

Stage 1

Stage 1 is the entry level assessment into the professional career pathways for grooms, professional riders and coaches.

Stage 1

The maximum number of complete spaces can be:

No. of spaces	Assessment format
12	6xAM, 6xPM
6	3xAM 3xPM or 3 care, 6 ride, 3 care

Centres should be aware that there may be more candidates attending than there are complete spaces available, completing re-sits or sections only (e.g. care only); so please ensure you have adequate parking to accommodate this. We will send assessors in a ratio of 1 assessor to 3 candidates; always including a nominated Lead Assessor. If there is anybody else attending e.g. Internal Quality Assurer or observer, we will usually let you know in writing 2-3 weeks before the assessment day.

What we need from you:

1. A single point of contact who takes responsibility for the organisation of all assessment days. This person needs to be available to discuss requirements with the Education Team and the Lead Assessor prior to and during the assessment days. A direct contact number should also be available in an emergency, i.e. in the event of any unforeseen circumstances on or just before the day.
2. A person in the yard responsible for ensuring all horses and equipment are ready on time (according to the programme). This person needs to be available all day during the assessments, should the assessors or candidates have any questions or require additional equipment/change of horses.
3. A room at a comfortable temperature with table and seats where assessors can meet and confer in private.
4. A waiting room at a comfortable temperature for candidates with adequate seating and pens to fill in the emergency form. Please do make candidates feel at home as they may be nervous.
5. Appropriate signage for candidates to find the Centre, facilities (incl. toilets) and waiting/briefing room. Signs should be hung stating 'Quiet please, assessment in progress, no filming or photography'.
7. Seating facilities for assessors and/or candidates in all phases, as they may be needed.
8. A caller for the riding section, to give instructions. Callers should hold the BHS Stage 3 Coach in Complete Horsemanship (previously BHSAI) as a minimum or be working at an equivalent level. We would recommend they are not the point of contact being used for the day. Guidelines are provided at the end of this document.
9. Suitable light refreshments throughout the day. Assessors may request lunch but this is chargeable to them directly if provided.
10. A First Aid kit. Where the riding is not in close proximity to the yard, a First Aid kit must be taken to the riding area. A means of communication also needs to be supplied (mobile phone or two-way radio).
11. A safeguarding representative who is available on site throughout the assessment. This person must be available to introduce to candidates during the briefing.
12. All horses and tack used in BHS assessments should be clean and well-presented. To view our assessment criteria please refer to the website, www.bhs.org.uk.

Safeguarding and Health & Safety

Please note the minimum age for this assessment is 13 years old. British Horse Society follows strict Safeguarding policies which protect children under 18 years and adults at risk. Sign out sheets and emergency contact details will be managed by the Assessors.

Assessment Day

The assessment day is split into two care sections and a riding section and the programme usually allows the same horses (where appropriate) to be used for both the care and the riding sections. The assessment day should be carried out like a normal working day, so candidates will be carrying out tasks in the relevant environment.

The Stage 1 Care and Ride assessment day has been designed not to interfere with the day to day running of your Centre, so please do continue to run lessons and business as usual where staffing levels allow.

Please ensure that, while sufficient staff are present on the yard to assist with the assessment, there are not extra observers who may cause the candidates to feel under pressure. Spectators are not permitted. Where a member of staff needs to be present during the riding section, please ensure that they are not seen to be in conversation with the assessors, as this may be perceived by candidates as giving internal candidates an unfair advantage.

In the interest of candidates, no photography or filming of any section of an assessment is permitted (excluding CCTV for security or insurance purposes).

When liaising with the assessing team before, during or after the assessment day, please do not discuss the performance of candidates with them, as this may be perceived as an attempt to influence their decisions.

Example timetables

6 Max timetable (1 assessor) 3 x AM, 3 x PM:

Time Start	Time End	Activity	Candidate
8.30	8.45	Briefing	Up to 3 candidates
8.45	10.00	Care A	Up to 3 candidates
10.00	10.40	Care B	Up to 3 candidates
10.40	11.00	Break	
11.00	12.00	Ride	Up to 3 candidates
12.00	12.45	Lunch	
12.45	13.00	Briefing	Up to 3 candidates
13.00	14.00	Ride	Up to 3 candidates
14.15	15.30	Care A	Up to 3 candidates
15.30	16.10	Care B	Up to 3 candidates

6 Max timetable (1 assessor) 3-6-3 model:

Time Start	Time End	Activity	Candidate
8.30	8.45	Briefing	Up to 3 candidates
8.45	10.00	Care A	Up to 3 candidates
10.00	10.40	Care B	Up to 3 candidates
10.40	11.00	Break	
11.00	11.15	Briefing	Up to 3 candidates
11.15	12.15	Ride	Up to 6 candidates
12.15	12.45	Lunch	
12.45	14.00	Care A	Up to 3 candidates
14.00	14.40	Care B	Up to 3 candidates

12 Max timetable (2 assessors)

Time Start	Time End	Activity	Candidate
8.30	8.45	Briefing	Up to 6 candidates
8.45	10.00	Care A	Up to 6 candidates
10.00	10.40	Care B	Up to 6 candidates
10.40	11.00	Break	
11.00	12.00	Ride	Up to 6 candidates
12.00	13.00	Lunch	
13.00	13.15	Briefing	Up to 6 candidates
13.15	14.15	Ride	Up to 6 candidates
14.30	15.45	Care A	Up to 6 candidates
15.45	16.25	Care B	Up to 6 candidates

Centres will be allocated a member of staff from the Education Team to liaise with in preparation for the assessment day. Please ensure you notify your contact person of any special requirements that should be considered when timetabling.

Care A

In this section candidates will be asked to muck out, groom, describe horse behaviour and identify points of the horse and use rugs.

Mucking Out

- Six (12 candidate timetable) or three (6 candidate timetables) quiet horses each with a correctly fitted headcollar - in stables not yet mucked out, ideally next to each other (they do not need to be used for the whole care section).
- Candidates will be expecting to muck out a shavings, straw, flax/hemp or paper type bed - not deep litter.
- Mucking out tools and wheelbarrow are required for each candidate (enough for one per candidate)
- Buckets, sponges or brush for cleaning automatic drinkers (if applicable).

Grooming, rugs and horse behaviour

- One horse per candidate is needed in this section - maximum six (12 candidate) or three (6 candidate timetables) horses needed, preferably in adjoining stables - they can be different horses used for the mucking out or riding section.
- Each horse requires a correctly fitted headcollar and lead rope, with suitable tie ring and string in each stable.
- Equipment needs to be set up on a table, bales or saddle racks in a covered area close to the stables to allow the candidates to select equipment easily. The equipment used must fit the horses provided.
- Equipment needed:
Six (12 candidate timetable) or three (6 candidate timetable) grooming kits with the following items included:
 - Body brush
 - Dandy brush
 - Flick Brush
 - Rubber curry comb
 - Plastic curry comb
 - Metal curry comb
 - Water brush
 - Hoof pick
 - Sponges (eyes, nose and dock)
 - Face brush
 - Mane comb
 - Mane and tail brush
- One correctly fitted rug per horse with cross over belly straps and leg straps (can be any type of rug).
- Examples of turn out, stable, cooler and fly rugs (one of each) for candidates to discuss
- Each group of stables needs to have a skip and tools nearby for removing droppings, so assessors can observe candidates easily.
- Where horses will be standing in stables for a considerable length of time, please ensure there is sufficient bedding down to encourage them to stale.

Care B

In this section candidates will be asked to tack and untack a horse, lead a horse in walk and trot, and discuss feeding and watering a horse.

Tacking up and handling the horse

- Access to a safe, level trot up area
- Six (12 candidate timetable) or three (6 candidate timetables) quiet horses with their own tack preferably in adjacent stables; with a tie up ring and string attached (the horses do not have to be same as the ones used for Care A or riding). Horses must be suitable for candidates to lead in walk and trot in a bridle.
- Where horses will be standing in stables for a considerable length of time, please ensure there is sufficient bedding down to encourage them to stale.
- Tack needed (to fit the horses provided):
 - Snaffle bridle (with ideally a cavesson noseband but can also be a flash or drop if not available).
 - GP Saddle and correctly fitting girth.
 - Running Martingale (not a breastplate with martingale attachment).
 - One pair of brushing boots per horse.
 - Headcollar and lead rope.
- One set of tack cleaning equipment per candidate (maximum six) in an area near to the feed room, (with a table or hook):
 - Sponges
 - Water (preferably access to warm water)
 - Saddle soap
- Maximum of six (12 candidate timetable) or three (6 candidate timetables) bridles for cleaning. The bridles need to be supple and can be easily undone at the buckles and billets.

Feeding

This section should be delivered in the feed room or an area with access to feed in bins or feed samples (ideally presented in buckets and not small jars). Samples should include:

- Coarse mix (can include more than one type)
- Cubes
- Chaff/Alfalfa
- Sugar beet (soaked and unsoaked)
- Balancers
- Hay
- Haylage

Samples of straights such as oats or barley are not required.

Area to fill, weigh and tie up a haynet, (preferably near to the feed room).

- Six (12 candidate timetable) or three (6 candidate timetables) unfilled haynets, access to hay and a spring balance.
- Somewhere suitable to tie up a haynet.

Riding

In this section, candidates will be asked to mount/dismount and ride under supervision in walk, trot and canter. They will ride in walk and trot over ground poles.

The riding section is designed to allow normal day to day lessons and activities to carry on, as the arena is only needed for 1 hour per riding group of 3/6 candidates. The arena should be no less than 20x40m with correctly labelled markers. If it is wider than this, it may be helpful to section a 20x40m area off using poles or dressage boards, as this helps candidates to accurately ride school figures.

Equipment needed:

- Six ground poles
- Mounting block

One horse per candidate is needed, with two spares available who are suitably sized for the candidates (a list of candidate heights and weights is provided two weeks prior to assessment date). Each candidate will need to ride 2 horses - the assessor will direct the caller regarding when to swap horses and allocate the second horse for each candidate. Horses should be approximately 14.2hh or over and left to your discretion; however no candidate should be under-horsed. Both the centre and assessors have the right to ask for a horse to be changed at any time during the session. The same horses may be used in two sessions, providing they are suitable and fit enough to ensure candidates receive a fair assessment.

Should you have a concern regarding a riders' weight, please liaise directly with the Lead Assessor. If it is necessary to weigh a candidate; a scale must be provided in a private location.

The horses will need to be:

- Well-mannered, reliable and schooled to a reasonable standard.
- Tacked up (with clean, safe tack in good condition) and in the arena ready for the candidates to mount, with spare stirrup irons and leathers (various lengths) Or a hole punch provided for adjustments to be made. It is not acceptable to wrap stirrup leathers around the stirrup iron to shorten them.
- Able to work independently in the school in walk, trot and canter.
- Able to work over three trot poles progressing from a single pole (suggested position off the track at E or B) to a line of three (suggested position across the diagonal).

Spare stirrup irons and leathers (various lengths) must be available if needed, or a hole punch provided for adjustments to be made. It is not acceptable to wrap stirrup leathers around the stirrup iron to shorten them.

What to expect from us before the assessment

Once candidate bookings are finalised, the Education Team will email a programme of the day to you, between two to three weeks prior to the assessment date (when candidate bookings close).

What will be included in the email:

- Programme
- Candidate names (including heights and weights)
- Assessor names and Lead Assessor contact details

The Lead Assessor will be in touch regarding the assessment, to help answer questions and liaise with you about the organisation of the day. If you have not heard from them by 5 days before the assessment, please contact either the Lead Assessor

directly or the Education team at your earliest convenience. If you have any concerns or wish to make changes to the programme, please discuss this with the Lead Assessor in the first instance.

The Lead Assessor may contact you regarding a reasonable adjustment if it requires centre input, e.g. if a candidates will be bringing adapted tack or equipment.

Please ensure the black bibs provided by BHS Education are ready when the Lead Assessor arrives, so the bib names and numbers can be inserted during the briefing. Should you need more candidate bibs, please contact the Education team.

The Lead Assessor will also carry out a risk assessment of the yard, so please be on hand to help provide any information (e.g. first aid kit location).

What to do after the assessment

Following the assessment, please forward an invoice directly to the BHS either by email or in the post, to cover the facility fee costs (please refer to the purchase quote provided by the BHS Education team) within 30 days of the assessment date.

We also ask that any data you have received from the Education Team is destroyed confidentially or returned to the office for disposal in accordance with your Data Processor Agreement.

We always welcome feedback regarding our assessments; please send through any comments to education@bhs.org.uk.

How can we help you?

If at any time you need help in setting up an assessment day or any questions answered before or after the assessment you can contact:

Education Team:

education@bhs.org.uk

02476 840508

Emergency out of office hours **only** (e.g. weather conditions):

Tracy Casstles (Director of Education)

tracy.casstles@bhs.org.uk

07876 652007

Michele Carman (Head of Education)

michele.carman@bhs.org.uk

07966 215964

Stage 1 Caller Guidelines

The Caller is there to guide the candidates through the riding section of the Stage 1.

The Caller should be:

- Minimum Stage 3 Coach (BHS AI) or equivalent, experienced at working with unknown riders and controlling a group situation, where riders may need additional support and careful control.
- Not the primary point of contact on assessment day
- Dressed in a smart and practical way
- Familiar with the Centre and horses' normal way of going.
- Experienced at striding out trot poles and distances suitable for horses used on the day of the assessment.

The Caller will need to:

- Guide candidates through exercises safely confirming that they understand and are comfortable with each exercise.
- Make sure the session is run in a time efficient manner.
- Put the candidates at ease and refer to them by name.
- Encourage candidates to ask questions; whilst not being too familiar with any internal candidates.

At Stage 1 level the candidates will work mainly as a ride, completely under the direction of the Caller. Although candidates are responsible for checking and altering their own girth and stirrups, please be prepared to offer assistance, to ensure candidate safety.

During the session we suggest you position yourself so you can see the whole ride at all times, whilst remaining close enough to the assessors so they can communicate with you. Although the session is not a taught lesson you can give specific directions to a candidate if they are unsafe or their actions are likely to cause an accident.

Stride table:

Suggestion for pole set up; single pole at E or B (on the three-quarter line) with 3 poles also on the diagonal line (four poles in total).

	PONY		COB/SMALL HORSE		COMPETITION/LARGE HORSE	
Trot poles	1.22m	4ft	1.37m	4ft 6in	1.52m	5ft

If a pole is kicked out of place, please ensure the candidates have enough time to circle away so the distances can be re-measured.

To see our assessment criteria please refer to the website (www.bhs.org.uk). We recommend you are familiar with the syllabus before facilitating this session.

Example exercises:

Duration one hour to include discussion with assessor

- Ride in closed order, one horse's length between you
- Working trot rising as a ride
- Leading file in succession at A or C ride one 20m circle then go large and circle to the rear of the ride.
- Change the rein
- Lead file in succession trot, in the first corner establish canter, canter a 20m circle in a free space, then return to the rear of the ride.
- Change the rein
- Lead file in succession trot, in the next corner canter around to the rear of the ride.
- Quit and cross stirrups, ride forward to walk
- Ride forward to trot sitting
- Rear file in succession at E or B halt and then, as the ride closes up behind, take sitting trot as lead file.
- Ride in single file, a three loop serpentine from A to C
- Take back stirrups, walk then trot once around the arena
- Ride turn in onto centre line and dismount

Change horses

- Ride in closed order, one horse's length between you
- Trot as a ride
- Rear file in succession turn across the school and take leading file on the other side of the arena
- 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.

Shorten stirrups to enable work in preparation for pole work

- Ride in closed order, two to three horse's length between you
- Change the rein as a ride
- On the long side take a light seat, on the short side rising trot
- In rising trot, turn down the three-quarter line and trot over the single pole
- In trot, change the rein in rising trot over the three trotting poles on one diagonal.
- Ride over poles two to three times in a light seat
- Lead file in succession trot and canter to the rear of the ride showing some light seat in the canter
- Change the rein and repeat the same exercise if required
- Allow horses to stretch at free walk on a long rein
- Ride turn in and halt on the centre line. Riders dismount and assessors speak to candidates individually.

Centre guidance check list

Facilities

Car Park	
Meeting room for assessors	
Briefing room + sign	
Toilets + sign	
Sign per assessment area 'Assessment in progress, no filming'	
Staff on hand throughout the day	
Caller (minimum of Stage 3 Coach in Complete Horsemanship or equivalent level)	
First Aid kit	
Safeguarding representative contact details	
Form of communication (mobile phone or two-way radio)	
Seating for assessors adjacent to the arena	
Candidate black bibs	
Facilities for refreshments/meals to be provided	
Scales (to weigh riders should you need to)	

Care A

For a 12 candidate timetable, six items/horses will be required.

For a six candidate timetable, three items/horses will be required

Quiet horses (can be used in other sections)- ideally in adjoining stables	
String for tying up horses	
Head collar and lead rope to fit each horse	
Wheelbarrows	
Brooms	
Forks/shaving forks (dependent on bedding)	
Shovels	
Water buckets/automatic drinkers	
Sponges/brushes for cleaning water buckets/drinkers	
Grooming kits	
Body brushes	
Dandy brushes	
Flick brushes	
Rubber currycombs	
Plastic currycombs	
Metal currycombs	
Water brushes	
Hoof picks	
Sponges (different needed for eyes, nose, dock)	
Mane combs	
Mane/tail brushes	
Face brushes	
One rug per horse (cross over belly straps and leg straps) - fitted	
Examples of turn out rug, stable rug, cooler and fly rug	
Skip and tools (outside stables)	

Care B

For a 12 candidate timetable, six items/horses will be required.

For a six candidate timetable, three items/horses will be required

Quiet horses (can be used in other sections) - ideally in adjoining stables	
String for tying up horses	
Head collar and lead rope per horse (fitted)	
Snaffle bridles (with ideally cavesson noseband or if not flash or drop nosebands)	
GP saddles	
Running martingales (no breastplates)	
One pair of brushing boots per horse	
Hooks/table for tack cleaning	
Sponges for tack cleaning	
Two saddle soaps	
Access to warm water	
Bridles for cleaning (can be same as ones used for fitting)	
Feed bins or buckets (not small jars) containing feed:	
Coarse mix	
Cubes	
Chaff/Alfalfa	
Sugarbeet (soaked and unsoaked)	
Balancers	
Hay	
Haylage	
Tie up ring for haynets	
One spring balance to weigh haynets	
Unfilled haynets	

Riding

One horse per candidate required, please bear in mind the candidates are required to ride two horses in the session.

One arena with correctly labelled markers (minimum 20x40m)	
Horses plus two spares (minimum 14.2hh)	
Six ground poles	
One mounting block	
Leather hole punch	
Various length stirrup leathers and size irons	
Riding caller (minimum Stage 3 Coach or equivalent level)	