



Approved Criteria

Riding Centre

Approved Riding Centre Criteria Introduction



Welcome to the assessment criteria for becoming a BHS Approved Riding Centre

The purpose of this document is to share with you information about the scheme and how it can benefit your business. In this we cover what it takes to join the scheme and explain the process from initial application through to becoming a member of a growing community of like minded equestrian businesses. We'll also explain the support that is available to you through a regional dedicated business support manager throughout the process, their key focus being to help you with any questions you may have throughout your application and beyond.

The core quality of provision and standards of working practice in our centres underpin the quality standards that are integral to the national recognition and success of the BHS Approved Centre scheme. We therefore take enormous pride and are honoured to have many centres on our various membership schemes all of whom, based on their catchment area and business model, have very differing offers to not only retain but importantly, attract new clients.

How do I start?

Let us know you're interested by contacting us at approvedcentres@bhs.org.uk or call us on 02476 840509 and your Business Support Manager will reach out to you and help guide you through the journey, from submitting an application through to helping you prepare for your initial inspection.

What to expect at a Centre Assessment?

At a time convenient to you, an Approved Centre Inspector will visit whereby they'll observe the horses and ponies in your care and gain an overview of the general everyday working practice and activities. All of this helps them to understand how your Centre operates. Throughout the visit, informal discussions allow plenty of time for equal sharing of questions and understanding whilst reviewing the scheme criteria. This document explains the areas that are assessed during the inspectors visit with successful assessment being met through a combination of submitting essential documents, self declaring meeting requirements where applicable, and the practical observations and recommendations of the Centre Inspector on the day of your assessment

What's looked for in each assessment area is explained further on. During your first year of membership, Centres can gain grading for becoming Approved. After your first year on the scheme, for Centres who wish to, there's option to progress for assessment in to the Highly Commended sections in the areas that specifically apply to you and your business.

How we can help

Our dedicated Approved Centres Business Support team can help Centres in preparation for inspections. Whether you are in need of 'written regimes' to help you with Local Authority Licensing requirements, a risk assessment template, rider registration forms or advice on how to meet the Safeguarding requirements, you will have access to templates and data sheets. Our friendly team is always happy to help so if you aren't sure about any aspect, simply contact BHS Approved Centre Operations at approvedcentres@bhs.org.uk or call 02476 840509

Riding Centre - Horse Care



Overall Expectation:

The well-being of the horse is the most important reputational aspect for any successful equestrian business. Meeting the daily and routine health care, exercise and welfare needs of all horses and ponies should always be the highest priority. Centres will need to have sufficient knowledge and experienced staff to ensure acceptable horse care standards are maintained throughout the seasons. Providing suitable shelter/accommodation, minimising risk of disease through an effective isolation procedure/facility and protocols and a preventative fire risk assessment being in place, are few of the required measures involved in helping to keep horses and ponies safe. All horses should be in a healthy condition and those in work should have fitness levels appropriate to their workload. In addition to onsite assessment sampling undertaken by a BHS Approved Centre Inspector, the evidencing of horses being in a healthy condition, will be supported by the Centre maintaining proactive plans for all routine aspects such as grooming, feeding, exercise, maintaining a healthy weight, worming, veterinary, dentistry and shoeing/trimming.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A1 There is a suitably experienced person with the knowledge and competence to ensure horse care and welfare needs are being met		✓		A1 We will need a list of staff working at the Centre that includes any equine qualifications and what their role is in the Centre. We have a staff list template to make this easier
A2 All horses should be microchipped and have a valid equine passport			✓	
A3 Evidenced by their appearance and condition, all horses to have a regular care program that includes exercise / grooming / time out of the stable	✓		✓	A3 This would involve the inspector meeting your horses and ponies and chatting with you to understand your routine management of them
A4 A written contract or loan agreement for horses not in the Centre ownership, for example, working liveries or loans that details how care and exercise for the horse are met, including planning for emergency situations			✓	A4 An essential to help protect all involved. Help can be provided regarding recommendations for content and coverage

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A5 Each horse to have constant access to clean water, appropriate shelter with their dietary needs being correctly met	✓		✓	A5 This would be assessed through observation during the inspection visit and discussing with you how you manage horses in your care
A6 Each horse is attended to regularly by a. A registered farrier to ensure feet are well maintained b. Either a veterinarian or qualified equine dentist to ensure teeth are maintained	✓		✓	A6 Having any shoeing and dentistry records available will help support any visual observations during the assessment
A7 All horses/ponies in use must be selected and fully assessed by a competent person at the Centre regarding their suitability for use relative to the client base attending the Centre	✓		✓	A7 This applies to those on working livery or loan to the Centre and needs be evidenced through individual risk assessments for each horse/pony
A8 All horses/ponies should be groomed in preparation for and after their daily work sessions	✓		✓	A8 Type of groom should be applicable to keep situation, for example, grass kept differing to stable kept. Horses/ponies should be well presented for sessions with minimal mud, stains etc
A9 All horses/ponies should have sufficient periods of rest between sessions to include removal of all saddlery and equipment between sessions	✓		✓	A9 For example, where saddles may be left on prior to or between lessons, horses should be secured and girths loosened. Such periods should be kept to a minimum duration and access to water must be maintained. For safety reasons it is advised to not leave bridles on.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A10 A worm prevention plan is in place that includes coverage for all horses on site	✓		✓	A10 This would be explaining to the inspector what preventative measures are taken to minimise the risk of worm burden for all horses
A11 Records of bodyweight (condition scoring) / health care / treatments and administration of any Prescription Only Medication are kept for each horse	✓		✓	A11 These would need to be accessible on your assessment day, in particular for any horses or ponies with specific care needs
A12 An isolation area, either stabling or a separate, sheltered and separately supplied paddock that includes options for arrival of any new horses	✓		✓	A12 This doesn't have to be completely separate, for some Centres, this might be a restricted area or paddock with natural shelter and water supply
A13 A written isolation / biosecurity plan is in place and adhered to that explains how a Centre minimises risk or spread of disease	✓		✓	A13 Whilst helping to provide isolation if needed, having a plan helps to protect all involved. We have Template available
A14 A written preventative fire risk assessment and evacuation procedure that explains what's being done to minimise risk of fire, your evacuation procedures and communication plans	✓	✓	✓	A14 A legal requirement for all businesses that should also capture recording of any practice fire drills. We have templates available. Further guidance can be found here https://www.bhs.org.uk/search/?query=fire+safety .

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A15 Stable yards and surrounding areas should be kept free from risk of excessive equipment / storage that could compromise entrance / exit routes	✓		✓	A15 Stables, yard and surrounding areas should be safe, accessible and well maintained with minimal potential for hazards that can lead to avoidable incidents for both horses and humans
A16 All accommodation, whether barn/crew/yard/shelter or individual stables must be well ventilated, safe in construction with height and size sufficient to allow comfort and movement for the horse, thus encouraging those permanently stabled to lie down	✓		✓	A16 All accommodation should have secure fixtures and fittings, be free from hazards or leaks, doors at suitable height / width which open / close freely and light to allow for suitable inspection of a horses' health
A17 Stables, including those with rubber matting, should have sufficient clean bedding to ensure comfort of the horse	✓		✓	A17 - A18 Rubber matting should be secure and cover the flooring area with no gaps between the edges. Bedding provided must be clean and positioned to encourage lying down and enabling the horse to stale. The bedding area should be large enough that should the horse need to roll, the entire body should be able to remain on the bedding. For example, only positioning bedding in a corner of a stable may restrict access to staling (urination) and limit 'soak-up' of urine. E.g. https://www.bhs.org.uk/horse-care-and-welfare/health-care-management/stable-management-and-bedding/bedding-types/
A18 Where any accommodation is used for a short period, for example during the day between lessons, there needs to be sufficient bedding to encourage the horse to stale	✓		✓	

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A19 The feed room, storage areas and utensils, buckets etc need to be dry, clean and tidy with vermin proof storage and a legible up to date feed chart detailing individual horse diets	✓			A19 Although ideally a separate feed room or area, the main thing is that it shouldn't be accessible to horses should one escape and feel hungry!
A20 An equine first aid kit that as a minimum meets emergency cover, e.g. bandages, sterile dressings, thermometer	✓			A20 For example, if kept in a feed room for convenience, they should be in a lockable cupboard / draw and clearly labelled regarding which horse
A21 Prescription Only Meds (POM's) should be kept in a restricted area or lockable provision with a nominated person responsible for administration	✓		✓	A21 Ideally with a list of contents and someone nominated as being responsible for checking all are up to date

Riding Centre - Client Experience



Overall Expectation:

Visual evidence of high standards of horse care, being suitably matched with a happy healthy horse or pony combined with a safe well delivered session and a genuine ethos of good customer care, all contribute to a positive experience for clients. From clear signage and directions about where to go on initial arrival at a centre or advising clients about any restricted areas, combined with friendly and welcoming staff, all serve to enhance the first impression into being a positive and welcome experience.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A1 Centres should be clean and tidy, creating a good impression through making sure there are no hazards or unnecessary clutter or rubbish that looks unsightly	✓			A1 Elderly premises are fine as long as they are well maintained and fit for purpose. Keeping all areas clean and tidy.
A2 Friendly staff with the confidence to acknowledge and welcome clients / visitors	✓			A2 For example, do they offer a 'hello' and enquire if help is needed?
A3 There are clean toilets with handwashing facilities	✓			A3 Are regular checks in place to ensure such amenities remain accessible and fit for purpose?
A4 All client communications are compliant with data protection requirements			✓	A4 Do you have a privacy policy or data protection policy that explains how you manage client data or is help needed? Guidance and a Template available
A5 Alongside registration forms being in place for all riders, an initial assessment upon riding ability should be undertaken and recorded for all new riders. Registration forms should contain as minimum, the rider emergency information and contacts	✓		✓	A5 An essential protection for all riding schools. These records should be data compliant, kept securely at all times and be regularly updated. Guidance and a Template available

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A6 All riders should wear hats that meet the current British safety standards. Where a Centre provides hats they must be fit for use with documented safety checks. Hat Standards poster display is recommended	✓		✓	A6 Hats should be clean and meet BHS standards with a schedule for replacement https://www.bhs.org.uk/go-riding/riding-out-hacking/what-to-wear/hats-and-helmets/ for advice or poster to display
A7 Where used, the Centre website and any social media platforms, such as Facebook, are accurate and up to date	✓		✓	A7 Check to see when your last update was done. Does it accurately represent you with up-to-date prices and event details
A8 The Centre price list is current and supported with a clear cancellation policy / statement			✓	A8 Having a visible and clear cancellation policy helps managing client expectations Guidance and Template available
A9 Clearly visible, legible Fire Drill Procedures are in place	✓		✓	A9 For example, what to do in the event of a fire, emergency signage and meeting points etc.
A10 Fire drills are undertaken on a regular basis, as a minimum, every year	✓		✓	A10 It's a legal requirement for any business to undertake and record the date of when fire drills are undertaken - https://www.bhs.org.uk/search/?query=fire+safety .

Riding Centre - Coaching Standards



Overall Expectation:

Centres that can provide riding lessons that offer clients quality coaching and tuition on well cared for horses and ponies in a safe and inclusive learning environment, are pivotal to the longevity and success of a riding school. Horses and ponies should be schooled, experienced, fit and able to meet the needs of their intended range of riders. Supported by appropriately experienced Coaches, the format of the session, whether group, semi or a private lesson, should maintain and develop the riding experience for all clients in an enjoyable, informative and safe environment. Lessons should have access to secure (fenced) arenas that are a minimum of 20x40m in dimension with a surface that is level and well maintained to limit dust.

During an Approved Centre inspection visit, the Approved Centre inspector will need to observe regular client lesson(s) and be able to provide feedback on the session(s) seen.

Centres who have a minimum of a BHS Stage 3 Complete Coach at all times teaching takes place can access a wider range of recreational or professional products to offer their clients - speak with your Business Support Manager to find out more!

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
<p>A1 At all times teaching is taking pace, as a minimum requirement, there should be a member of staff on site who has both of the following qualifications, or their equivalent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHS Stage 3 Care and Lunge • BHS Stage 2 Teach 		✓	✓	A1 This can be evidenced through submission of the staffing list and certificate copies if required. If uncertain about equivalency through other equine regulated qualifications at L3 or industry experience then please contact us
<p>A2 At all times teaching is taking place, there should be a First Aid qualified member of staff on site, as agreed with the agreement of the relevant Local Authority responsible for the issue of the 'Hiring out of Horses' License to operate</p>		✓	✓	A2 This can be evidenced through submission (and regular updating) of the staffing list and certificate copies if required
<p>A3 Only horses / ponies listed for use on the Local Authority License are used for sessions</p>			✓	A3 Supported by the Riding School License list and the Centre's own list

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A4 The quality of instruction meets the standard for BHS Approval using the 'Lesson Assessment' criteria	✓			A4 A copy of the lesson assessment criteria is at the end of this document Session(s) will be assessed at the Centre inspection
A5 Sessions are inclusive and structured to encourage progression throughout the lesson	✓			
A6 The range of horses and ponies are risk assessed and suitable for use in sessions and are compatible for their riders	✓		✓	A6-A8 Written risk assessments are required as part of the Working Practice assessment and should be available should the inspector request to view them. Guidance and templates are available
A7 The Centre has (generic) written risk assessments for their lessons that are shared with coaches	✓		✓	
A8 Where sessions occur outside of the arena(s), for example in a field or onsite such as farm tracks, a generic written risk assessment will be needed	✓		✓	
A9 Arenas should ideally be a minimum of 20x40m	✓			A9 Arena size should be adequate for activities taking place but a minimum 20x40m should be in place where centres wish to facilitate BHS assessments

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
<p>A10 Arena(s) should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A gateway / entrance wide enough for safe entry and exit of horses, that allows vehicle access for both maintenance and in case of emergency b. A level arena surface, with equipment in place to ensure regular maintenance of the surface occurs c. Working drainage to support the surface and enable use throughout the year d. A surface free from excessive dust or an effective watering system to minimise dust 	✓		✓	
<p>A11 Where fenced in, the perimeter fencing on an outdoor arena should be safely constructed</p>	✓		✓	<p>A11 Smooth surfaced materials, such as wooden rails or arena walls at height compatible to use, as a guide minimum 4ft 6 / 1.4m</p>
<p>A12 Where a covered arena is fitted with kicking boards, these should have a smooth surface and be free from sharp edges / holes</p>			✓	<p>A12 Ideally there should be no protrusions inside or into an arena, any unavoidable (non-removable) protrusions should be padded to minimise risk of injury</p>
<p>A13 Any spectator viewing areas with a glass frontage should feature safety glass in their construction.</p>			✓	
<p>A14 If any arena mirrors are in place, they should be safely positioned and fitted in accordance to the manufacturers advice.</p>			✓	

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A15 Any arena equipment, such as jump wings, poles etc when not in use are safely stored	✓		✓	A15 This would be an agreed location, adhered to by all to minimise risk from clutter etc and to enable full use of arena by other users
A16 Where a Centre provides equipment for client use, there are; a. Arena letter / markers b. Mounting block(s) c. Safe jump poles / stands d. Safety cups	✓		✓	A16 This would be relevant to the Centre, but where jumps are used with back rails on jump stands, then safety cups should be provided for use
A17 Prior to riding out, for new clients, an initial assessment of rider ability is undertaken by the Centre coach to ensure compatibility of both horse and rider	✓		✓	A17 Where riders regularly ride at a Centre, their riding ability is already known, hence this would only be a requirement for new clients
A18 All riders to wear correctly fitted PPE, for example a riding hat to current standards, footwear suitable in design for riding or adaption to stirrups, such as the use of 'toe stoppers' to reduce risk of entrapment of a boot / shoe	✓		✓	A18 Information upon the correct current Hat Standards is available in Working Practices assessment https://www.bhs.org.uk/go-riding/riding-out-hacking/what-to-wear/hats-and-helmets/
For Centres that include use of jumps whether natural features or 'Cross Country ' fences as part of their provision, supported by a written risk assessment for use, all fences and ground surfaces must be safely constructed and well maintained. Risk assessment should include as minimum use of PPE, correct flagging of 'one-way' fences and route maps indicating access points for emergency use			✓	All fences must be securely fixed to the ground with take -off and landing areas free from poaching and rough or stony areas. Use of portable fences compliant with British Eventing guidance

Riding Centre - Hacking and Riding Out



Overall Expectation:

The offer of hacking and riding outside of the arena environment should be an enjoyable and safe experience for both clients and horses. Centres should be able to evidence the safe practices they have in place to make this a supervised and enjoyable experience. This should be achieved through ensuring their provision is well organised, with appropriate matching of horses and riders, advance knowledge and understanding of proposed routes and supervision by competent and experienced staff throughout. Access to safe and enjoyable off-road hacking is considered a premium and a high priority for many riders. After initial approval, where a Centre can offer direct access (with minimal roadwork) to quality hacking routes then the allocated grade for this area will be considered for higher standards providing the below criteria for approval can be met.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A1 Prior to riding out, for new clients, an initial assessment of rider ability is undertaken by the Centre coach to ensure compatibility of both horse and rider	✓		✓	A1 Where riders regularly ride at a Centre, their riding ability is already known, hence this would only be a requirement for new clients
A2 For staff taking out rides a. The member of staff nominated as Rider Leader should have, Stage 2 Complete Coach or above or level two rider leader or above. b. Supporting staff should have BHS Ride Safe Silver Challenge Award (or BHS Riding and Road Safety) as well as Centre training and induction	✓	✓	✓	A2 a. This information would be provided on the previously submitted staffing list, alongside other qualifications etc b. This information would have been provided on the previously submitted staffing list.
A3 For staff undertaking a supervisory role as either Ride Leader or Ride Support, there should be a Centre specific induction training and assessment by a member of senior staff who is ideally, as a minimum, a BHS Stage Two Coach in Complete Horsemanship, a holder of the Equine Tourism(ETQ) Level Three, or an Equine Tourism Manager (ETM)	✓	✓	✓	A3 Assessment of competence should be supported by a training logbook. Guidance and template are available. Please contact us to discuss equivalency of other equine qualifications held

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A4 The Ride Leader must have a first aid qualification and carry with them a portable first aid kit	✓		✓	A4 This information would be provided on the previously submitted staffing list
A5 Centres provide risk assessments upon routes to Ride Leaders in advance	✓		✓	A5 This area is also covered in the assessment of Working Practices
A6 The Ride Leader and / or Ride Support should carry with them a mobile phone (with good signal access) for use in emergencies	✓		✓	A6 It is recommended that use of 'what3words' is considered to help with identifying location of the ride
A7 The use of Hi-Viz equipment is strongly recommended when hacking out: This ensures that riders can be seen by helicopters and other road users etc in the incident of a fall	✓		✓	A7 It is recommended that where possible, Hi-Viz and ID tags are also placed on horses, should one become loose
A8 All riders to wear correctly fitted PPE, for example a riding hat to current standards, footwear suitable in design for riding or adaption to stirrups, such as the use of 'toe stoppers' to reduce risk of entrapment of a boot / shoe	✓		✓	A8 Information upon the correct current Hat Standards is available in Working Practices assessment https://www.bhs.org.uk/go-riding/riding-out-hacking/what-to-wear/hats-and-helmets/

Riding Centre - Tack and Equipment



Overall Expectation:

A tack room that is dry, secure and tidy with adequate light and space to safely clean and store tack and associated equipment, will help in maintaining equipment in a safe and useable condition.

There should be room for saddle racks and bridle hooks to enable safe storage and a regular safety inspection process for cleaning and repairing all tack and associated equipment e.g. numnahs and girths.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A1 Secure and sufficient tack / equipment storage with safe saddle and bridle racks	✓			A1-A2 Saddles and bridles should be stored on their own stands / racks with labelling to avoid risk of incorrect tack being used
A2 There is a system for identification or labelling of tack	✓		✓	
A3 Saddlery and tack must fit correctly, be safe, clean and well maintained with recorded checks for adjustment being made as required e.g. seasonal or other	✓		✓	A3 Correct check for fit undertaken by experienced person to maintain horses' comfort. As minimum, bits rinsed between use etc. The inspector will ask to sample a range of horses tacked up
A4 A record is kept to evidence regular safety inspections upon tack	✓			A4 Proactive safety checks are recorded e.g. stirrups, girths, reins etc, this could be a list or in your yard diary
A5 Associated equipment, such as boots, rugs etc are tidily stored in the dry with minimal risk of creating obstructive clutter	✓			

Riding Centre - Grassland and Turnout



Overall Expectation:

Access to turnout or grazing on well-maintained grassland is often considered premium at many equestrian centres. Such restrictions may exist due to the location and accessibility to suitable land or seasonal influences such as inclement weather and effectiveness of soil drainage. Safe and secure turnout or grassland with access to water and shelter and an effective management programme forms the basis of assessment for BHS Approval. This assessment also includes seasonal grazing, alternative grazing such as track system, and turn out that may be off site from the Centre. Turnout areas can include use of all-weather surfaced arenas that have been provided to allow for situations when access to grassland is restricted.

Utilising their knowledge upon individual horses when determining either herd / group or individual turnout situations, Centres should manage an appropriate schedule or rota system for access to their grassland and turnout.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A1 All boundary and divisional fencing should be safe, in a good state of repair and well maintained	✓		✓	A1 Fencing materials can be found as an appendix at the end of the criteria
A2 Grazing / turnout areas should be safe and easily accessible with secure field gates and easy access / egress	✓		✓	A2 For example, do gates easily open / close and is there provision of a 'walk through' if needed
A3 There is safe access to a continual supply of clean water	✓		✓	A3 For example, ground conditions don't prohibit safe access for horses or people
A4 Where water supply is reliant upon natural sources, such as springs or streams, there should be checks and alternative supply arrangements in place for: a. Pollution risk b. Low water levels c. Ease of access d. Ensuring horses cannot wander / escape fields	✓		✓	

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A5 The grazing / turnout area is well maintained with a system for management of droppings	✓		✓	A5 For example, dropping removal or harrowing with rest periods for grazing areas
A6 An effective plan for ongoing maintenance of fields with systems in place to promote pasture quality, such as removal of weeds, poisonous plants or dangerous objects	✓		✓	A6 For example, the risk of over-grazing or a 'horse-sick' appearance to fields is minimal. For information upon poisonous plants https://www.bhs.org.uk/horse-care-and-welfare/health-care-management/pasture-management/poisonous-plants/
A7 Paddocks / turnout area to be relevant to requirement e.g. allowing safe stocking ratios for either grazing or turn out	✓		✓	A7 At your inspection, you'll be able to explain how you manage your grazing and turn out system
A8 Horses should have access to natural shelter appropriate to any seasonal conditions whether extreme heat or rain	✓		✓	A8 Access to shelter should consider factors such as duration of turnout and companionship

Riding Centre - Safeguarding



Overall Expectation:

A key benefit of BHS Approved Centres is their understanding and support for applying best practice principles for Safeguarding in equestrianism. Not only does this offer assurance and protection for Proprietors, their employees and clients alike, it also promotes an inclusive approach through promotion of safety and well-being of all groups at a BHS Approved Centre.

All BHS Approved Centres which have children attending their Centre are required to comply with the BHS Safeguarding policy as a pre-requisite for such Centres to join the scheme. This involves nominating a Centre Safeguarding Officer (CSO) who is the person within the Centre who has competence, currency and authority to ensure adherence to the Safeguarding policy.

Centres who do not have any children attending their premises would need to submit our supplied self-declaration to this effect.

The BHS Approved Centre Business Support Team can help to advise and support Centres through provision of all relevant guidance and information that they may need.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
<p>A1 The Centre Proprietor, or a delegated person, is responsible for ensuring that all required Criminal Record checks have taken place on staff and volunteers.</p> <p>a. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland checks are legally required on all individuals who work or volunteer in 'regulated activity'</p> <p>b. In Scotland they are required on all individuals who are in 'regulated work'</p> <p>c. In Ireland checks are required when working with children and vulnerable adults. The process in Ireland is called Garda Vetting</p>		✓	✓	<p>A1 For further information please visit our website at https://www.bhs.org.uk/about-us/how-we-operate/our-policies/criminal-records-checks/</p>

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A2 There should be at least one trained staff member appointed as the Centre Safeguarding Officer (CSO) responsible for child and adult welfare. Their contact details must be displayed at a central point that is accessible to all staff and clients. Centres to inform BHS office should the nominated CSO change		✓	✓	
A3 The Centre Safeguarding Officer (CSO) must have attended either a BHS Safeguarding for Equestrians workshop or equivalent BEF Member Body Safeguarding workshop or UK Coaching Safeguarding workshop and has this updated every three years*		✓	✓	A3 Here is the link to provide you with further information upon how to access courses throughout the UK and Ireland https://www.bhs.org.uk/careers-recreational-awards/continuing-professional-development/safeguarding-courses/ *Accredited prior learning is considered - please contact safeguarding@bhs.org.uk for further information
A4 The Centre should implement a Centre Safeguarding policy which is reviewed regularly and shared with staff and volunteers			✓	A4 For Centres that do not have their own, a template BHS Safeguarding policy is available for Centres to use
A5 There is a clear policy regarding the care and supervision of Under 18's when at the Centre. If there are no Under 18's permitted at the Centre completion of a declaration form is required		✓	✓	A5 Where no Under 18's attend the Centre, we can supply a a Centre Safeguarding declaration form
A6 The Centre must agree to report any Safeguarding concerns to the necessary organisations as detailed in the BHS reporting booklet and threshold document			✓	A6 Follow the below link to access https://www.bhs.org.uk/about-us/how-we-operate/our-policies/safeguarding/

Riding Centre - Working Practice



Overall Expectation:

This assessment area requires Centres to have been operational for a minimum of 12 months and to be registered as either a Sole Trader, Partnership, a Ltd Company, Charity, or Community Interest Company (CIC). Compliance with legislative requirements to operate a business and applying best practice principles within any equestrian setting, offer assurance and protection for Proprietors, their employees, volunteers, visitors and clients alike. Centres will need to meet a combination of legislative requirements with requests for documentary evidence of policies (statements) where needed. Where shortfall in any policy requirements may exist, such as for a new Centre applying for approval, then BHS guidance and templates can be provided through the Approved Centres Business Support Team. A registered business with a clear management and communications structure for all involved will not only enhance further opportunities for the business, but importantly provide assurance to their clients.

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A1 Centre will need to have a. A current Local Authority Riding School Licence b. Current Public Liability / Employers insurance	✓	✓		Many insurance companies will consider premium discounts for Centres that are BHS Approved. Whilst we would recommend a minimum of coverage for £5 million, the minimum cover to be agreed with the local authority responsible for licensing. Inclusion of Care Custody and Control is recommended where horses are also kept at livery
A2 Centres will need to have and implement the following policies / plans: a. Health and Safety b. Safeguarding policy (Centre based or BHS) c. An emergency plan that includes coverage for the evacuation for staff, volunteers, clients and horses	✓		✓	A2 Where a Centre may not have such policies, BHS templates can be provided for Centres to adapt for their use

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
<p>A3 Centres will need to have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. First Aid coverage (qualified staff) b. First Aid kit(s) to be available at all times www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid c. An accident reporting procedure, including how and when to report to RIDDOR 	✓		✓	<p>A3 Coverage for First Aid needs to include reporting of accidents and be relevant to the size of a Centre and its activities, such as portable First Aid kits for riding out. Requirement for coverage for First Aid qualifications for staff to be agreed with the Local Licensing</p>
<p>A4 The below minimum risk assessments should be in place</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Horse / pony suitability regarding handling and ridden use b. Activities within the Centre, for example lesson(s) / hacking and other activities 	✓		✓	<p>Written risk assessments should ideally be updated on a yearly basis or sooner should need arise, such as a change is working practice</p>
<p>A5 Siting of the muck heap, storage and removal should not contaminate waterways</p>	✓		✓	<p>A5 Environmental legislation may differ within each Nation, regarding construction and siting, for some areas this may need to be on a concrete base</p>
<p>A6 The Centre should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adhere to all legal requirements for employment of staff, such as supply of job descriptions / employment contracts and meet minimum / living wage obligations for all employed staff b. Supply contracts for trainees / work-based apprentices c. Have an induction procedure for staff, including a staff handbook d. Ensure that any staff rest area / room is warm, clean and tidy 	✓		✓	<p>A6 Support in this area is available through scheme membership through Law Assure contact your Business Support Manager for further guidance if needed and we can help get this in place</p>
<p>A7 There should be CPD and on-going training available for all staff and as appropriate, volunteers</p>			✓	<p>A7 This supports LA licencing requirements. Templates are available for use</p>

Criteria for BHS Approval Approved	Inspection Visit	Submit Online	Self Declaration	Preparation Notes
A8 For Centres offering residential accommodation for staff / students all accommodation should meet LA requirements			✓	A8 If in doubt, then check with your LA regarding and additional licensing requirements, for example, food hygiene certification or HMO (Houses of Multiple Occupancy)
A9 A written complaints procedure is either on display or on the Centre website	✓		✓	A9 Should a client be dissatisfied, is there a clear process to follow, for example, who should they raise it with etc. Templates are available if needed
A10 We would advise that centres also have the following policies or procedures in place 1. Data protection / Privacy policy 2. Use of Social Media policy	✓		✓	A10 For any centre wishing to be considered as Highly Commended in this area at a later stage, these policies will need to be in place and submitted to approvedcentres@bhs.org.uk We have templates available
A11 We would advise that centres also have the following additional written risk assessments in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COSHH (control of substances hazardous to health) risk assessment • Manual handling and horse care duties (including non routine) • Staff use of equipment, e.g. clippers, solarium, horse walker, arena leveller etc • Areas of the business that are accessed by staff / clients, for example stable yard, arena and reception / office areas • Facilities provided by the Centre for client use, such as the arena, show jumps and XC fences are risk assessed for suitability of use 	✓		✓	A11 For any centre wishing to be considered as Highly Commended in this area at a later stage, these will need to be in place and submitted to approvedcentres@bhs.org.uk We have templates and guidance available

Riding Centre - Lesson Assessment Appendix

Overall Expectation:

Provision of quality riding lessons on appropriately schooled horses and ponies is at the core of the BHS Approved Centre Scheme.

The assessment of riding lesson and the quality of the teaching and coaching is a key element of the inspection process. Consistency in high standards of horse welfare, safely delivered instruction and coaching should apply to every session across all levels of a centres provision, from a child or adults first experience through to clients who are pursuing formal career or competitive achievement.

Horses or ponies should be matched to the rider attributes and experience levels, the session content in terms of experience and ability with neither horse or rider being expected to perform at levels detrimental to fitness or capability. The ability and experience of the coach should enhance the experience, learning and enjoyment for the rider and the benefit of the horses and ponies in use.

Throughout the sessions, coaches should be able to recognise rider's ability, manage expectations and ambitions to encourage progression to an agreed target (goal), whether within a group or individual setting.

Targets or goals can be many and varied, from simple engagement in an enjoyable activity such as weekly clients maintaining positional balance when learning to canter, through to an individuals ambition achievements, for example, meeting the needs or those who wish to progress through a professional career route, such as the BHS Career Pathway or towards a competitive discipline.

Criteria for BHS Approval - Inspector will observe criteria during visit

A1 Lessons observed are shown on a daily plan that recognises and takes into account of the individuals allocated workload for the horses and ponies

A2 The coach delivering the lesson has an appropriate qualification and experience or is supervised by someone with an appropriate qualification to support such trainee instructors

A3 Horses and ponies are clean, groomed appropriately and well presented for the session

A4 Horses and ponies are wearing saddlery that fits

A5 There is safe supervision for the level of the rider ability and spectators whilst horses and ponies are taken to the school or mounting area

Criteria for BHS Approval - Inspector will observe criteria during visit

A6 Where leaders / assistants are used, they have been assessed through induction as being competent to lead, and wear correct PPE for the activity

A7 The riders are mounted on horses of a suitable height and type

A8 Riders to wear the correct PPE for the activity, e.g. hats, boots, gloves and body protectors as required

A9 The aims of the session are clearly stated and discussed and explained with rider agreement

A10 The format of the lesson is safe, relevant to the ability of the riders and shows clear understanding of the level of the horses and riders' fitness

A11 The horses / ponies used are suitable for the level and content of the session

A12 The content of the session is safely delivered

A13 The coach clearly strives to aid improvement by raising the skill level and enhancing the understanding of the riders in a safe enjoyable environment

A14 The coach uses a variety of communication skills. (voice, tone, body language, varied vocabulary), in a timely and effective manner, thus promoting rider interaction and enjoyment

A15 The coach / other staff member or proprietor are clearly able to discuss the strategies employed by the Centre to maintain and develop the horses training and way of going

Riding Centre - Grassland and Turnout Appendix

Acceptable Types of Fencing Materials

Wooden post and rails

- a. Minimum two rails at height suitable to deter and minimise escape risk

Hedging

- a. Non-poisonous variety that is sufficiently established in growth to ensure all year security. Addition of other fencing to support security as required

Stock fencing

- a. If as divisional fences, it is recommended that off-set electric fencing should be used
- b. If as boundary fencing alongside hedging

Horse safe netting

- a. Must be constructed the correct way up (smaller holes lower down) with additional supplementary fencing, such as top rail provision to enhance security and viability

Plain wire

- a. If used as a divisional fencing visibility for the horse(s) must be maintained, for example use of ribbon / visibility strips
- b. If used as an electrified divisional fencing then single strand (with ribbon / visibility strips)

Barbed wire

- a. There should be evidence of mixed grazing e.g. cattle and or sheep, or the grazing lands should be grazed by livestock at other times of the year which necessitates the need for such fencing
- b. Where there is no mixed grazing e.g. horses only, the barbed wire should ideally be removed or an inner fencing should be used to prevent horse access
- c. Barbed wire should not be used in any field divisional arrangement
- d. Only be permitted in a boundary fence in conjunction with stock netting closely bordered by a hedge that provides sufficient boundary to the field or an inner fence should be used to prevent horse access
- e. Both fencing and hedge should be in good repair with no loose wire

Electric fencing

- a. Supplied from the main electricity supply. Wooden posts providing permanency to the structure. Minimum two strands (either tape or cord or flexi construction) and differentiated in height
- b. Temporary (battery / solar supply) electric tape / rope (with plastic posts). Recommended for use in divisional sectioning of fields, not sole boundary fencing

Iron Railings

- a. For example, situated in parklands setting where there would be a minimum of two horizontal railings with no upright protrusions, such as flat top parkland railings, and set at differentiated heights to deter and minimise risk of escape

Stone Walls

- a. Well maintained at sufficient height and reinforced with safe fencing as needed