whether your participants are considering breeding your own mare or just want to learn more about horse breeding, these awards are a great place to start.

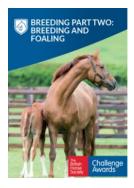
Part One – the suitability of a mare for breeding, the knowledge and time required, necessary facilities, and potential costs.

Part Two –choosing a stallion, the required characteristics of the mare, covering methods, and care during pregnancy and the foaling process.

Part Three –the care required from birth to three weeks, from three weeks to weaning, from weaning to two years.

STAND-ALONE AWARDS











3. Delivering the Awards: Your flexible approach

One of the great strengths of the BHS Challenge Awards is their flexibility! You have the freedom to tailor each participant's journey based on their current experience, knowledge, skills, and what they hope to achieve. This means there's no set number of awards a participant must complete, nor a strict order in which they have to do them.

While we recommend participants generally begin at the Introduction or bronze level and then progress through silver, gold, and platinum to gain the most benefit, this isn't compulsory. If you and your participant feel it's suitable, they can certainly start at a higher level.

You have a few options for how you guide participants through the awards:

- Working Across Topics: You could have participants complete all the awards within a section at one level (for example, all four About the Horse Bronze awards) before moving on to the next level.
- **Pick and Mix:** Alternatively, participants can simply choose the individual awards that interest them most. For instance, they might want to progress specifically through *Lungeing your Horse* from bronze right through to platinum to deeply develop their skills in that area.

We also leave the group sizes entirely to your discretion, whether you're coaching one-to-one or with a larger group. Just consider your facilities and available equipment when deciding what works best.

4. Participant Recognition and Rewards

We've made it easy for you to recognise your participants' hard work and progress.

Certificates: You'll issue a certificate to each participant upon completion of a single award (for example, Lungeing your Horse bronze)

Enamel pin badge: You will give an enamel pin badge once they've completed all four topics within a specific section at the same level (for example, all four About the Horse bronze awards).

You'll purchase both these certificates and pin badges as part of the award packs when you place your order, so you'll have everything ready for your participants' big moments!



5. Essential coaching support materials for you

We're here to support you every step of the way. All the following support materials are readily available for you to download from the BHS Accredited Professional Hub. Remember, these resources are flexible tools designed to assist you, not rigid requirements. Feel free to use them for ideas, adapt them to suit your participants and coaching style, and infuse them with your own creativity!

Planning and delivering your sessions

These resources are designed to help you plan engaging and effective coaching sessions.

- Session plans: You'll find a series of suggested session plans for each award. These offer fantastic ideas for content and activities. While they provide a great starting point for your planning, we encourage you to adapt them to perfectly suit your participants, facilities, the time of year, and the horses available. Don't rush your sessions there are no time restraints or limits for completing awards. Plan to spend more time on certain areas or repeat sessions as needed to build participant confidence and ensure they achieve the required skills.
- **Group exercises:** We've included a variety of practical group tasks that can be completed on the yard. These are ideal for encouraging participants to work together as a team. You'll also find suggestions for discussions and debates to explore topics and scenarios in more detail. Fostering a community spirit and encouraging collaboration is central to the Challenge Awards. This mindset will help participants develop essential life skills, especially if they go on to own their own horses, by encouraging them to seek advice and work with professionals for the best care.
- **PowerPoint presentations:** For the Horse Knowledge Part One and Part Two, and Horse Health awards, a PowerPoint presentation accompanies each topic.
- **Coach Pack information booklets:** A complete set of all participant information booklets is available for you to purchase as a handy reference. Please note, this coach pack does not include certificates or enamel pin badges.

Guidance for informal assessment and key practical guidelines

This section provides details on how to use the award checklists and important considerations for practical tasks.

• Checklist guidance notes: Each participant booklet includes an award checklist outlining the knowledge and skills required. Our checklist guidance notes provide clear indications of the level expected for 'sign off,' helping you avoid over-assessing. Remember, there's no time limit for completion, so participants can work at their own pace. We don't require formal assessments; the checklist should be signed off continuously as each task is completed. You also don't need to assess participants individually for every task (for example, daily field checks can be done as a group, with each participant discussing their role and observations).



Working with horses (About the Horse awards):

- The checklist criteria should always be carried out using safe and respectful handling techniques and with suitable horses and ponies.
- Encourage participants to work efficiently (though remember these aren't professional awards, so industry speed isn't expected) and to keep their workspace clean and tidy (for example, skipping out before working in the stable).
- Where possible, encourage participants to work with a variety of suitable horses. This helps them build experience and confidence and recognise that every horse is different.
- We recommend that knowledge-based topics take place in a practical setting, allowing participants to discuss the subject or what's in front of them in a relaxed environment.

Riding horses (About the Rider awards):

- The primary focus is on the rider's position and balance, riding with empathy and respect, with an emphasis on developing an independent seat.
- Participants are not expected to work their horse in an outline or improve the horse's way of going; if their actions aren't detrimental to the horse, they can pass the awards.

Participant resources

- Information booklets for participants: Each award is accompanied by a dedicated information booklet. These aren't available for download but will be sent to you when you purchase your participant resource packs. Each booklet is packed with helpful advice, pointers, top tips, fun facts, and home challenges for participants to read as they progress.
- Throughout the booklets, you'll find tips directing participants to read more information on our website, watch videos in the Education Resource Hub, or find local events. Please help by familiarising yourself with the BHS website so you can easily guide them to relevant pages.
- The information booklet also contains the **award checklist** at the back. This lists the skills and knowledge required to complete an award, acting as a clear 'to-do' list for the participant. You'll find space to date and sign off tasks once a participant has demonstrated competence or can discuss a topic confidently.
- Once all items on the award checklist have been signed off, we highly encourage you to give the **learner feedback** in the box provided. Be positive! Highlight areas they did exceptionally well and should be proud of to encourage them for their next award. While you'll give verbal feedback throughout, written feedback that can be filed and referred back to by the learner is always appreciated and goes a long way.

6. Registering participants and purchasing their resource packs



You don't have to provide any registration details for your participants, and they don't need to be members of the BHS. You, the coach, or a centre representative, buys the resource packs for your participants. Bulk buy discounts are available for cost efficiency. You will be asked to fill in your Accredited Professional Coach or Approved Centre details and these will be checked against our records before the order is dispatched.

Resource packs are available from our online shop. Please note, this is a hidden web page with exclusive prices and discounts specifically for the use of Accredited Professional Coaches and Approved Centres. **Do not forward the link to anyone else for them to buy packs.**

A resource pack for an individual award will include the participant resource booklet and a blank certificate for you to issue. If you purchase a resource pack for the About the Horse or About the Rider awards your pack will also include the corresponding enamel pin badge.

Our exclusive online shop often has special offers throughout the year. We will promote these offers on our Accredited Professional and Approved Centre Facebook pages. Not a member of those? Search on Facebook for the group and request to join.

The prices listed on the next few pages are correct at the time of producing this guide. BHS has the right to amend prices at any time.



Participant resource packs: About the Horse

The resource pack for the **About the Horse** awards includes:

- 1x Knowing your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Handling your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Caring for your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Lungeing your Horse Award booklet
- 4x certificates (one for each award)
- 1x About the Horse Badge

You will select options for:

- 1. the level you want the pack for; bronze, silver, gold or platinum
- 2. the type of pack; Horse Explorers or Challenge Awards Horse Explorers design available for bronze or silver only

3. number of packs

Price: £23.00 (include P&P)

Bulk buy your packs to save money:

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount	
10 - 24	£21.50 each	£1.50 off each pack	
25 - 49	£20.00 each	£3.00 off each pack	
50 - +	£18.50 each	£4.50 off each pack	



Participant resource pack: About the Rider

The resource pack for the **About the Rider** awards includes:

- 1x Riding Fit Award booklet
- 1x Riding Flat Award booklet
- 1x Riding Jump Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Guide
- 4x certificates (one for each award)
- 1x About the Rider Badge

You will select options for:

- 1. the level you want the pack for; bronze, silver, gold or platinum
- 2. the type of pack; Horse Explorers or Challenge Awards Horse Explorers design available for bronze or silver only
- 3. number of packs

Price: £27.50 (including P&P)

Bulk buy your packs to save money:

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount	
10 - 24	£25.00 each	£2.50 off each pack	
25 - 49	£22.50 each	£5.00 off each pack	
50 - +	£20.00 each	£7.50 off each pack	



Participant resource pack: Individual awards

The resource pack for any **Individual** award includes:

• 1x Award booklet

• 1x certificate

(Please note if selected Silver Ride Safe if you will also receive the Ride Safe Guide)

You will select options for:

1. the level of award; bronze, silver, gold or platinum

2. the type of award; Horse Explorers or Challenge Awards – Horse Explorers design available for bronze or silver only

3. the award; if selected Starter Award- Horse Health, Horse Knowledge Part 1, Horse Knowledge Part 2, First Pony Guide, Mounted Games.*

If selected bronze, silver, gold, platinum- Caring for your horse, Knowing your horse, Handling your horse, Lungeing your horse, Riding fit, Riding flat, Riding Jump, Ride Safe*

4. number of packs

Price: £6.00 (not including P&P)

Price of silver Ride Safe: £12.00 (including P&P)

Bulk buy your packs to save money (individual awards):

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount	
10 - 24	£5.50 each	£0.50 off each pack	
25 - 49	£5.00 each	£1.00 off each pack	
50 - +	£4.00 each	£2.00 off each pack	



Participant resource pack: Ride Safe Pack

We have bundled the bronze and silver Ride Safe awards as a convenient pack; great for novice riders or those new to exploring outside the arena.

The resource pack for the **Ride Safe bundle** includes:

- 1x bronze Ride Safe Award booklet
- 1x silver Ride Safe Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Guide
- 2x certificates (one for each award)

You will select options for:

- 1. the level you want the pack for; bronze, silver, gold or platinum
- 2. the type of pack; Horse Explorers or Challenge Awards
- 3. number of packs

Price: £15 (including P&P)

Bulk buy your packs to save money:

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount	
10 - 24	£14.00 each	£1.00 off each pack	
25 - 49	£13.50 each	£1.50 off each pack	
50 - +	£12.50 each	£2.50 off each pack	



Coach pack

The resources for the **Coach Pack** includes:

The perfect pack for you as a Coach to keep and refer to whilst delivering your sessions. You will get a copy of all booklets from bronze-platinum, our Ride Safe Guide, and our 8 stand-alone awards.

You will select options for:

- 1. the level you want the pack for; bronze, silver, gold or platinum
- 2. the type of pack; Horse Explorers or Challenge Awards Horse Explorers design available for bronze or silver only
- 3. number of packs

Price: £50 (including P&P)

7. Important Considerations

This section covers vital practices to ensure the safety, inclusivity, and proper administration of your Challenge Award sessions. Think of these as friendly reminders of the good practice you already adopt in your coaching.

Health and Safety

Take time at the start of each session to cover health and safety rules and procedures and what to do in the event of an emergency. Remember to include general housekeeping, especially if the participants are not familiar with the yard. Throughout each session participants should wear appropriate and correctly fitting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) relevant to the task. Horses and ponies should be accustomed to novice people working around them and suitable for the tasks. Equipment should be in a good repair and safe to use.

Risk Assessment

We strongly advise you to carry out a risk assessment before each session and keep this documentation on file. This proactive step helps you identify and mitigate potential hazards.

Suitability of horses

The Challenge Awards cater to the recreational market, and participants may use their own horses or horses from a BHS Approved Riding School. It's crucial that horses are of a suitable level and temperament for the tasks. There are no height restrictions, so please use your experience and discretion to match



suitable horses to each participant (if they're not using their own). Ensure no participant is 'under-horsed' or 'over-horsed.' If a participant is using their own horse, we advise the horse should be over 4 years old, and you should always check their equipment and tack for suitability and safety before starting.

If at any time you feel the welfare or safety of a participant or horse is compromised, please swap the horse if possible or stop the session. If it's a participant's own horse, have a friendly chat with them about your concerns, as they may not fully understand what happened.

Reminder: If you are an Accredited Professional Coach and have opted to include the insurance within your membership package, you are covered to coach riders on their own horses. The Care, Custody and Control cover also allows you to handle that horse during appropriate demonstrations. Approved Centres must adhere to their own riding school insurance conditions.

Reasonable Adjustments

The BHS is committed to promoting equity, diversity, and equality of opportunity within the Challenge Awards. We understand that adjustments may be needed due to the practical nature of the awards. We recommend finding an appropriate time to confidentially discuss each participant's learning or physical requirements. No reasonable adjustment form is required by us; simply follow your normal procedure for recording and applying adjustments in your everyday lessons. While adjustments can be made to ensure access, participants must still complete all the challenge criteria to achieve an award.

If you have any queries regarding adjustments, please contact us on 02476 840508.

Data Protection

The BHS complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, and you should always adhere to GDPR best practice. Further information regarding your responsibilities is available on the BHS Cloud and at www.bhs.org.uk/apcdataprotection. As a general guide, ensure that any information and data you collect from participants will be:

- Dealt with sensitively and used fairly and lawfully
- Used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- Used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- Handled according to people's data protection rights
- Kept safe and secure



If you have any queries relating to GDPR please contact the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.org.uk

8. Further Support for You

Check out our coach Frequently Asked Questions if you have any questions about delivering our recreational products.

We offer regular **information sessions**, held via video call. These are presented live and gives you an opportunity to refresh your knowledge regarding any of our awards, give us feedback or ask us questions. Head to the Challenge Awards resource page on the AP Hub to find your next session.

Your **Accredited Professional Hub** (AP Hub) is your resource Hub for all things Challenge Awards. It hosts all the coach resources mentioned in this guide, links to your exclusive online shop to buy your participant resource packs, and more! You will also find your APC insurance details, resources for other recreational products and courses and other exclusive APC membership benefits and events.

If you don't have access to our AP Hub, please contact accreditedprofessionals@bhs.org.uk with your APC number and we can forward you the details.

If you have any further questions, or if you wish to provide us with any feedback, we would love to hear from you! Please contact: challengeawards@bhs.org.uk or call us on 02476 840508.

9. Continuing your participant's journey: Links to BHS Stage 2

If you have clients that are aiming for a career in the equestrian industry, we recommend they sit BHS Stage 1 Care and Ride, instead of the Challenge Awards. BHS Stage 1 will prepare them for future assessments, and their career.

While some recreational awards offer an alternative route into Stage 2, it's crucial not to imply they are equivalent to or contribute towards a Stage 1 qualification. Misrepresenting this has unfortunately led to feedback and complaints from participants who believed they had achieved Stage 1. It's important to remember that these awards are designed as recreational courses for everyday riders to improve skills, *not* as professional qualifications. While they cover fundamental skills related to Stage 1, they don't directly equate to it, as the content has a broader, less industry-specific remit.

However, there is a direct entry link from Horse Explorers/Challenge Awards silver core awards to the BHS Career Pathway for participants who may wish to transition to our suite of professional qualifications. Copies of the award certificates or coach completion of the online <u>Achievement Tracker</u> must be seen by the Education Team before we can accept an assessment booking via a direct entry application request. Please read our <u>guidance on direct entry</u> for further information on our process.



Groom Pathway	Groom with Riding Pathway	Complete Horsemanship Pathway	Ride Leader Pathway
Completion of the following challenge awards will provide direct entry to BHS Stage 2 Care and Lunge*: ✓ About the Horse silver	Completion of the following challenge awards will provide direct entry to BHS Stage 2 Ride*: ✓ About the Rider silver	Completion of the following challenge awards will provide direct entry to BHS Stage 2 Care, Lunge and Ride*: ✓ About the Horse silver ✓ About the Rider silver	Completion of the following challenge awards will provide entry to BHS Stage 2 Riding Out**: ✓ Riding out safely silver ✓ About the Horse silver

^{*}Please note the minimum age for a participant to sit any Stage 2 Care, Lunge or Ride assessment is 14 years old and they are required to be a BHS Gold Member.

^{**}Please note the minimum age for a participant to sit the Stage 2 Riding Out assessment is 18.