

Section 3: Training Horses

Dressage Pathway

The BHS Performance suite of qualifications are awarded upon achievement of relevant sections.

Section 3: Training Horses (Dressage Pathway) covers the following units:

- Unit 5: Working the Horse from the Ground
- Unit 7: Ride for Training Dressage

You will complete Section 3: Training Horses (Dressage Pathway), if you are working towards any of the following qualifications:

Performance Centre Manager with Riding

Performance Dressage Coach BHSI

The next few pages will detail the unit structure of units 5 and 7. The unit structure lists the assessment criteria you will be assessed against to achieve each unit. We strongly recommend you also read our Guidelines document (relevant to the qualification you are working towards) which also details the scope of the assessment.

Each unit is required to be achieved in one attempt, however once passed, that unit is 'banked'. Generally, Section 3: Training Horses is assessed in one day, but you can take these units on different days. Assessment dates are listed on our [website](#).

You will find our Guidelines document, plus further recommend reading, resources and links to training events on our website.

Unit Structure



Unit 5: Working the Horse from the Ground

Unit Aim

This unit aims to enable learners to demonstrate their practical skills and underpinning knowledge related to the non-ridden training and development of competition and performance horses.

Unit Introduction

This unit assumes a comprehensive understanding of terminology, concepts and techniques used in the care and training of horses.

Learning Outcome The learner will be able to:	Assessment Criteria	Guidance on the breadth of content that may be covered during assessment.	Assessment Method
1. Understand how to work horses from the ground using two reins	1.1 Evaluate the process of working horses between two reins	Process to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lungeing with two reins and long reining • Different types of long reining in different environments • Position of reins and handler Horses to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young horses • Experienced horses 	Discussion
2. Work the horse between two reins to develop its way of going	2.1 Maintain health, safety and welfare of horse, self and others at all times	Health, safety and welfare in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of schooling area • Awareness of space and other users • Horse fitness and level of education considered • Checking tack for safety • Lungeing with two reins or long reining • Use of poles (if appropriate) 	Observation
	2.2 Assess the horse's way of going	Way of going to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed observation of the horse working in walk, trot and canter • Comparison of way of going on both reins • With and without side reins (if appropriate) 	Observation and discussion
	2.3 Utilise techniques appropriate for the horse	Techniques to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling of equipment • Stance, authority • Working at relevant rhythm and tempo • Work over poles (as appropriate) to develop the way of going • Developing balance • On a circle and straight lines • Shortening and lengthening the stride • Transitions 	Observation
	2.4 Utilise a range of exercises to improve the horse's way of going	Exercises may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitions • Shortening and lengthening stride • Increasing and decreasing the size of the circle • Use of poles (as appropriate) to develop the way of going 	Observation

	2.5 Develop an effective rapport with the horse	Effective rapport to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manner with the horse • Effectiveness of aids • Control and influence over horse's way of going • Empathy with the horse's needs 	Observation
	2.6 Evaluate the effectiveness of the session	Evaluation may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on the content of session • Logical sequence and timing • Analysis of effectiveness of exercises chosen • Identify strategies to improve personal performance • Identify effective techniques used 	Discussion
	2.7 Develop a plan for progression	Plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify areas for improvement • Consider progression for future sessions for the development of the horse 	Discussion

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Unit Structure

Unit 7: Ride for Training Dressage



Unit Aim

This unit aims to enable learners to showcase their experience and skills riding and training competition and performance horses.

Unit Introduction

This unit assumes a comprehensive understanding of terminology, concepts and techniques used in the development, training, care and welfare of horses.

As part of assessment criteria 1.2, the learner can bring a logbook (of their training) or similar to the assessment. The logbook will support the learner during their analysis of the training they have delivered, and to aid discussion with the assessor. A template logbook is available to download from the BHS website: www.bhs.org.uk/pathways or the learner can supply their own log of evidence. The learner can also bring photos or videos (on your own device) s evidence to support your discussion.

Learning Outcome The learner will be able to:	Assessment Criteria	Guidance on the breadth of content that may be covered during assessment.	Assessment Method
1. Understand the progressive training of horses	1.1 Explain methods to progressively develop a horse's training	<p>As part of Unit 6: Ride for Training, training to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dressage training up to Advanced Medium Jump training up to 1.20m <p>As part of Unit 7: Ride for Training Dressage, training to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dressage training up to Advanced Medium <p>As part of Unit 8: Ride for Training Show Jumping, training to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jump training up to 1.20m <p>All, making reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and retraining Problem solving Competition training The Training Scale 	Discussion
	1.2 Analyse the progressive training of a horse	<p>Candidate to discuss a training programme with a horse they have trained over a minimum period of six months.</p> <p>Analysis to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logbook of training, or similar Goals and aims of the training programme Progression of training programme Training methods, exercises and type of work carried out Resources, equipment and assistance utilised Evaluation of the training programme Self-reflection Consideration for the welfare of horse throughout the training programme Plan for continuation of training and development of horse <p>Horse may include:</p>	Discussion / logbook (optional)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young horse for backing • Riding school horse used for training others • Competition horse (any level) • Retraining for a different discipline 	
2. Ride safely	2.1 Maintain the health, safety and welfare of horse, self and others	Health, safety and welfare to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ride with consideration for other users of the school space • Consideration of individual horses • Consideration of ground conditions 	Observation
3. Assess a horse	3.1 Evaluate the horse prior to mounting	Evaluation to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Static and dynamic conformation assessment • Condition • Musculature • Age and type • Temperament 	Discussion
	3.2 Assess the horse under saddle	As part of Unit 6: Ride for Training and Unit 8: Ride for Training Show Jumping, assessment to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the flat and over fences As part of Unit 7: Ride for Training Dressage, assessment to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the flat All, assessment to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ridden assessment on grass • All three paces • Assessment for potential use 	Observation
	3.3 Evaluate the horse	Evaluation to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe way of going in relation to the Training Scale • Balance and carriage • Level of training • Responsiveness to aids • Fitness 	Discussion
4. Ride horses up to Advanced Medium dressage to develop their way of going	Learners will be required to ride two horses in this section. One horse will be working towards this level. One horse will be more established at this level. The assessment criteria relate to both horses.		
	4.1 Ride in an influential, balanced position	Influential, balanced position to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secure balanced position whilst maintaining integrity of the aids • Riding forward to a receiving contact with rhythm and balance within a working frame appropriate to the horse's level of training • Demonstrate empathy and feel 	Observation
	4.2 Warm the horse up and evaluate way of going	A progressive evaluation with reference to the Training Scale and reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pace • Balance • Way of going with reference to conformation • Relevance of tack • Gymnastic ability • Attitude / rideability • Technique 	Observation and discussion
	4.3 Use exercises appropriately to develop the horse	Exercises may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressage movements to Advanced Medium level • Range of paces within the gait, collected to extended • Shoulder in, travers and renvers 	Observation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half pass • Walk pirouette • Single flying change • Logical progression of exercises 	
	4.4 Evaluate the session	Evaluation to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justify reasoning for the selection of the work • Effectiveness of the work 	Observation and discussion
	4.5 Plan a training schedule to develop the horse	Training schedule to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future possible work; short term (one month), medium term (six months) and long term (twelve to 24 months) • Reference to the Training Scale • Use of alternative work programmes which may include lungeing, hacking and outside work • Progression beyond Advanced Medium level work • Awareness of Fédération Equestre Internationale (FEI) and discipline specific rules and regulations 	Discussion
5. Ride a horse over show jumps up to 1.20m to develop its way of going	NOT APPLICABLE FOR THIS UNIT		
6. Ride a horse over technical cross country fences of up to 1.10m to develop its way of going	NOT APPLICABLE FOR THIS UNIT		
7. Ride a horse that is training towards Advanced level dressage to develop its way of going	7.1 Ride in an influential, balanced position	Influential, balanced position to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A secure, balanced position whilst maintaining integrity of the aids • Riding forward to a receiving contact with rhythm and balance within a working frame appropriate to the horse's level of training • Demonstrate empathy and feel 	Observation
	7.2 Warm the horse up and evaluate way of going	A progressive evaluation with reference to the Training Scale and reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pace • Balance • Way of going with reference to conformation • Relevance of tack • Gymnastic ability • Attitude / rideability • Technique 	Observation and discussion
	7.3 Use exercises appropriately to develop the horse	Exercises may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressage movements towards Advanced level • Range of paces within the gait, collected to extended • Shoulder in, travers and renvers • Half pass • Work towards canter pirouettes • Work towards tempi changes • Logical progression of exercises 	Observation

	7.4 Evaluate the session	Evaluation to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justify reasoning for the selection of the work Effectiveness of the work 	Observation and discussion
	7.5 Plan a training schedule to develop the horse	Training schedule to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future possible work; short term (one month), medium term (six months) and long term (twelve to 24 months) Reference to the Training Scale Use of alternative work programmes which may include lungeing, hacking and outside work Progression to Advanced level work Awareness of FEI and British Dressage (BD) rules and regulations 	Discussion
8. Ride a horse used for training others on the flat over poles to develop its way of going	8.1 Ride in an influential, balanced position	Influential, balanced position to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riding in a GP or jump saddle A secure, balanced position whilst maintaining integrity of the aids Demonstrate empathy and feel An influential position that has a positive effect 	Observation
	8.2 Warm the horse up and assess way of going	A progressive assessment with reference to the Training Scale and reference to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All three paces Pace Balance Way of going with reference to conformation Relevance of tack Gymnastic ability Attitude / rideability Technique 	Observation and discussion
	8.3 Use exercises appropriately to develop the horse's athletic performance	Exercises may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of poles to create a variety of floor patterns relative to the horse Raised poles, if appropriate Logical progression of exercises Athletic performance may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to influence the canter Paces, forwardness, attitude Rhythm, bend, straightness, outline Ease of movement 	Observation
	8.4 Evaluate the session	Evaluation to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paces, forwardness, attitude Rhythm, bend, straightness, outline Softer/stiffer side Ease of movement Stronger and weaker movements Response to the aids Reference to the Training Scale 	Discussion
	8.5 Plan a training schedule to develop the horse	Plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future possible work; short term (one month), medium term (six months) and long term (twelve to 24 months) Reference to the Training Scale Use of alternative work programmes which may include lungeing, hacking, gymnastic development and flatwork 	Discussion
9. Ride horses over show jumps of up to 1.25m to develop their way of going	NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS UNIT		

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