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Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Statutory guidance

Hiring out horses licensing: statutory guidance for local authorities

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This guidance is for local authority inspectors in England. You should read it alongside the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018.

To decide if an activity is covered by the regulations and needs a licence to operate, you should consider all of the following guidance.

All activities involving hiring out horses for riding, or instruction in riding, need to have a licence if they're carried out as a commercial business.

To decide if an activity is a business and will need a licence, consider if the operator:

- makes any sale or carries out the activity to make a profit
- earns any commission or fee from the activity

You should also consider HMRC's 9 badges of trade.

If someone has a trading income below the HMRC trading income allowance, they do not require a licence for their activities.

If someone has a trading income above the HMRC trading income allowance, they do not automatically qualify as a business.

To be in scope, they must hire out horses for riding, or instruction in riding.

This could include:

- riding schools
- loan horses
- hunter hirelings
- pony and donkey rides
- polo instruction
- pony parties where the ponies are ridden

Activities that fulfil one or more of the following criteria do not require a licence:

- pony party businesses where none of the ponies are ever ridden (these should be licensed as animal exhibits)
- activities that are carried out solely for military or police purposes
- riding stables that are used solely for instructing university veterinary students with their studies
- people who occasionally lend a horse, even if a small fee is charged, where there is no profit made and no intent to make a profit
- people who hire out horses and have a trading income below the current HMRC trading income allowance

Veterinary inspections

For the hiring of horses, a listed vet must be appointed for the initial inspection, for a renewal inspection, and for the annual inspection for the hiring of horses.

A listed vet is required for any inspections for the activity of hiring out horses. A listed vet is a vet who is authorised to carry out an inspection on the list of vets held by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Riding Establishments Inspectorate List.

Where the listed vet is accompanied by a suitably qualified local inspector, they will be appointed under 4(4) of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018.

Where a listed vet is required by the local authority to carry out the inspection without being accompanied by a suitably qualified officer, they must be appointed under section 51 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (the Act) to exercise the enforcement powers available under the Act. They must also be appointed under 4(4) of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)(England) Regulations 2018.

Where the listed vet is required by the local authority to carry out the inspection without being accompanied by a suitably qualified officer, the listed vet must be appointed in writing by the appropriate person with delegated powers within the local authority.

Annual listed vet inspection

Where there is a hiring of horses licence in place, the local authority must appoint a listed vet under section 8 of the Regulation to inspect the premise before the end of the first anniversary of the day on which the licence, as granted or renewed, came into force and before the end of each subsequent year in respect of which the licence remains in force.

Mid-licence local authority unannounced visit

As per the risk scoring matrix set out in the procedural guidance, the local authority is required to carry out one unannounced inspection during the term of the licence. This inspection does not have to be carried out at the same time as the annual listed vet inspection.

Minimum standards

It is expected that all businesses will meet and maintain minimum standards. If on a renewal inspection you identify minor failings that do not compromise welfare standards, follow the risk-based approach to renewing a licence .

To grant a new animal activities licence for hiring out horses, you must check that businesses meet all of the minimum standards in this guidance.

Higher standards

Businesses that meet the higher standard will get a 4 or 5 star rating in the animals activity star rating system.

Higher standards are required or optional. To achieve a higher rating, businesses hiring out horses need to achieve all of the required higher standards and at least 50% of the optional higher standards.

If a business meets the higher standards, it will qualify for a longer licence that’s valid for 2 or 3 years rather than one year. This lowers the cost of the licence.

See Animal activity licensing process: statutory guidance for local authorities for an explanation of the animal activity star rating system and how it incorporates a risk assessment of the business.

Part A – General conditions (Schedule 2 of the Regulations)

Paragraph numbers relate to the conditions in the schedules of the regulations.

1.0 Licence display

> 1.1 A copy of the licence must be clearly and prominently displayed on any premises used for the licensable activity.

The licensed premises address must be displayed on the licence. It must be displayed in a public-facing area of the premises such as the entrance.

> 1.2 The name of the licence holder followed by the number of the licence holder’s licence must be clearly and prominently displayed on any website used in respect of the licensable activity.

2.0 Records

> 2.1 The licence holder must ensure that at any time all the records that the licence holder is required to keep as a condition of the licence are available for inspection by an inspector in a visible and legible form or, where any such records are stored in electronic form, in a form from which they can readily be produced in a visible and legible form.

> 2.2 The licence holder must keep all such records for at least 3 years beginning with the date on which the record was created.

Electronic records must be backed up.

3.0 Use, number and type of animal

> 3.1 No animals or types of animal other than those animals and types of animal specified in the licence may be used in relation to the relevant licensable activity.

> 3.2 The number of animals kept for the activity at any time must not exceed the maximum that is reasonable taking into account the facilities and staffing on any premises used for the licensable activity.

The licence must clearly state the numbers of horses permitted at the premises used for the activity. Undeclared numbers would be a breach of the licence, especially if staffing levels are not increased.

For each horse used for the activity at the premises, the licensing authority must record its:

- name
- unique equine life number
- microchip number

Licence holders must inform their local authority of changes to the list of horses being used. They must also provide evidence that a vet has deemed new horses as fit for the purpose for which they will be used. The licence must then be varied by the local authority.

4.0 Staffing

> 4.1 Sufficient numbers of people who are competent for the purpose must be available to provide a level of care that ensures that the welfare needs of all the animals are met.

Staff with experience of working with horses must oversee daily horse care and ensure optimal welfare for all horses.

At least one member of staff must have either:

- a recognised qualification such as, a relevant Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) regulated Level 3 qualification
- suitable experience and training, such as, running an equine facility before

If there is evidence that the welfare needs of the animals are not being met, you should consider if the staffing levels are appropriate.

During the inspection, you should take into account the:

- size of premises
- layout of the premises (for example, the number of horses that are kept in a stable or field)
- qualifications and experience of the staff
- use of part time staff or volunteers

> 4.2 The licence holder or a designated manager and any staff employed to care for the animals must have competence to identify the normal behaviour of the species for which they are caring and to recognise signs of, and take appropriate measures to mitigate or prevent, pain, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour.

You should look at training records as evidence of suitable induction training of staff in:

- animal welfare, including recognising poor welfare
- animal handling
- animal behaviour
- cleanliness and hygiene
- feeding and food preparation
- disease prevention and control
- recognition and first aid treatment of sick or injured animals

Staff who care for the horses must either:

- hold a formal qualification, such as a Level 2 Ofqual regulated qualification appropriate for their role
- show they have relevant and sufficient knowledge and experience

If no accredited training course exists that is appropriate to the activity, then other evidence of training must be provided, such as, industry generated courses.

Individuals undertaking an Ofqual regulated qualification must have suitably progressed in 12 months and have completed the qualification within 2 years.

> 4.3 The licence holder must provide and ensure the implementation of a written training policy for all staff.

The staff training policy must be reviewed and updated each year.

It must include:

- an annual appraisal
- planned and continued professional development
- recognition of knowledge gaps

This applies to all staff including the licence holder.

Training can be demonstrated by:

- engagement with online courses
- annual appraisal documents

Evidence of staff attendance or completion of the training must be provided.

5.0 Suitable environment

> 5.1 All areas, equipment and appliances that animals can access must present minimal risks of injury, illness and escape.

They must be constructed in materials that are robust, safe and durable, in a good state of repair and well-maintained.

In stables, each horse must have enough room to:

- lie down
- stand up
- turn around in comfort

Roofs should be high enough to provide adequate ventilation, including good air circulation.

There should be a minimum clear space to the eaves above the ears of the horse in its normal standing position (60 to 90 centimetres or 2 to 3 feet).

All passageways should be wide enough for horses to be led safely past other horses.

Where stalls are used (individual compartments enclosed on 3 sides) the positioning and dimensions must allow room for the horse to lie down but not turn around. There must be enough space behind the stall for the horse to back out easily.

Stalls and stables must have adequate bedding and a non-slip floor.

Timber must be of good quality and well-kept. Any damaged areas must be sealed or over clad. Wood must be smooth, proofed and maintained to keep it waterproof.

Interior surfaces, including floors, should be even, waterproof and easy to clean. Floors must have a non-slip, solid surface.

There must not be any sharp or rough edges, projections, or other hazards that could injure a horse.

Doors must be strong enough to resist impact and close securely.

Doors should be a suitable width for horses. The height of the door must allow the horse to look out with the head comfortably over the door, unless there’s a valid reason not to have heads out. The horse and handler must be able to enter and exit the stable safely. Doors should open outwards or use a slide mechanism.

There should be a gap under the door so that waste and water can drain from the stable.

Any gaps or openings must be small enough to prevent a horse’s head or any limb getting trapped.

Windows should be fitted with safety glass or covered with mesh. Fittings should not protrude into the stable to prevent injury. They should also encourage air flow.

Drainage should be a minimum gradient of 1:80 to allow water to run off. There must be no standing water or pooling. Wastewater must not run into neighbouring stables.

Stables must open onto secure areas so that horses cannot escape from the premises.

Fields must be safe and securely fenced, ideally using:

- post and rail that is at least 1.25 metres or 4 foot high
- plain taut wire that is visible to the horse
- well-maintained hedging or electric fencing with gates

For facilities that carry out on-site riding instruction, there must be a safe riding area suitable for the activity, such as an arena or field.

That area must:

- have well-maintained and clear access and exits
- be secure to prevent horses escaping onto public land

A safe suitable area must be provided to carry out rider assessments. The riding surface must be well maintained and have management systems in place to maintain the surface and control levels of dust.

Fields must be free from dangerous objects and poisonous plants and weeds. If this is not possible, horses must be fenced away. Annual pasture management plans must be in place for fields.

Housing must be regularly inspected for damage and potential injury or escape points. Inspection results must be recorded. Damaged housing must be repaired or replaced immediately.

Pony lines and tie-up areas must be well maintained.

> 5.2 Animals must be kept at all times in an environment suitable to their species and condition (including health status and age) with respect to:

(a) their behavioural or needs

(b) its situation, space, air quality, cleanliness and temperature

(c) the water quality (where relevant)

(d) noise levels

(e) light levels

(f) ventilation

Horses must be monitored to check they are not too hot or too cold. The licence holder must be able to show the steps they take if a horse is showing signs of heat or cold intolerance. For example, if a horse is too cold they could provide rugs.

Horses must have access to shelter in the form of purpose-built or natural cover when kept in fields. The entrance of a purpose-built shelter must be wide enough to allow access and exit for at least 2 horses to minimise the risk of injury.

Where working horses are kept in individual stalls, they must spend a significant part of their day out of the stall. Horses kept in stalls must be fastened so they can access food, water and lie down comfortably.

Bedding materials should have minimal dust. They must be of sufficient depth to encourage horses to lie down.

Where rubber floor matting is used in stables it must be regularly cleaned and there must be a small amount of bedding material.

Sleeping areas need to be:

- clean
- dry
- draught-free
- well-ventilated

They also need to be large enough to allow all the animals housed to rest together fully outstretched, turn around unimpeded and move around comfortably.

Horses kept outdoors must have suitable protection from adverse weather conditions.

> 5.3 Staff must ensure that the animals are kept clean and comfortable.

Stables must be cleaned on a regular basis. Faeces must be cleared daily.

All horses in work must be regularly groomed. They must be groomed before tacking up.

All horses must be checked daily to make sure they are clean and comfortable.

> 5.4 Where appropriate for the species, a toileting area and opportunities for toileting must be provided.

Dung management must be a central part of pasture management. This helps to create an effective parasite control programme and improve grass recovery.

> 5.5 Procedures must be in place to make sure housing and any equipment within it is cleaned as often as necessary and good hygiene standards are maintained. The housing must be capable of being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Stables must be kept in a clean condition, there must be a documented procedure for this. It must detail the routine daily cleaning regime and the procedure for cleaning between periods of occupation.

Where there is a pest problem, a pest control programme must be put into place.

> 5.6 The animals must be transported and handled in a manner (including for example in relation to housing, temperature, ventilation and frequency) that protects them from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

All animals must be transported according to the regulations laid down in the current legislation.

The licence holder must demonstrate that when a horse is transported, it is in a suitable vehicle. It does not have to be owned by the licence holder.

Horses must not be left unattended in a vehicle if it's unsafe to do so. Time in a vehicle must be minimised.

Horses should not be transported in temperatures that could risk the horse's health.

> 5.7 All the animals must be easily accessible to staff and for inspection. There must be sufficient light for the staff to work effectively and observe the animals.

Natural light is ideal, but artificial light must be available. Artificial lights must be turned off overnight to provide a period of darkness.

> 5.8 All resources must be provided in a way (for example, as regards frequency, location and access points) that minimises competitive behaviour or the dominance of individual animals.

Horses in stables or stalls must have access to their own water at all times.

If horses are being fed together, care must be taken to make sure that all horses are receiving enough food.

When horses are kept in a field attention must be paid to any taking over of resources, such as hay and water. All horses must have access to resources. There should be one feeding site per horse plus an extra one.

> 5.9 The animals must not be left unattended in any situation or for any period likely to cause them distress.

Horses at grass must be inspected at least once a day, or as often as necessary for the individual health and welfare of each horse. Stabled or group-housed horses must be inspected at least twice a day.

The licence holder must have a system to record observations of:

- illness
- injury
- behavioural problems

Required higher standards for providing a suitable environment for horses

There must be an option for a permanent individual turnout paddock or pen. This will give horses their own area for grazing or turnout if needed because of ill-health or domination by other horses.

Horses must be inspected at least once out of hours, for example between 6pm and 8am.

Optional higher standards for providing a suitable environment for horses

There must be a separate secure, clean and well-lit veterinary inspection area for safe access to inspect a horse.

6.0 Suitable diet

> 6.1 The animals must be provided with a suitable diet, in terms of quality, quantity and frequency that reflects their needs. Any new feeds must be introduced gradually to allow the animals to adjust to them.

There must be a plan or record of the quantity, frequency and type of food each horse is given.

> 6.2 Feed and (where appropriate) water intake must be monitored, and any problems recorded and addressed.

If a horse has no appetite for longer than 6 hours, veterinary advice must be sought. Seek advice from a vet earlier if there are specific concerns about diet or a lack of appetite.

The body condition of every horse must be monitored on a regular basis.

Horses displaying significant weight loss or gain must be checked by a vet and treated as needed. The vet's advice must be followed if feeding debilitated, underweight or ill horses. This also applies to horses with specific dietary requirements.

The premises must have the ability to isolate the individual horse to check if it is eating when in a group management situation.

> 6.3 Feed and drinking water provided to the animals must be unspoilt and free from contamination.

Prepared feed must not be left out for excessive periods. It must be stored away from risk of vermin and kept in cool and dry places.

The premises must use clean and dry feed bins that are labelled clearly to show the different feed types.

Any stored feed must be kept off the floor to prevent dampness.

There must be a system in place for disposal of feed waste.

> 6.4 Feed and drinking receptacles must be capable of being cleaned and disinfected, or disposable.

Receptacles must be:

- algae-free
- non-porous
- cleaned at least once a week
- disposed of if damaged

> 6.5 Constant access to fresh, clean drinking water must be provided in a suitable

> receptacle for the species that requires it.

Automatic water bowls or troughs must be routinely cleaned and the supply of water checked.

In fields, water troughs or buckets must be securely fixed at a convenient height to allow horses of different sizes to drink comfortably. It should not be possible for the trough or bucket to be dislodged and knocked over. Supply should be placed in a location which reduces the risk of the entrapment of a horse.

> 6.6 Where feed is prepared on the premises, there must be hygienic facilities for its preparation, including a working surface, hot and cold running water and storage.

Staff must have access to:

- hot and cold hand washing facilities that are connected to a suitable drainage system
- soap
- hygienic hand drying facilities

Optional higher standards for diet

There must be separate well lit, lockable, purpose built feed room with water available and additional storage for supplements.

7.0 Monitoring behaviour and training

> 7.1 Active and effective environmental enrichment must be provided to the animals in inside and any outside environments.

Exercise or field time is part of enrichment. Keeping horses permanently stabled or without exercise must be avoided. If it is necessary for veterinary purposes, then thought must be given to enrichment in the form of feeding mechanisms and grooming.

> 7.2 For species whose welfare depends partly on exercise, opportunities to exercise which benefit the animals' physical and mental health must be provided, unless advice from a vet suggests otherwise.

Horses must be exercised regularly, but rest periods must be factored into the weekly schedule for each horse.

A horse kept in a suitable field does not always need extra opportunities to exercise and may have extended rest periods.

> 7.3 The animals' behaviour and any changes of behaviour must be monitored. Advice must be sought, as appropriate and without delay, from a vet or, in the case of fish, any person competent to give such advice if adverse or abnormal behaviour is detected.

The behaviour of individual horses must be monitored daily. Any changes in behaviours that suggest stress, fear, pain or anxiety must be recorded and acted upon.

The licence holder or manager must be able to identify horses that are anxious or fearful of:

- being close to people or other horses
- direct contact with people or other horses

Horses that show signs of being nervous or stressed must be located in a suitable part of the facility. The licence holder or manager must bear in mind the individual temperament of the horse.

> 7.4 Where used, training methods or equipment must not cause pain, suffering or injury.

> 7.5 All immature animals must be given suitable and adequate opportunities to:

(a) learn how to interact with people, their own species and other animals where such interaction benefits their welfare

(b) become habituated to noises, objects and activities in their environment

Processes must be in place to meet the needs of new and young horses.

This must include:

- appropriate training
- slow introduction to different noises and sights that will be part of their daily routine or workload

Required higher standards for monitoring horses' behaviour and training
All horses must have a structured management and care programme to include their exercise needs. It should include suitable alternatives for those not able to exercise, such as extra grooming or physiotherapy.

8.0 Animal handling and interactions

> 8.1 All people responsible for the care of the animals must be competent in the appropriate handling of each animal to protect it from pain, suffering, injury or disease.

Horses must always be handled humanely and appropriately to suit the requirements of the individual horse. Steps must be taken to minimise fear, stress, pain and distress.

Horses must never be punished so that they become frightened or display aversive behaviour.

Training equipment must only be used by competent people.

> 8.2 The animals must be kept separately or in suitable compatible social groups appropriate to the species and individual animals. No animals from a social species may be isolated or separated from others of their species for any longer than is necessary.

Horses are usually best kept in social groups. If a horse must be separated from the social group it should still have sight of other horses, if possible.

A policy must be in place for monitoring the introduction of new horses to existing groups. This will help avoid stress to either new or resident animals.

> 8.3 The animals must have at least daily opportunities to interact with people where such interaction benefits their welfare.

Horses must be interacting with people each day through grooming and exercise.

If kept at pasture all year, they may not have interaction for daily grooming but will need interaction for health and injury checks.

9.0 Protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease

> 9.1 Written procedures must:

(a) be in place and implemented covering

(i) feeding regimes

(ii) cleaning regimes

(iii) transportation

(iv) the prevention and control of the spread of, disease

(v) monitoring and ensuring the health and welfare of all the animals

(vi) the death or escape of an animal (including the storage of carcases)

(b) be in place covering the care of the animals following the suspension or revocation of the licence or during and following an emergency

> 9.2 All people responsible for the care of the animals must be made fully aware of these procedures.

The procedures must show how the conditions in this guidance are met.

> 9.3 Appropriate isolation, in separate self-contained facilities, must be available for the care of sick, injured or potentially infectious animals.

There must be adequate isolation facilities for animals with infectious diseases. This may be on-site or at another location, such as a local veterinary practice.

The licence holder must have a biosecurity plan agreed with a vet. This must include the ability to isolate a horse for up to 21 days.

If an infectious disease is present in the premises, appropriate infection prevention and control measures must be carried out using the advice of the attending vet. There must be people trained to manage these infection prevention and control measures.

Measures include:

- use of protective clothing and footwear changed between enclosures
- cleansing and disinfection of materials in contact with the affected group of animals
- separate use and storage of equipment
- separation of waste
- washing hands

There must be a control of substances hazardous to health assessment for management of infectious diseases.

The assessment must cover:

- zoonoses (infectious disease that can pass from animal to human)
- use of process operation management systems

Members of the public must not have access to sick animals or handle them.

> 9.4 All reasonable precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread among animals and people of infectious disease, pathogens and parasites.

Procedures must be in place to prevent the introduction of infectious disease and spread from any infected animals. All staff must understand the procedures.

If there is evidence of external parasites, such as fleas, ticks, lice or mites, treat the horse according to best practice. Use a product authorised by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate where necessary. Records of treatment must be kept.

A preventative plan must be in place and include information about:

- effective grassland management
- use of current anthelmintics (treatment of parasitic worms) alongside faecal egg counts where needed

> 9.5 All excreta and soiled bedding for disposal must be stored and disposed of in a hygienic manner and in accordance with any relevant legislation.

There should ideally be a muck heap located at least 10 metres away from any stables. It must be removed from the site at regular intervals.

Siting and storage of any muck heap must:

- follow environmental legislation
- avoid contamination of waterways

> 9.6 Sick or injured animals must receive prompt attention from a vet or, in the case of fish, an appropriately competent person and the advice of that vet or, in the case of fish, that competent person must be followed.

When a competent person suspects a horse is ill or injured, they must contact a vet for advice immediately. Instructions for treatment must be recorded. Minor ailments can be dealt with by a competent person.

> 9.7 Where necessary, animals must receive preventative treatment by an appropriately competent person.

Routine and documented treatment must be in place for internal and external parasites.

A homoeopathic vaccination is not an acceptable form of preventative treatment. Vaccinations must only be administered by a vet.

A vaccination plan must consider:

- biosecurity
- horse travel movements

> 9.8 The licence holder must register with a vet with an appropriate level of experience in the health and welfare requirements of any animals specified in the licence and the contact details of that person must be readily available to all staff on the premises used for the licensable activity.

The vet’s details must be displayed where they can be easily seen by all staff members.

This must the include:

- name
- address
- telephone number
- out of hours telephone number

> 9.9 Prescribed medicines must be stored safely and securely to safeguard against unauthorised access, at the correct temperature, and used in accordance with the instructions of the vet.

Any medication given must be prescribed or recommended for the individual horse by a vet. It must be recorded in each instance.

All treatment must be completed to the instructions given by the vet.

Prescription only medications (POMs) must:

- be kept in a lockable container
- have a nominated responsible person to act as key holder or issuer of medications

Records of POMs given must be recorded in horse passports by the vet or owner where required.

All unused medication must be disposed of appropriately. It may need to be returned to the vet who prescribed them.

> 9.10 Medicines other than prescribed medicines must be stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the instructions of the manufacturer or vet.

Care must be taken when disposing sharp instruments such as needles into an appropriate yellow sharps container. These should be emptied as hazardous waste. They must be securely stored by a competent person.

> 9.11 Cleaning products must be suitable, safe and effective against pathogens that pose a risk to the animals. They must be used, stored and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and used in a way which prevents distress or suffering of the animals.

Any cleaning and disinfectant products that are used must be based on suitability, safety, compatibility and effectiveness.

Cleaning and disinfection products must be used in line with the manufacturer's instructions. Staff using cleaning products must be competent in the safe use of detergents and fluids.

Cleaning products must:

- be kept out of the reach of animals
- never be left in stables or stalls

Standing water must not be allowed to build up, because of the possibility of pathogens and biting flies that live in moist environments.

Any equipment that has been used on an infectious or suspected infectious animal must either be:

- cleaned and disinfected after use
- disposed of

> 9.12 No person may euthanise an animal except a vet or a person who has been authorised by a vet as competent for such purpose or:

(a) in the case of fish, a person who is competent for such purpose

(b) in the case of horses, a person who is competent, and who holds a licence or certificate, for such purpose

The licence holder must be able to show which veterinary practice or competent person will be contacted. The passport for the horse must be available for the vet or competent person to check the identity of the animal.

A record of all animals that have been euthanised must be kept for 36 months. It must include:

- the name of the person who euthanised the animal
- how the carcass was disposed of

> 9.13 All animals must be checked at least once daily and more regularly as necessary to check for any signs of pain, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour. Vulnerable animals must be checked more frequently.

Horses must be checked for signs of:

- illness
- injury
- stress
- fear
- anxiety
- pain
- abnormal behaviour for the horse

> 9.14 Any signs of pain, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour must be recorded and the advice and further advice (if necessary) of a vet (or in the case of fish, of an appropriately competent person) must be sought and followed.

10.0 Emergencies

> 10.1 A written emergency plan, acceptable to the local authority, must be in place, known and available to all the people on the premises used for the licensable activity, and followed where necessary to ensure appropriate steps are taken to protect all the people and animals on the premises in case of fire or in case of breakdowns for essential heating, ventilation and aeration or filtration systems or other emergencies.

There must be a preventative fire risk assessment that includes a location map showing access and exits for people and horses. Entrances and fire exits must be clear of obstructions at all times.

Suitable firefighting, prevention and detection equipment must be provided and maintained in good working order. Buildings that are subject to building regulations need at least one working suitable fire detection system installed. It must be in a suitable location on each separate level or floor of the property. This includes any buildings where horses are kept in stables or stalls.

There must be awareness about the risk of entrapment of horses and the procedures to release them.

Emergency drills must be practiced regularly. These practices must be recorded with any failings noted and addressed in the procedures. Drills must be carried out at least annually, or as determined by fire risk assessments.

All new members of staff must have this fire awareness as part of their induction programme.

There must be a plan for housing for the horses if the premises become uninhabitable - even if field-only provision is available. There must also be contingency planning for extreme weather.

There must be an accessible and current human and equine first aid kit available. There must also be an accident reporting procedure which complies with the Health and Safety Executive.

There must be a portable human first aid kit available for use off-property, if relevant. The licence holder must display a list of people that are qualified in first aid.

> 10.2 The plan must include details of the emergency measures to be taken for the extrication of the animals should the premises become uninhabitable and an emergency telephone list that includes the fire service and police.

> 10.3 External doors and gates must be lockable.

> 10.4 A designated key holder with access to all animal areas must at all times be within reasonable travel distance of the premises and available to attend in an emergency.

A reasonable distance is interpreted as no more than 30 minutes travelling time in normal conditions.

In a non-domestic setting, an emergency contact name and number must be displayed outside of the premises.

Internal gates and doors to stables should not be locked to allow for safe evacuation of horses and people in an emergency situation.

Optional higher standard for emergencies
A competent person must be on site at all times.

Part B – Specific conditions: hiring out horses (schedule 5 of the regulations)

Paragraph numbers relate to the conditions in the schedules of the regulations.

2.0 Eligibility

> 2.1 The licence holder must:

(a) hold an appropriate formal qualification, or have sufficient demonstrable experience, in the management of horses

(b) hold a valid certificate of public liability insurance which both

(i) insures the licence holder against liability for any injury sustained by, and the death of, any client

(ii) insures any client against liability for any injury sustained by, and the death of, any other person, caused by or arising out of the hire of the horse

The licence holder must either:

- have a formal qualification which is appropriate for the role they take in the licensable activity
- show experience which is sufficient for the role they take in the licensable activity

The licence holder must have employers' liability insurance if required. This must be displayed with the copy of the licence.

> 2.2 The certificate mentioned in subparagraph (1)(b) must be clearly and prominently displayed at the premises.

3.0 Supervision

> 3.1 The activity must not at any time be left in the charge of a person aged under 18 years.

This includes managing the facility and dealing with clients.

> 3.2 No horse may be hired out except under the supervision of a person aged 16 years or more unless the licence holder is satisfied that the person hiring the horse is competent to ride without supervision.

> 3.3 The following must be clearly and prominently displayed at the premises:

(a) the full name, postal address (including postcode) and telephone number of the licence holder or other person with management responsibilities in respect of the activity

(b) instructions as to the action to be taken in the event of a fire or other emergency.

4.0 Suitable environment

> 4.1 It must be practicable to bring all the horses at the premises under cover.

There must be access to safe shelter appropriate for seasonal conditions for all horses. This includes horses kept in stables or in a field. Examples include a field shelter, barn or suitable natural shelter such as hedges or trees.

This can include off-site facilities (for example, stables in a neighbouring farm).

> 4.2 Suitable storage must be provided and used for feed, bedding, stable equipment and saddlery.

> 4.3 All arena surfaces must be suitable for purpose, well drained, free of standing water and maintained regularly to keep them level.

5.0 Suitable diet

> 5.1 At all times when any horses are kept at grass, adequate pasture, shelter and clean water must be available for them.

Grazing must be managed with routine dung management to make sure there is adequate pasture for consumption. If this is not possible, alternative forage such as hay or haylage must be provided.

> 5.2 Supplementary feed and nutrients must be provided to any horse when appropriate.

> 5.3 Each horse must be fed a balanced diet of a quantity and at a frequency suitable for its age, health and workload to enable it to maintain an appropriate physical condition.

Optional higher standards for diet

Records must show individual health plans and monitoring of the dietary needs of horses. Monthly body condition scoring must be recorded - if is not optimum, advice must be sought from a vet or expert equine nutritionist. This advice must be documented.

There must be a legible and up to date feed chart on display. It must show the correct feeding amounts for individual horses.

6.0 Protection from pain, suffering and disease

> 6.1 The horses must be maintained in good health and must be in all respects physically fit.

All horses must have a structured management and care programme set out on an annual calendar or diary. It must include information about:

- foot care
- worming

- veterinary care

Saddles and tack must be checked regularly to make sure they are safe and fit the horse correctly. Saddles should be checked more often for:

- young horses
- horses that gain or lose weight
- horses with muscle development changes

All horses must have a dental check at least once a year by a vet or someone qualified by the British Association of Equine Dental Technicians.

> 6.2 There must be a preventative healthcare plan in place agreed with the appointed vet or appointed veterinary practitioner.

The health plan must show:

- the measures taken to prevent and control disease
- any medication or treatments for each horse

> 6.3 A daily record of the workload of each horse must be maintained and available for inspection at any reasonable time.

The record will set out hours of work that each horse has carried out and must be maintained over the course of that year.

> 6.4 Each horse must be suitable for the purpose for which it is kept and must not be hired out if, due to its condition, its use would be likely to cause it to suffer.

There will be records to show that each horse workload or regime is balanced to meet the needs of each horse. They will show the maximum weight of a rider for each horse.

> 6.5 Any horse found on inspection to be in need of veterinary attention must not be returned to work until the licence holder has, at the licence holder's expense, obtained from and lodged with the local authority a veterinary certificate which confirms that the horse is fit for work.

This may include the horse being lame, underweight, overweight or with any back or teeth problems affected by riding.

> 6.6 Each horse's hooves should be trimmed as often as is necessary to maintain the health, good shape and soundness of its feet and its shoes should be properly fitted and in good condition.

If shod, their shoes must be properly fitted by a registered farrier. The frequency of trimming and shoeing for each horse must be recorded and available for inspection.

> 6.7 An area suitable for the inspection of horses by a vet must be provided.

This must be a semi-dark stable to inspect eye and heart function. It must have a level firm surfaced trotting up area which allows the vet to examine the horse and observe any signs of lameness.

> 6.8 The following must not be hired out:

(a) a horse aged under 3 years

(b) a mare heavy with foal

(c) a mare whose foal has not yet been weaned

The age of the horse refers to the age that is listed on the horse passport.

A mare (female horse) can be exercised during the first 6 to 8 months of pregnancy. She should not be used 2 to 3 months before foaling, unless veterinary advice suggests otherwise. Care must be taken to make sure that a mare is not overworked.

> 6.9 The licence holder must keep a register of all horses kept for the licensable activity on the premises and each horse's valid passport showing its unique equine life number and microchip number (if any).

The licence holder may be considered the keeper of the horse in the owner's absence.

The keeper has a legal responsibility to make sure that the horse has the correct and up to date identification document. If available, the microchip number of each horse must be checked by the inspector to make sure it matches that in the passport. This only applies to horses being used for the activity.

Required higher standards for protecting horses from pain, suffering and disease

Each horse will have its own specific care plan detailing their age and any health related conditions.

Records must show individual monitoring and training plans for horses with training needs to improve their use within a riding school. This must be accompanied with evidence of regular and effective checks with the saddler for comfort and fit.

7.0 Equipment

> 7.1 All equipment provided to clients must be in good and safe condition and available for inspection at any reasonable time.

Riders must use the correct personal protective equipment for the activity. For example, hats, riding boots, gloves and body protectors as needed.

Riding hats must meet current safety standards and be worn at all times when mounted on a horse. Hats must be stored, clean and fit for purpose with clearly documented records of regular safety checks.

Saddlery and associated equipment must be in a good state of repair and checked for safety.

Jumps and equipment used in riding lessons must be fit for purpose and checked before each use for safety.

Rider registration forms must be completed and kept up to date.

They must include:

- emergency contact details
- client health conditions

Required higher standards for equipment

Initial assessments must be carried out for new riders. The details of the assessment must be recorded.

A documented risk assessment must be available for all equipment.

Examples include:

- horse clippers
- horse walker
- yard blowers
- arena levelling equipment
- any extra therapy based machines or equipment

A documented risk assessment must be available for activities, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs. It must include the need for PPE for different tasks and situations.

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