
Health and Safety Statement for BHS Assessments

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Introduction

The British Horse Society (BHS) is committed to making sure all its activities are conducted safely, fairly, transparently, objectively and free from bias. Ensuring a professional, safe and effective service is provided.

The BHS has a commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing for candidates, assessors and all others involved in assessments, as underpinned in the *BHS Health and Safety Policy*.

This statement outlines how we maintain health, safety and wellbeing for candidates, assessors and all others involved in BHS Assessments.

For information on how we safeguard horses and ponies during assessments, please refer to our [Horse Welfare at BHS Assessments Statement](#).

Approved assessment centres

All BHS Approved assessment centres are BHS Approved Riding Schools and adhere to detailed assessment criteria set out in the *BHS Approved Centre Criteria: Riding Schools*. The BHS Approved Centre process is managed by the BHS Approved Centre Team. The BHS Education Team and Approved Centre Team have regular meetings to discuss issues, concerns and areas of good practice. If issues are raised, the Approved Centre Business Support Team will liaise with the BHS Education Team to deliver an improvement plan for the centre.

To maintain high quality standards, safety and welfare (including horses) and offer a good candidate experience at BHS Assessments, all BHS Approved Riding Schools (within the UK and Ireland) will have, as a minimum (this list is not exhaustive):

- A current Local Authority License and current Liability/Employers Insurance
- Policies/plans implemented for; Health and Safety, Data Protection, Safeguarding, emergency planning for staff, volunteers, clients and horses, accident reporting procedure
- Written risk assessments for; preventative fire risk assessment (with clearly visible and legible Fire Procedures in place), COSHH, working activities, generic activities within the centre
- A suitable experienced person with the knowledge and competence to ensure horse care and welfare needs are being met
- Healthcare records for horses, such as dentistry, veterinary, farrier are maintained
- A biosecurity plan
- An equine and human first aid kit
- Clean toilets with handwashing facilities
- A designated office or reception area to welcome and greet candidates
- Refreshments available
- A riding arena of minimum 20mx40m with a safely constructed perimeter fence
- Equipment and tack in good repair and safe to use with regular inspections recorded
- A centre protocol for accident/incident management. First Aid coverage, First Aid kits and an accident reporting procedure

- Required centre staff and volunteers have the required Criminal Record checks (in accordance with the guidelines for their country)
- There is at least one trained centre staff member appointed as the Centre Safeguarding Officer and the centre has implemented a Centre Safeguarding Policy

Health, safety and safeguarding at an assessment

It is the candidate's responsibility to understand the requirements of the qualification/assessment they are booking and to prepare effectively. By booking an assessment, the candidate accepts this responsibility. For candidates under 18 it is the parent/carer's responsibility.

At any point during an assessment should doubt exist as to the health, safety and/or welfare of the candidate, horses, assessor or others, an assessor or assessment centre personnel has the right to stop the candidate at any time.

The BHS fully accepts its legal and moral obligation under The Childrens Acts (1989) and (2004)* and safeguarding adult legislation* to provide a duty of care to protect all children and adults at risk and safeguard their welfare, irrespective of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation and socio-economic background.

*Nation specific safeguarding legislation and guidance is also adhered to.

As well as BHS specific policies *BHS Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy* and *BHS Safeguarding Adults Policy*, the BHS also fully adopts the British Equestrian Safeguarding Policies: *Safeguarding Policy (Children and Young People)* and *Safeguarding Policy (Adults at Risk)*.

Further information can be found at the [British Horse Society](#) and [British Equestrian](#) websites.

At assessment, robust procedures are implemented:

- Assessments are only held at BHS Approved Riding Schools, or suitable equivalent
- Risk assessments are checked and completed by the Lead Assessor. The risk assessment reflects specific requirements for children and adults at risk where applicable
- Assessors are current in first aid and safeguarding training
- Assessors have the required Criminal Record check as per the guidelines set by the UK Nation or country of residence they live in
- Candidate to follow the [Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustment](#) process if they (or a member of their support network) wishes to request any access arrangements for a BHS assessment, or want the BHS assessor/s to be informed of any additional support that may be required on the day
- Candidates are required to 'sign in' and 'sign out' of the assessment centre
- Emergency contact details are collected for candidates. Emergency contact is called if an assessor has concern for the health, wellbeing or safety for a candidate.
- [Accidents at BHS Assessments Policy](#) followed in the unlikely event of an accident
- Accidents and near misses reported, reviewed and monitored
- Appropriate signage is in place to direct candidates to the welcome room and assessment areas

- Assessors are identified by a name badge
- Assessors are introduced before the assessment begins and a briefing is given informing candidates of the timetable of the day, what to expect and who to report to should they have a concern, and welcoming any questions from candidates.
- Candidates with access arrangements or reasonable adjustments are acknowledged and spoken to confirming the additional support in place for their assessment
- Online assessments are recorded
- Implementing internal quality assurance which looks at health and safety on IQA visits

In addition to the guidance and procedures set out above, we safeguard candidates under 18 during assessments by:

- Consent* from a parent or carer is given for the assessment booking.
- The BHS will email booking confirmation and an Emergency Contact Form to the candidate and to the parent/carers of the candidate. It is the responsibility of the parent/carers to complete the Emergency Contact Form on the day of the assessment, or for the candidate to bring a completed form with them to the assessment.
- Emergency contact details are required for candidates before the assessment day. The emergency contact is called once if a candidate does not turn up.
- We clearly state in our Assessment Terms and Conditions that BHS or the assessment centre cannot provide supervision for candidates during breaks and lunch time. The BHS strongly recommends that any candidate below the age of 18 years should be accompanied by a responsible adult who remains at the assessment centre for the duration of the assessment. For candidates aged 16-17, it is at the discretion of their parent/carers.
- If the accompanying adult leaves the assessment centre at any time, the responsibility for the candidate remains with the accompanying adult. It is the responsibility of the accompanying adult to leave emergency contact details with the assessor who must be contactable.
- If a candidate under 18 arrives without a responsible adult, the responsibility for the candidate lies with the emergency contact provided at the time of booking. This person must be contactable during the assessment.
- The Lead Assessor is made aware who on the assessment is under 18.

*Parent/guardian consent is not required for students taking an assessment at a college, school or other education provider where they are enrolled. Responsibility will defer to the education provider and the safeguarding measures they have in place for their own students.

Pregnant candidates

Candidates who are pregnant should notify the Education Team by email at the earliest opportunity.

We advise that the individual talks with their doctor/healthcare professional with an honest summary of what the assessment will entail in order to support a decision to undertake or withdraw from the assessment.

Guidance regarding fit note and risk assessment requirements are within our [Assessment Terms and Conditions](#).

Internal quality assurance process

Quality assurance activities ensure the assessment of the candidate at all stages is valid, authentic, current, reliable and sufficient. It upholds the integrity of the BHS qualification and assessment system. It also ensures the candidate receives a thorough and fair assessment with excellent customer service provided throughout. An IQA may observe and report on some, or all of the following:

Internal quality assurance – customer service, health, safety and welfare of candidates and horses, safeguarding, facilities, timetabling, presentation of assessors, assessment centre welcome and signage, BHS guidance provided to assessment centres and assessors, BHS information and guidance provided to candidates.

Internal verification – accuracy of assessment, assessor judgments and decisions, reasonable adjustments and access arrangements, recording of assessment activity, effectiveness of assessment materials, assessment equipment, horses used are at the correct level, management of health, safety and welfare of candidates, including safeguarding, implementation of BHS Education policies, processes and procedures, Skills Record.