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## Assessment Centre Approval and Allocation Policy

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## Assessment centre approval and allocation policy

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2.0	All	To revise and formalise previous policy	15.05.2023

Please note: This document is uncontrolled once printed. Please check with the BHS Education Team for the most up to date version.

## 1. Introduction

The British Horse Society (BHS) is committed to ensuring consistency in assessment standards. The approval of assessment centres is crucial in maintaining quality, fairness and consistency in assessment provision.

## 2. Scope and applicability

This policy applies to:

- All BHS Career Pathway assessments, other than in-house Stage 1 assessments. This includes qualifications awarded by BHS and BHSQ.

This policy is for:

- Approved assessment centres
- BHS Approved Riding Centres who are seeking assessment centre status
- BHS employees
- Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers and Assessor Mentors
- Others as relevant

## 3. Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this policy is to clearly define the criteria and process for assessment centre approval and assessment allocation. It also defines the process for upgrading assessment centres through the BHS levels and how assessment provision at centres is monitored and terminated if necessary.

This document will:

- Define the generic criteria a centre must meet in order to become an approved assessment centre
- Inform interested parties where specific criteria for each assessment level can be accessed
- Outline the assessment centre application process
- Define the process for centres to schedule an initial assessment
- Define the process for approved assessment centres to upgrade their status
- Explain BHS's approach to assessment allocation
- Explain BHS's approach to quality assurance of Approved assessment centres
- Outline the process for removing assessment centre approval

It is useful to refer to the following documents and policies when reading this:

- Conflict of Interest
- Internal Quality Assurance
- BHS Assessment Centre Agreement
- BHS Approved Centre Criteria – Riding Schools
- Assessment Centre Guidance (all levels)

#### 4. Terms and definitions

**Approved assessment centre** is any location where a BHS assessment is taking place.

**Candidate** is anyone taking a BHS assessment.

**Assessor** is contracted to make assessment decisions at BHS assessments.

**Lead Assessor** is responsible for co-ordinating the assessment day with the Approved assessment centre, BHS Education Team and any co-assessors.

An **Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)** is contracted by the BHS to carry out internal quality assurance activities.

**Approval** is the process which confirms that a centre has the necessary equipment, facilities, horses and organisation skills required to hold an assessment at a specified level or capacity

**Allocation** is the attribution of assessment dates to an approved assessment centre

**Upgrade** refers to expanding the levels of assessment which an approved assessment centre is approved to hold.

#### 5. BHS's approach to approving assessment centres and allocating assessment dates

The BHS take a consistent and evidence-based approach to the approval and upgrading of its assessment centres. This is based on clearly defined criteria.

The aim of the BHS in the allocation of assessment dates is to match these as closely as possible to candidate demand, providing sufficient opportunities for candidates to progress while retaining commercial viability in the majority of cases.

#### 6. Assessment centre requirements

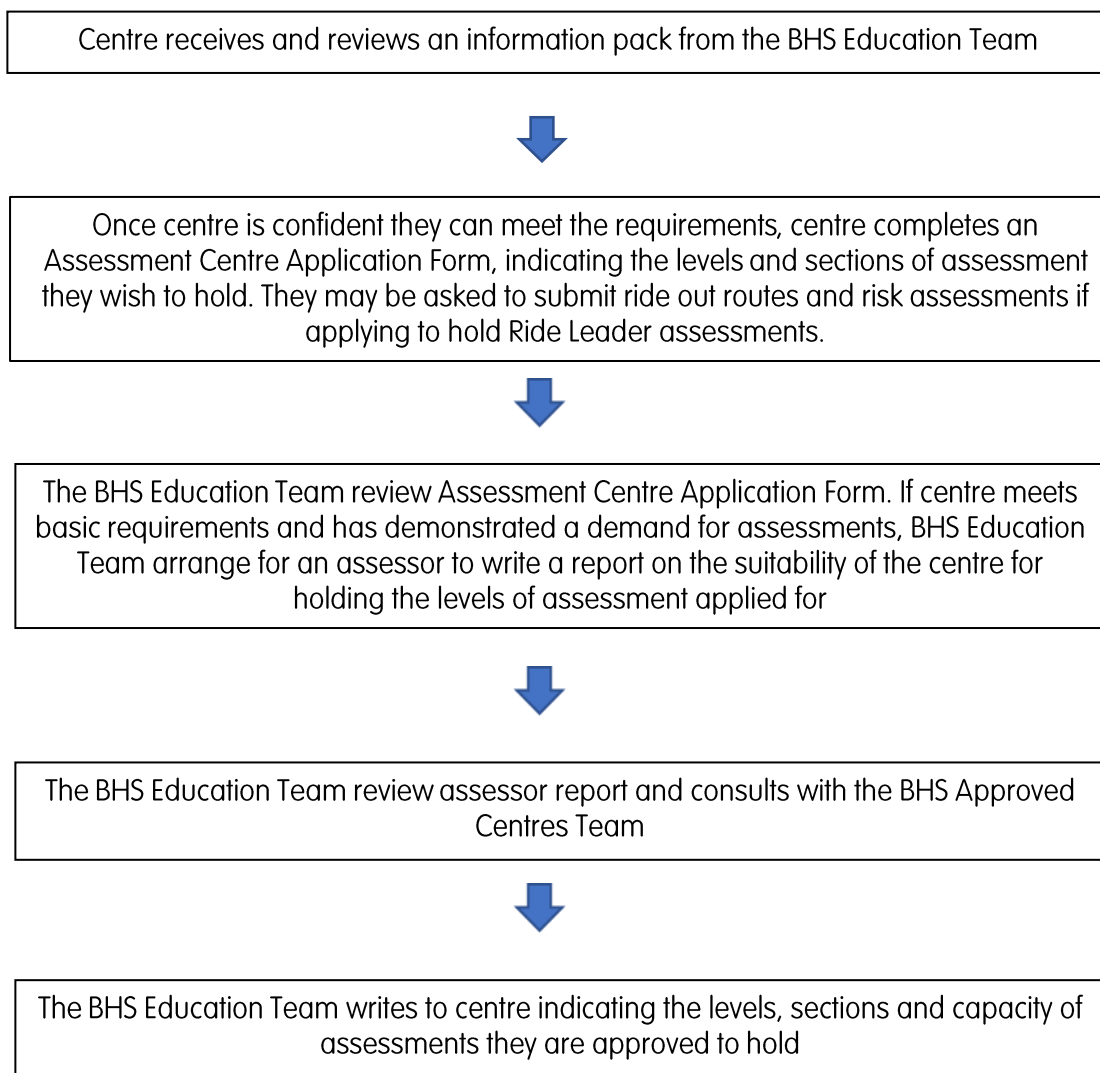
To become a BHS Approved assessment centre, a centre must be a BHS Approved Riding Centre and be able to provide the requirements as listed in the BHS Centre Guidelines for BHS Assessments. These are available from the BHS Education Team upon request. BHS Approved Centres can access these documents online via the BHS Approved Centres Cloud

The only exception to the requirement of BHS Approved Riding School status is for Performance Horse Care and Welfare assessments. These assessments are held at establishments that may not be a licensed or BHS Approved Riding School. The type of horse required at these assessments may require outsourcing via centres that specialise in areas such as rehabilitation, competition or rescue. The BHS Education Team inspect these centres as part of the initial approved assessment centre process to ensure the level of care, welfare and safety is aligned to the usual requirements.

## 7. Assessment centre approval process

The assessment centre approval process is normally initiated when a centre makes an enquiry to the BHS Education Team about holding assessments. The BHS may approach centres directly where there is a lack of assessment provision in a particular geographical area or at a specific level.

The approval process will then begin as follows:



### 7.1 Scheduling of initial assessment

When an assessment centre is given initial approval, they will be asked to accept the terms of the BHS Assessment Centre agreement and request an initial assessment date. The BHS Education Team will review the assessment date request and will send confirmation to the centre if the assessment is considered to be viable.

After the initial assessment has taken place, feedback from the Lead Assessor will be reviewed and shared with the centre. At this point, the BHS Education Team will confirm to the centre whether or not further assessments at this level may be requested.

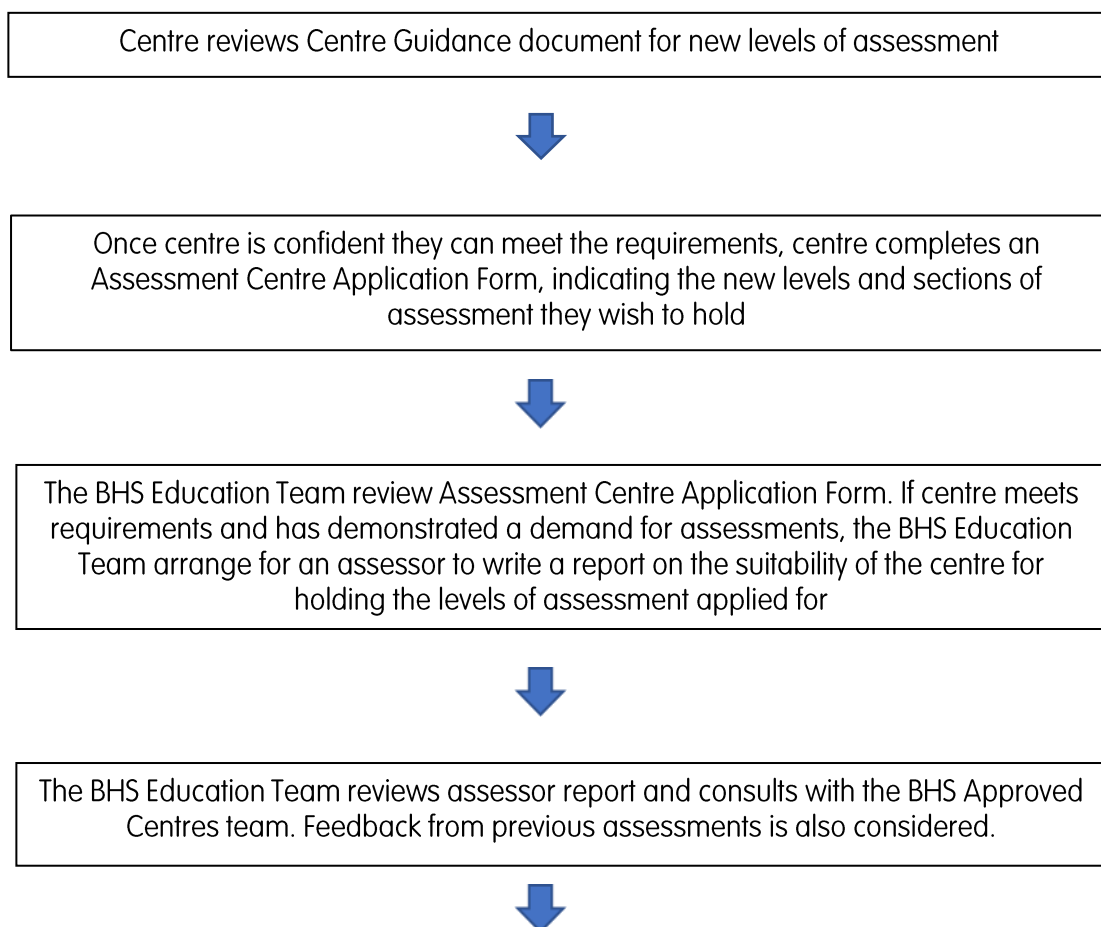
If the centre has been given initial approval to hold more than one level of assessment, they may request to hold one assessment at each level but sufficient time must be left between initial assessment dates to allow for feedback to be taken on board and changes implemented before subsequent assessments.

New assessment centres may be subject to a higher frequency of Internal Quality Assurance activity than established assessment centres but this will be reviewed over time as the evidence to formulate a risk-rating is collated.

### 8. Assessment centre upgrade process

The assessment centre upgrade process is normally initiated when an approved assessment centre makes an enquiry to the BHS Education Team. The BHS may approach centres directly where there is a lack of assessment provision in a particular geographical area or at a specific level.

The upgrade process will then begin as follows:



The BHS Education Team confirms to centre any new levels, sections and capacity of assessments they are approved to hold

### 8.1 Scheduling an initial assessment at a new level

When an assessment centre is given approval to hold a new level of assessment, they will be invited to request an initial assessment date. The BHS Education Team will review the assessment date request and will send confirmation to the centre if the assessment is considered to be viable.

After the initial assessment, feedback from the Lead Assessor will be reviewed and shared with the centre. At this point, the BHS Education Team will confirm to the centre whether or not further assessments at this level may be requested.

If the centre has been given approval to hold more than one new level of assessment, they may request to hold one assessment at each level but sufficient time must be left between assessment dates to allow for feedback to be taken on board and changes implemented before subsequent assessments.

Assessment centres holding new levels of assessment may be subject to a higher frequency of Internal Quality Assurance activity than established assessment centres at the same levels but this will be reviewed over time as the evidence to formulate a risk-rating at the new levels is collated.

### 9. Allocation of assessment dates

Approved assessment centres will be invited to submit requests for assessment dates through an annual allocation process. Requests to hold assessments at a level or capacity which an assessment centre is not approved to hold will not be considered. Requests to hold assessment dates will be considered if submitted outside this process, however, assessment dates should be requested at least 12 weeks in advance, (this may be reduced to 10 weeks if at least 50% of the spaces are held for internal candidates). Assessment dates submitted through the annual allocation process will be given priority when reviewing the viability of requests.

The BHS Education Team will review assessment date requests to ensure that assessment provision is aligned with forecast candidate demand across all geographical areas and at all levels of assessment. This means that some assessment dates requested may not be confirmed if they are not deemed to be viable and centres may be asked to alter assessment dates or assessment capacities.

When an assessment date is viable, confirmation of the date, level, capacity and expected facility fee for the assessment will be sent to the Approved assessment centre. Where spaces are available for external candidates, the assessment date will be listed on the BHS website.

## 10. Monitoring and Quality Assurance of approved assessment centres

The BHS will risk-rate each approved assessment centre using the following red, amber, green system, based on their provision at previous assessments:

- Green – approved assessment centre poses a low risk to the integrity of the qualification
- Amber – approved assessment centre poses a medium level of risk to the integrity of the qualification
- Red – approved assessment centre poses a high level of risk to the integrity of the qualification

This rating may determine the level of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) activity to which the Approved assessment centre is subject and if the Approved assessment centre is deemed to be high risk, an improvement plan may be implemented.

Approved assessment centre provision is monitored via means such as internal and external quality assurance activity, response to BHS Education Team communications and updates, candidate feedback, feedback from Lead Assessors and through the investigation of complaints and appeals, or malpractice, maladministration or whistle-blowing concerns. Concerns are recorded as either minor or major.

## 11. Removal of assessment centre approval

The BHS may remove approved assessment centre status at any time and any such decision will always be communicated to the approved assessment centre in writing. This may apply for all assessments or be limited to assessments at particular levels and/or specific sections. The removal of approved assessment centre status will be based on risk and will normally follow a period of consultation. In addition, an assessment centre may request the removal of their assessment centre status.

Where a change in management has taken place at an Approved assessment centre or there has been a significant change in facilities, the BHS Education team will review whether assessment centre status can remain in place when notified of this change. Where there is a change in centre ownership or the centre has moved to a new site, assessment centre approval will automatically be removed until the BHS Education team have re-evaluated the suitability of the centre for holding assessments.

Where an approved assessment centre has not held an assessment at a particular level for more than 3 years, assessment centre approval will automatically become inactive for that level and BHS Education may request further evidence that the centre can provide the required horses, facilities and equipment before the approval can be re-activated.

## 12. Record Keeping

The BHS Education Team must maintain records of all assessment centre applications for audit and monitoring purposes. Records will be maintained securely and no personal data will be held.