

Online HorseCollege



Student Workbook

3.T.17 Rider Assessments

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Rider Assessments 3.T.17 Workbook

Students are to complete 3.T.13-16 teaching online assessments prior to attempting 3.T.17-20 and to follow all recommended safety considerations.

Practical assessments for 3.T.17-20 are as follows

- A) 3.T.17 RiderAssessments
- B) 3.T.28 TurnGuide
- C) 3.T.19 TrotDiagonals
- D) 3.T.20 Corners

These assessments incorporate the following unit from the SIS30710 Sport Industry Training Package which include the listed elements

SROEQO003A Supervise horse handling

SRXRIK001A Undertake risk analysis of activities

Further information about this assessment is available at www.training.gov.au

Rider Assessments Introduction

Every time you teach a new rider you will assess their abilities to determine what they are and are not capable of. This is an important process for developing the rider's skills and for maintaining safety during a lesson by avoiding exercises which the rider may not be ready for.

Rider Assessment

Riding school often use what can be referred to as an 'Assessment Lesson' to determine the skills of new riders who are having their first lesson at the school. Rider assessments are used for riders who do and don't have riding experience.

Often people who have ridden before wish to go into a group lesson and because they are new to the school they need to have an assessment lesson with a coach to determine how vast their experience is and which level of group they would best fit into.

Sometimes assessment lesson may be used for existing riders at the school where different instructors teach the group lessons to the private (individual) lessons and it will be therefore necessary for the group lesson coach to assess the rider to decide whether or which group they are suitable for.

For people who are new to horses and the riding school assessment lessons are less common but they can be used to introduce the rider into the horse and horse riding environment.

Rider assessment lessons can include the person performing the grooming, saddling and unsaddling of the horse as well as riding.



Assessment lesson should begin on the lunge line/rein until it has been determined that the rider has control of the horse. The rider should be able to move with the horse and maintain a steady position in walk and trot (including rising and sitting trot) before they are allowed to ride off the lunge rein/line. They should also be able to turn and guide the horse in walk and trot (without losing rising trot rhythm) and move the horse in and out of halt, walk and trot with minimal influence from the coach before this happens. A good exercise to test their strength and balance is to have the rider attempt to remain in 2 point seat for 5 circles while on the lunge. Corrections to and feedback on the riders performance should be given in an assessment lesson, being that even though it is an assessment of the rider it is still a lesson.

Determining Skills

Occasionally a rider may exaggerate their experience with horses and riding and this is another good reason why assessment lessons are used. And as a coach you should not presume that all new riders will lie about their experience however you do need to exercise caution and ensure the rider is on the same page you are. For example a person may come into a lesson and tell you that they have galloped and jumped before, but they may lack the knowledge to know that what they perceived as a 'gallop' was actually a trot and that 'jumping' was actually the horse stepping over a log or that their experience galloping and jumping was because the previous horse they rode bolted for home.

If the rider asks you why assessment lessons are necessary of what they are be tactful in your reply (e.g. that it is to ensure they have the knowledge and are aware of the terminology and processes the riding school and coaches use).

Establishing Experience

As previously mentioned it is not uncommon for people with little experience to be unaware to the depth and vastness of knowledge there is surrounding horses. And sometimes you will get riders who are familiar with other disciplines or styles of riding or those with little formal riding education who are quite competent but don't understand common terms (i.e., a person who has ridden stock work for many years and can rise to the trot but doesn't understand the term 'rising trot' or is unfamiliar with trot diagonals) these people can come across as inexperienced because they are unfamiliar with the 'lingo' but are actually the opposite.

Therefore it is important that you can quickly recognise those who are and are not capable of different horse related activities and with coaching practice this will become easier and easier.

Listed below are common signs of people who are both inexperienced and experienced around and riding horses (remember this is just a guide to general indications).

Leading the horse

| Inexperienced (beginner) | Experienced (final stage) |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stands away from the horse, at the end of the lead rope/reins.- Leads the horse with one hand holding the lead rope/reins.- Leads the horse from the off-side.- Has difficulty getting the horse to walk.- Has difficulty getting the horse to stop.- Turns the horse towards them. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Stands close to the horse's shoulder or neck.- Organises the lead rope/reins and leads with two hands, one under the horse's head and the other holding the end of the lead/rein.- Leads the horse from the near-side (recognises near and off sides).- Is effective in getting the horse to walk forward.- Is effective in getting the horse to stop.- Is effective and precise in manoeuvring the horse. |

Establishing Experience (cont.)

Mounting the horse

| Inexperienced (beginner) | Experienced (final stage) |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lets go of the reins when given another task i.e., checking the girth.- Unfamiliar with how to check the length of the stirrups and how to alter the length.- Tries to mount from the off-side.- Puts the wrong foot into the stirrup for mounting.- Is slow and unsteady in transferring right leg across the horse's back.- Doesn't hold the reins when mounting. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Keeps the reins organised and off the ground.- Has knowledge or is able to check/alter stirrup length.- Mounts from the near-side- Puts the left foot into the stirrup.- Is organised, fluent and methodical in mounting.- Keeps the reins short, in contact with the horse's mouth when mounting. |

At the halt

| Inexperienced (beginner) | Experienced (final stage) |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Weak (slumping, foetal type) or exaggerated (stiff, defensive) position or stature.- Holds the reins with the hands upside-down (palms up). Holds the reins too long or too short. Holds onto the saddle or doesn't know where to hold onto.- Sits too far forward or too far back in the saddle. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Confident and balanced position or stature.- Holds the reins at a length which maintains a contact with the horse's mouth. Holds the reins with the thumbs on top (or some riders may hold the reins with 'piano hands' where the thumbs face towards each other and fingernails down, this should be corrected).- Sits in the centre of the saddle in the deepest part. |

Establishing Experience (cont.)

At the walk

Inexperienced (beginner)

- Weak (slumping, foetal type) or exaggerated (stiff, defensive) position/stature or too relaxed and loose in the saddle.
- Does not follow movement of the horse or moves very loosely in the saddle.
- Un-organised in the use of aids.
- Shows little preparation for and inaccuracy in turns.

Experienced (final stage)

- Confident and balanced position or stature.
- Follows the movement of the horse without stiffness or exaggeration.
- Can apply aids with fluency and organisation.
- Prepared and can anticipate the use of the aids, effective in turning and guiding the horse.

At the trot

Inexperienced (beginner)

- Rising trot may lack rhythm and co-ordination. Rising trot rhythm may be lost when given other tasks to focus on. Rising may be performed too fast or too slow for the movement.
- Lacks the strength/stamina to perform trot for long periods.
- Position is lost upon commencing trot.
- Drops shoulders forward. Heels come up.

Experienced (final stage)

- Maintains rhythmic rising trot whilst performing and concentrating on other tasks. May be able to perform, recognise and change trot diagonals.
- Can perform rising trot for long periods of time.
- Maintains position and balance.
- Shoulders remain upright. Leg stays long.



Establishing Experience (cont.)

At the trot (cont.)

Inexperienced (beginner)

- Rider is un-organised in turns, mis-judges speed (turns too sharp causing the horse to return to walk) and accuracy.

Experienced (final stage)

- Rider can judge speed and accuracy and maintains the same trot through turns and corners.

At the canter

Inexperienced (beginner)

- Rider loses position in the canter.
- The depth of the seat is lost i.e., the rider comes forward out of the saddle (can see daylight between the saddle and rider's seat).
- The rider leans or drifts to the outside of the horse in canter.
- The seat becomes rigid and does not follow the movement of the canter (often causing the rider to thump into the saddle each stride).
- Holding onto the saddle. Rider's may be able to guide the horse a little with one hand.

Experienced (final stage)

- Position is maintained through transitions and canter.
- The seat and hips follow the movement of the canter, no daylight can be seen between the saddle and rider's seat.
- The rider can remain balanced with the weight even and body straight with the horse.
- Elasticity of the seat (pelvis, hips, thighs).
- The horse can be guided and controlled with accuracy.



Establishing Experience (cont.)

Simple, safe exercises can be used in the walk to assist in determining the level of control of the horse and knowledge and technique of applying the aids.

One that can be used before the rider even gets on is leading the horse. People who are new to horses often lack confidence and organisation when leading a horse. This can be evident by the handler dragging the horse along by the end of the reins/lead, letting the reins/lead drag on the ground and being unable to get the horse to walk, turn and sometimes stop.

Weaving, turning and guiding the horse around witches hats or markers is a safe exercise that can be performed at different paces/gaits and will ascertain the riders knowledge and technique in applying the aids. Transitions are also good for the same reason and both exercises can be performed on the lunge so that the instructor/coach can maintain control over the horse if need be.

A rider with good knowledge and technique in applying the aids will show fluency, balance, accuracy, effectiveness and co-ordination when using the aids.

When using transitions in your assessment of a rider it is best to start with simple, safer transitions such as halt to walk, walk to trot, trot to walk and walk to halt. Using difficult transitions like walk to canter are unsafe (particularly if you have not yet seen the rider canter) and may give a false interpretation of the rider's abilities (i.e., walk to canter transitions are more difficult and just because a rider cannot perform them does not mean they are an inexperienced rider).

Before putting a rider into trot you should make sure they understand what they need to do once they are trotting. Some riders may have trotted before but have not performed rising trot or have ridden rising trot but may have poor rhythm. To check their knowledge (and for new riders whom you have to teach rising trot, this method can be used) of rising trot have the rider pretend they are in trot whilst walking (primarily you should practice this in halt before trying it in walk specifically for nervous or very unbalanced riders), that is they will rise and sit in the saddle while the horse walks. This provides an opportunity for you to give positional corrections at a slower easier pace and for the rider to practice the movement.



Extension Lesson

Produce a lesson plan for assessing a rider (this will be a requirement for the practical assessment).

In your own words describe five signs that may indicate a rider has little experience with horses and riding.

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In your own words describe five signs that may indicate a rider has had experience with horses and riding.

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Recommended Reading

Publication:-

The Principles of Riding

Author:-

German National Equestrian Federation

References

Publication:-

The Principles of Riding

Author:-

German National Equestrian Federation

Name:
Student Number:

Fantasy Saddle Club
StudyHorses.com

Fantasy Saddle Club Lesson Plan

(To be prepared in advance and discussed with Coach Educator before each lesson)

Unit No: Subject: Level of Students:

Number of Students: Support Personnel:

Facilities:

Equipment/Resources:

| | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| Introduce Self ✓ Check Disabilities ✓ | Introduce Subject ✓ Check Experience ✓ | Check Gear ✓ Establish Control ✓ |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Explanation - What:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • <p>Reference:</p> | <p>Explanation - Why:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • <p>Reference:</p> | <p>Explanation - How:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • <p>Reference:</p> |
|--|---|---|

| |
|--|
| <p>Demonstration - Who:</p> <p>What:</p> |
|--|

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Relevant Warm Up: | <p>Progression to Lesson Plan (Map on back of page): (Include Class Formation, Changes of Rein and Position of Coach)</p> |
|-------------------|---|

Name:
Student Number:

Fantasy Saddle Club
StudyHorses.com

Fantasy Saddle Club Lesson Plan
(To be prepared in advance and discussed with Coach Educator before each lesson)

| Potential Problems: | Corrections: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">••••• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">••••• |

