



Syllabus of Instruction

Proficiency Standards

Revised Edition – September 2019

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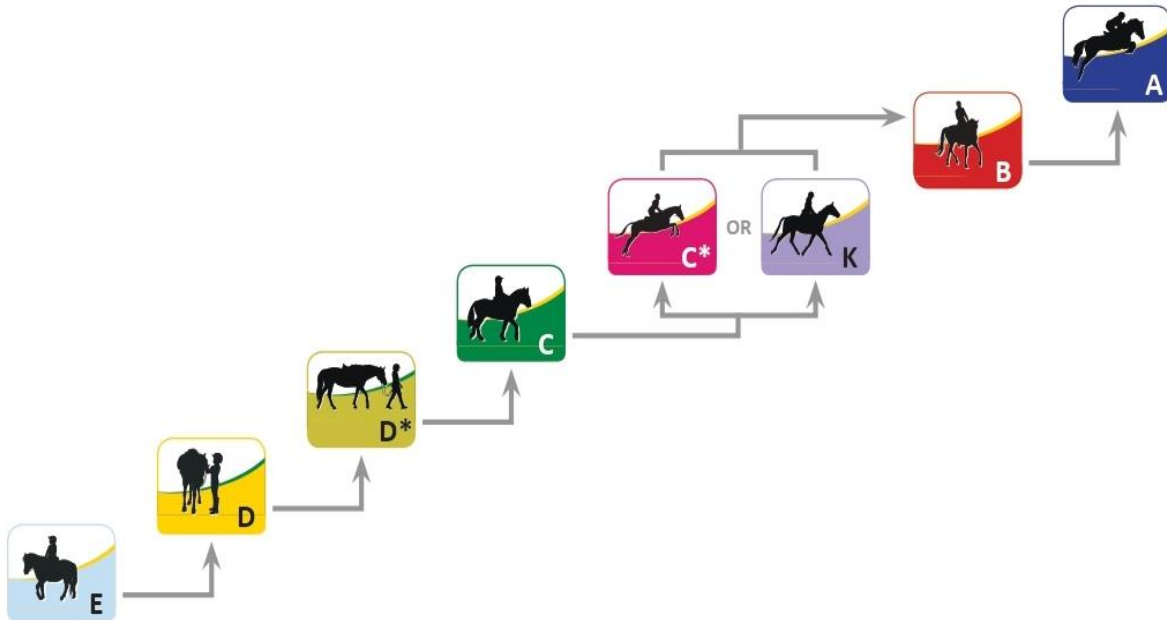


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Certificates

The Pony Club Australia Syllabus of Instruction is built on certificate levels that enable the rider to continuously develop their skills in riding, horse care and citizenship. Members are encouraged to move through the certificates at their own pace, but in the following order



- The E Certificate is optional, but recommended.
- The D, D*, C and B Certificates are pre-requisites for the following certificates.
- The C Certificate is recommended as the baseline for all members and will ensure that the rider has a good foundation of skill, safety and horsemanship.
- Candidates can progress from C to B via either the C* or the K Certificate.

Recognition

Pony Club certificates are recognised in Pony Club countries across the world, and at the higher levels demonstrate to potential employers the member’s knowledge of working with and caring for horses. Certificates are often used as a pre-requisite for selection for teams competing at the state, national and international level.

Safety

At all certificate levels, riders are expected to understand correct safety practices and demonstrate correct use of appropriate safety equipment for horse handling and ground work (such as correct handling of a lead rope) and when riding (riding boots, helmet correctly fitted, body protector when jumping etc.).

Age of candidates

Members can be examined for their certificates at any age when their coach considers they meet the competency standards.

Qualification of horse/rider combinations

Horse and rider combinations for practical assessment must have attended a minimum of two working rallies in the prior 12 months and must be the riders' qualified mount as per State/Territory Rules.

PCA Riding Centre members should be assessed after at least six hours of supervised instruction at a PCA Riding Centre in the prior 12 months, on a familiar mount.

Assessor

An Assessor within a Club may test for E, D and D* Certificates. Each State must have a panel of Assessors for C Certificates and above. Assessors should not test in their own Club unless circumstances make this necessary (e.g. excessive travel distances).

To remain on the Assessor's Panel, Assessors must be active members of a Pony Club and attend refresher courses conducted by their State. The names of Assessors on the Panel will be reviewed every three years.

Assessment

At the time of assessment, candidates may be asked to demonstrate skills that were previously assessed in prior prerequisite certificates.

Candidates must pass each section of the assessment in order to qualify for the certificate.

Assessment credits

Any section of a Test passed by the candidate will be held as credit/s until such time as all sections are passed (maximum two years from original practical Assessment date).

Journals and written papers

Written papers are no longer required for E, D, D* and C Certificates.

Candidates will be required to keep a journal for C* and above.

Written papers are an option for some parts of the higher certificates.

Manuals

Candidates will be required to work through the syllabus using Pony Club Australia certificate resources (i.e. Certificate Manuals).

Supplementary tests for practical sections

Supplementary testing may be required where horses or conditions are unsuitable on the scheduled day of assessment or where further development is required from the rider.

Supplementary testing may be undertaken at a time agreed by the Assessor and candidate once the candidate is ready and within two years of the first assessment at this level. Where possible, one of the original assessors should be engaged for the supplementary test.

Presentation

- For ridden assessments, candidates must wear Pony Club or PCA Accredited Centre formal uniform.
- The horse must be clean and tidy, with hooves showing evidence of care.
- All tack must be clean and fit correctly, and be in good repair.
- Riders should ride in a snaffle bit where possible. If another bit is used for higher certificates, the candidate should be able to explain its action.

E Certificate

The E Certificate is recommended but not compulsory.

Candidates working through the E Certificate will be riding on the lead line or transitioning to independent riding. Assessment can be completed on a lead line. The successful E Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate the following, with assistance as required:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Be familiar with the term pressure–release (may not necessarily be able to describe it accurately but understands the importance of the release of pressure)
- Know two different ways to reward the horse (scratching and food rewards).

On the Ground

- Understand the importance of correct safety equipment for riding and ground work
- Understand the need for gloves, boots, helmet, long pants, long sleeves, shirt tucked in, and lead rope held correctly
- Catch and let go of the horse
- Lead the horse correctly
- Understand how to tie up their horse safely
- Demonstrate stop and go responses while leading.

Under Saddle

- Mount and dismount safely
- Understand some basic elements of the correct position
- Hold the reins correctly
- Be developing rising trot
- Stop / slow, go forward and turn the horse.

Horse Management

- Know these parts of the horse: nostril, mane, wither, forelock, knee, flank, fetlock, ears, forehead
- Know some colours (chestnut, bay or brown and grey)
- Know some markings (star, blaze and socks)
- Know some basic grooming tools and how to use them with assistance (dandy brush, body brush, curry comb, hoof pick)
- Understand what the horse requires to be healthy (roughage, water, shade, shelter, friends)
- Know how to clean tack
- Know these items of tack (bridle, bit, reins, saddle, girth, stirrups).

D Certificate

There are no prerequisites for the D Certificate but the E Certificate is recommended preparation. The successful D Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate the following, with assistance as required:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Understand the flight response
- Understand (though may not necessarily be able to explain at this stage) pressure–release training, reward training and punishment
- Know these two ways to reward the horse: scratching and food.

On the Ground

- Understand the safety requirements for ground work
- Catch and let the horse go safely
- Tie the horse up safely
- Demonstrate stop, slow, step back, go and turn in hand
- Complete a basic ground work dressage test.

Under Saddle

- Mount and dismount safely
- Hold the reins correctly
- Demonstrate a riding position that is developing correctly
- Walk, rising trot and canter safely and in control
- Stop/slow, go forward and turn the horse
- Complete a basic ridden dressage test
- Understand the rules of riding in groups.

Horse Management

- Know these parts of the horse: nostril, mane, wither, forelock, knee, flank, fetlock, ears, forehead, eye, muzzle, crest, neck, shoulder, back, loins, rump, tail, hock and hoof
- Know and demonstrate the correct and safe use of these basic grooming tools: dandy brush, body brush, curry comb, hoof pick
- Demonstrate correct and safe picking out of the hooves
- Know these basic requirements of the horse: roughage, water, shade, shelter, friends
- Tie a hay net safely
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Know how to clean tack
- Know these items of tack: bridle, bit, reins, cheek strap, brow band, nose band, throat lash, saddle, girth, stirrups, pommel, leathers, seat, crupper, surcingle.

D* Certificate

The D Certificate is a pre-requisite.

For assessment, D* Certificate candidates will be required to jump a maximum height and width of 45cm. The successful D* Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the D Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Understand and recognise the flight response
- Understand and be able to explain: pressure–release, reward training, punishment, habituation.

On the Ground

- Know the following foundation responses: stop, go forward, turn the shoulders left, turn the shoulders right, move the hindquarters left and move the hindquarters right
- Complete a ground work dressage test.

Under Saddle

- Understand correct fitting of noseband
- Saddle and bridle a horse with assistance if necessary
- Be developing a correct riding position
- Stop with accuracy
- Demonstrate clear downward transitions
- Be able to explain the concept of self-carriage
- Demonstrate clear upward transitions
- Demonstrate correct turn and also riding on straight lines (between two points)
- Be developing an understanding of rising diagonals
- Demonstrate canter in an enclosed arena
- Ride a simple dressage test
- Know and discuss some mounted games
- Know how to ride on the road / traffic rules (including hand signals)
- Demonstrate crest release
- Walk and trot over poles
- Negotiate small jumps with a maximum height and width of 45cm.

Horse Management

- Understand the Five Freedoms of horse welfare
- Know the following parts of the horse: throat, elbow, pastern, dock, coronet, hips, hock, stifle, ribs, cheek)
- Demonstrate the correct way to brush a tail
- Know some parts of the hoof (wall, sole, frog, heels)
- Discuss correct hoof management practices
- Know feeding and living conditions and the daily horse checklist (water, fences, gates, pasture, rug, horse).
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Know some common illnesses or minor injuries (girth gall, cold, colic, laminitis).
- Discuss correct management of tack (including checking stitching and cleaning if wet etc.)
- Identify the following items of tack (bridle, bit, reins, cheek strap, brow band, nose band, throat lash, saddle, girth, stirrups, pommel, leathers, seat, crupper, surcingle, cantle, waist, gullet, stirrup bar, sweat flap).

C Certificate

The D* Certificate is a pre-requisite.

For assessment, C Certificate candidates will be required to jump a maximum height and width of 65cm. The successful C Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the D* Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- An understanding of the horse's evolution and how it still influences the modern horse
- Understand and manage the flight response
- Discuss the three parts of pressure-release training (light aid, stronger aid, release)
- Discuss reward training, punishment (and the pitfalls of punishment) and habituation in further detail
- Discuss classical conditioning.

On the Ground

- Demonstrate accurate stop, step back and slow from light signals
- Demonstrate accurate go and turn from light signals
- Demonstrate park
- Explain how a voice cue is trained
- Complete a ground work dressage test with accuracy and control.

Under Saddle

- Demonstrate correct riding position
- Stop with accuracy and from light signals
- Demonstrate clear downward transitions
- Change pace within each gait in self-carriage
- Demonstrate clear, accurate upward transitions
- Show correct rising diagonals
- Demonstrate canter on straight lines and 20m circles (both reins) and recognise leading leg
- Know the footfalls at trot and canter
- Ride without stirrups at walk and trot
- Ride with reins in one hand at walk and trot
- Shorten and lengthen the reins whilst riding one-handed
- Alter the stirrups and girth while mounted (at the halt)
- Demonstrate correct two-point and three-point position. Discuss when to use them.
- Demonstrate balanced riding over poles, both single and in sequence
- Negotiate small show jumps, maximum height and width of 65cm

- Know a range of types of show jumping fences
- Know jumping strides and distances
- Walk a show jumping course, demonstrating a knowledge of the rules and an understanding of the factors to take into consideration
- Demonstrate riding over small cross-country obstacles (max height 65cm).

Horse Management

- Know these parts of the horse: poll, point of hip, hind quarters, gaskin, flank, jowl, breast, ribs, cannon bone, forearm, chestnut, and ergot
- Know these markings: star, snip, blaze, stripe, socks, stockings
- Know these colours: chestnut, bay, brown, black, palomino and grey
- Know how horses are measured
- Know and demonstrate the correct use of the following grooming tools: combs, sponge, towel, bot knife
- Discuss correct hoof management practices (shoeing, trimming etc.)
- Identify the bars of the hoof
- Know these farrier's tools: rasp, knife, cutters, hammer, buffer, pincer
- Discuss the requirements for transporting horses
- Know the daily paddock checklist (water, fences, gates, pasture, rug, horse)
- Know the main rules for feeding horses
- Know how to treat: a girth gall, sore back, sore mouth
- Discuss tetanus prevention and parasite management
- Know what to have in a basic first aid kit for horses
- Discuss when to call the vet
- Know the symptoms of colic, greasy heel, lameness, minor wounds, seedy toe, a stone in the foot, strangles, thrush and laminitis
- Discuss appropriate dental care for horses
- Discuss saddle fitting
- Demonstrate a correctly fitted saddle and bridle
- Know how to care for tack (including checking stitching)
- Identify the following parts of a saddle: cantle, waist, gullet, sweat flap
- Discuss the use of martingales, breast plates, surcingles, cruppers
- Demonstrate a correctly fitted rug and safe rugging practices
- Know the horse's thermoneutral zone and understand the implications for rugging.

C* Certificate

The C Certificate is a pre-requisite. Holders of C Certificates can progress to either the C* or the K Certificate. The K Certificate is a non-jumping alternative to the C* Certificate, with elective subjects.

For assessment, C* Certificate candidates will be required to jump a maximum height and width of 85cm.

A journal in an appropriate format of the year's riding and training is required for assessment.

The successful C* Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the C Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Discuss the ten principles of training
- Briefly explain the evolution and changing role of horses within human society
- Discuss the horse's memory, ability to form habits and intelligence
- Have a very thorough understanding of pressure-release and reward training
- Explain conditioned reinforcers and their use
- Understand punishment and habituation
- Explain overshadowing
- Show a developing understanding of the shaping process.

On the Ground

- Understand the importance of clear, obedient responses on the ground
- Demonstrate an understanding of the shaping process throughout ground work
- Discuss the process of training a horse to step backward from voice cue
- Know the difference between steps and strides
- Demonstrate a developing ability to move the horse's hindquarters.
- Demonstrate park and head down

Under Saddle

- Discuss how a metronome can be used in horse training
- Demonstrate stop, slow and step back from light aids
- Understand the biomechanics of turn
- Ride a turn on the forehand
- Ride with reins in one hand at walk, trot and canter
- Ride without stirrups at walk, trot and canter
- Demonstrate correct position
- Be fluent with diagonal changes and be developing a feel for the correct diagonal

- Be proficient in cantering – able to achieve correct leads most of the time and correct them when they are incorrect
- Know the footfalls of all gaits
- Ride at 220, 350, 400 and 450 metres per minute with a degree of accuracy
- Discuss warming up and cooling down
- Discuss how to manage the horse when they first start going to events and competitions and have a clear understanding of safe practices in this situation
- Discuss the etiquette for the warm up arena.

Jumping

- Understand two different forms of rein release (i.e. crest and automatic (direct) release)
- Negotiate small show jumps with calmness and an understanding of good training practices, maximum height and width of 85cms
- Relate a discussion of shaping and punishment to jumping
- Demonstrate riding over small cross-country obstacles (at least 85cm)
- Know the different types of cross-country obstacles

Lungeing

- Discuss the reasons for lungeing
- Discuss correct and safe attire and tack for lungeing
- Demonstrate correct, safe lungeing practices.

Horse Management

- Discuss the Five Freedoms
- Demonstrate how to neatly plait a mane and tail
- Discuss trimming and clipping styles. Understand the reasons for not trimming horse feathers and vibrissae (whiskers)
- Discuss correct hoof management practices (shoeing, trimming etc.)
- Know the farrier's tools (rasp, knife, cutters, hammer, buffer, pincers).
- Discuss the requirements for safe transportation of horses
- Know the paddock checklist
- Know the daily checklist for the paddocked horse
- Understand the care requirements for both a paddocked and stabled horse
- Discuss stable bedding types
- Discuss feeding guidelines
- Discuss different types of hay and basic feeds appropriate to the local area
- Discuss letting the horse down for spell
- Discuss the process of getting a horse fit after spell
- Know when to call the vet

- Know how to take the following observations for the vet: heart rate, respiration rate, temperature, manure
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Describe a well-stocked first aid kit and the use of each item of contents
- Bandage a minor leg wound
- Be able to detect lameness
- Discuss how to treat deep wounds and skin disorders
- Discuss the identification and treatment of common ailments including laminitis, colds, greasy heel and seedy toe
- Discuss parasite control appropriate to the local area
- Discuss vaccinations for tetanus and strangles, plus other vaccinations needed for the local area.
- Discuss dental care
- Be able to tell a horse's age by looking at the teeth
- Demonstrate an understanding of correctly fitted tack including martingales
- Understand the different types of bits
- Discuss how to fit leg protection to the horse
- Explain how to maintain rugs and grooming equipment.

K Certificate

C Certificate is a pre-requisite.

The K Certificate is an alternative to the C* Certificate. K Certificate candidates will complete the C* curriculum in all areas except jumping and with an additional requirement to complete one Alternative Discipline Component of their choice *and* either a Community Service Component *or* a New Skill Component (detailed below). Candidates should keep a journal of their progress in an appropriate format, which will be included in assessment.

The successful K Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the C Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Discuss the ten principles of training
- Briefly explain the horse's evolution and changing role within human society
- Discuss the horse's memory, ability to form habits and intelligence
- Have a very thorough understanding of pressure-release and reward training
- Explain conditioned reinforcers and their use
- Understand punishment and habituation
- Explain overshadowing
- Show a developing understanding of the shaping process.

On the Ground

- Understand the importance of clear, obedient responses on the ground
- Demonstrate an understanding of the shaping process throughout ground work
- Discuss the process of training a horse to step backward from voice cue
- Know the difference between steps and strides
- Demonstrate a developing ability to move the horse's hindquarters.
- Demonstrate park and head down

Under Saddle

- Discuss how a metronome can be used in horse training
- Demonstrate stop, slow and step back from light aids
- Understand the biomechanics of turn
- Ride a turn on the forehand
- Ride with reins in one hand at walk, trot and canter
- Ride without stirrups at walk, trot and canter
- Demonstrate correct position
- Be fluent with diagonal changes and be developing a feel for the correct diagonal

- Be proficient in cantering – able to achieve correct leads most of the time and correct them when they are incorrect
- Know the footfalls of the gaits
- Ride at 220, 350, 400 and 450 metres per minute with a degree of accuracy
- Discuss warming up and cooling down
- Discuss how to manage the horse when they first start going to events and competitions and have a clear understanding of safe practices in this situation
- Discuss the etiquette for the warm up arena.

Lungeing

- Discuss the reasons for lungeing
- Discuss correct and safe attire and tack for lungeing
- Demonstrate correct, safe lungeing practices.

Horse Management

- Discuss the Five Freedoms
- Demonstrate how to neatly plait a mane and tail
- Discuss trimming and clipping styles. Understand the reasons for not trimming horse feathers and vibrissae (whiskers)
- Discuss correct hoof management practices (shoeing, trimming etc.)
- Know the farrier's tools (rasp, knife, cutters, hammer, buffer, pincers).
- Discuss the requirements for safe transportation of horses
- Know the paddock checklist
- Know the daily checklist for the paddocked horse
- Understand the care requirements for both a paddocked and stabled horse
- Discuss stable bedding types
- Discuss feeding guidelines
- Discuss different types of hay and basic feeds appropriate to the local area
- Discuss letting the horse down for spell
- Discuss the process of getting a horse fit after spell
- Know when to call the vet
- Know how to take the following observations for the vet: heart rate, respiration rate, temperature, manure
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Describe a well-stocked first aid kit and the use of each item of contents
- Bandage a minor leg wound
- Be able to detect lameness
- Discuss how to treat deep wounds and skin disorders

- Discuss the identification and treatment of common ailments including laminitis, colds, greasy heel and seedy toe
- Discuss parasite control appropriate to the local area
- Discuss vaccinations for tetanus and strangles, plus vaccinations related to the local area.
- Discuss dental care
- Be able to tell a horse's age by looking at the teeth
- Demonstrate an understanding of correctly fitted tack including martingales
- Understand the different types of bits
- Discuss how to fit leg protection to the horse
- Explain how to maintain rugs and grooming equipment.

Additional K Certificate Components

Before beginning the K Certificate, the candidate, in discussion with their Pony Club coach and parents (if appropriate), will decide on their areas of interest, the ways in which the number of hours will be recorded and approved, and the forms of evidence to be presented to the examiners. Candidates should keep track of their progress in their journal, which will form part of assessment.

Alternative discipline component

K candidates will choose an equestrian discipline to work on and develop their skills. At least 20 hours throughout the year should be dedicated to this. The discipline could include harness driving, mounted archery, clicker training or agility.

And either:

Community service component

K Certificate candidates will spend 10 – 15 hours on a project that will benefit the local equestrian community. This could include develop a website for a local equestrian charity, develop a risk management plan for club events, write a report on local trail infrastructure, write a local newspaper article on your Club, volunteer with a horse rescue organisation or Pony Club Australia.

Or:

New skill component

Candidate will spend 10-15 hours developing a new skill. This should be equestrian or related in some way. Skills could include: course designing for cross country and show jumping, clipping, float maintenance, technical large animal emergency rescue training. Other skills that will benefit Pony Club could also be proposed, such a First Aid certificate.

The new skill component could also be in the form of a research project of 2500 words in an area of interest, e.g. advanced Equitation Science principles, feeding, conformation and physiology, conditioning practices for sport horses, biosecurity risk management, technical large animal emergency rescue, event risk management or emergency and natural hazard management.

B Certificate

NOTE: This is the 2013/2016 syllabus for B Certificate. The B Certificate curriculum is due to be updated in late 2019.

The C* or K Certificate is a pre-requisite.

The successful B Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all the skills of either the C* or the K Certificate, plus the following:

Under Saddle – On the Flat

- Position at all paces becoming well-established and showing some depth, enabling the rider to apply aids smoothly and accurately
- Understand the importance of warming up and demonstrate its application
- Improved knowledge of the horse's footfalls
- Recognise and understand the horse's movement including faults
- Explain the following:
 - Rhythm and tempo
 - 'Accepting the bit' and 'being on the bit'
 - Straightness
 - Impulsion.
- Ride the following movements in a 20m x 60m arena and explain the aids
 - Medium walk and free walk on a long rein
 - Working trot and canter
 - Lengthened strides at trot and canter – must cover more ground – including across the diagonal and on a circle
 - Halt
 - Circles to 10m at walk and trot and 15m at canter
 - Serpentine at trot
 - Walk-canter transition
 - Counter canter – 2m loop off the long side
 - Change the canter lead through trot and walk.
- Ride and explain the turn on the forehand including the horse's outline and correct placement of the feet
- Ride and explain the leg yield including the horse's outline and correct placement of the feet
- Knowledge of Pony Club Australia and FEI (EA) dressage rules.

Under Saddle – Jumping

The jumping component should be assessed over fences 0.85 – 1.0m

- Maintain a balanced position over fences on varied terrain including drop fences, banks and ditches
- Jump a variety of fences and combinations, demonstrating tempo, line and rhythm in showjumping and cross-country
- Understand and show use of poles and/or cavaletti and grids including trot and canter exercises to improve the horse's jumping
- Land on the correct lead after jumping a fence. Candidate should recognise when they need to rebalance and correct canter lead
- Show lengthening and shortening of the canter stride and understand the application of this when riding related lines
- Know the correct use of the whip and show understanding of the reasons for behaviour warranting its use
- Demonstrate knowledge of pace, riding at 350, 400 and 450 metres per minute
- Be able to build simple schooling fences and combinations and plan a simple showjumping course
- Walk and discuss a jumping course, both showjumping and cross-country
- Know Pony Club Australia and FEI (EA) rules for showjumping and horse trials.

Assessment of Different Horses

- Ride and assess different horses and give accurate feedback using correct terminology (the horses provided to be well mannered, known to the Assessor and suitable for the task).

Lungeing

- Know principles, benefits, and potential dangers of lungeing
- Know correct equipment required for horse and handler, and their purpose
- Understand safe practices to be adopted when lungeing
- Demonstrate control of the horse at walk, trot, canter and show a few lengthened strides of trot
- Candidate to:
 - Start horse off correctly
 - Demonstrate a warm up phase without side reins
 - Demonstrate the work session with side reins correctly attached
 - Cool down without side reins.

Horse Care and Management

- Paddocking
 - Understand the management of paddocks appropriate to the area including harrowing, rotation, fertilising
 - Knowledge of noxious weeds and poisonous plants
 - Knowledge of suitable pasture.
- Feeding, Watering, Conditioning
 - Know types of feed and be able to assess value and quality
 - Understand the relationship of feed to the type of work the horse is doing
 - Basic knowledge of feed programs for their horse and be able to describe feed for
 - Horse not in work
 - Horse in light work (3-4 days per week)
 - Horse in full competition work for all disciplines
 - Rest day.
 - Prepare a horse for strenuous work, for example, a Pony Club One Day Event
 - Care for the horse before, during and after strenuous work including knowledge of feed program on the day of competition.
- Stabling
 - Know how to care for the fully stabled horse to maintain its standard of training and health.
 - Outline a stable routine
 - Describe different types of bedding and their maintenance
 - Have knowledge of stable vices and their causes
 - Recognise signs of ill health.
- Transport of horses
 - Explain what parts of the float or truck need regular maintenance. Have knowledge of maintenance of brakes, lights, floor, ramp, tyres, hitch and ball, breeching bar or safety chain.
 - Demonstrate appropriate rugging and horse protection
- Grooming, Trimming, Clipping
 - Groom efficiently and effectively to show ring standard.
 - Explain care for the clipped horse and understand the different types of clip. Identify types of clip (full, belly, trace, hunting and blanket)
- Care of Feet and Shoeing
 - Understand the principles of shoeing and recognise a well shod horse.
 - Know the parts of the foot and how they function (heel, bulbs of heel, cleft and point of frog, bars, wall, toe, white line, coronet band and the bone structure)

- Health, Ailments, Injuries
 - Take temperature, pulse and respiration.
 - Know how to care for the horse's teeth and recognise potential problems.
 - Demonstrate knowledge of internal and external parasites.
 - Administer a worm paste
 - Explain life cycles of large and small strongyles, bots, ascarids, tape worm and pin worms
 - Recognise and treat lice, ringworm, ticks, onchocerca
 - Be able to recognise, know the cause of, and where applicable, treat the following:
 - Azoturia
 - Heat stress / dehydration
 - Hoof abscess
 - Stomach ulcers
 - Be able to administer first aid to the horse.
 - Candidates must be able to apply a pressure bandage and figure of eight bandage.
 - Know when to call the Veterinarian and be able to carry out prescribed treatment of wounds, ailments and lameness.
- Soundness
 - Recognise good and poor conformation of the horse and the effect of this on soundness and action.
 - Describe conformation faults affecting a horse's performance and longevity.
 - Discuss the following causes of unsoundness:
 - Bog spavin
 - Bone spavin
 - Curb
 - Navicular disease
 - Ringbone
 - Sidebone
 - Splints
 - Tendon problems
 - Thoroughpin
 - Windgalls
 - Broken wind
 - Roaring and whistling.
- Tack and equipment
 - Bandage for exercise, competition and travel
 - Fit tack correctly
 - Know the following five groups of bits/bridles and their action: snaffle, Pelham, double, gag, bitless
 - Be familiar with biting allowed for Pony Club competitions
 - Understand the care, cleaning and storage of equipment.

A Certificate

NOTE: This is the 2013/2016 syllabus for A Certificate. The A Certificate curriculum is due to be updated in late 2019.

The B Certificate is a prerequisite.

The A Certificate is the highest award of the Pony Club and provides a comprehensive assessment in horsemastership for well trained and experienced members.

The Candidate must present for the test on a qualified (rally attendance requirements) horse suitable for this level and able to demonstrate all requirements of the A Certificate.

Candidates will be examined riding experienced and 'green' horses on the flat and will be asked to assess each horse and discuss its ongoing training program.

The successful A Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all the skills of the B Certificate, plus the following:

Under Saddle - on the Flat

- Show correct paces with the horse on the bit and working towards collection
- Perform and explain the aids for each of the following movements using correct and appropriate terminology:
 - Medium trot and canter
 - Half pirouette at walk
 - Simple change of leg
 - Counter canter
 - Rein back
 - Shoulder-in at trot.
- The candidate must:
 - Show an established position and be able to maintain the correct position while applying the aids. Position to be consistent and correct on both reins with an effective lower leg
 - Have a sound knowledge of training terms, e.g. impulsion, on the bit, etc., and of the stages of training
 - Be able to change the horse's frame, outline and length of stride and maintain its balance throughout all work
 - Be able to assess the way the horse is working and recognise when the horse is out of balance and be able to improve it

- Use simple exercises/school figures, to show horse is willing to move away from the leg, accept driving and restraining aids, and control line of travel and straightness in the horse
- Show good use of allocated area and understanding of exercises and school figures appropriate to the horse's training and performance on the day
- Encourage the horse to work with a softer, rounder back
- Demonstrate/have knowledge of exercises to improve the rider's position
- Be able to give feedback using correct and appropriate terminology.
- There should be some discussion on whether the rider has trained the horse, and how long the combination has been together. The horse should:
 - Be forward, active and show relaxation
 - Be consistent in rhythm and tempo in all paces with an even acceptance of the bridle on both reins
 - Be forward and obedient in transitions both within the pace and from one pace to another
 - Show correct flexion and bend.
- Discuss half pass, travers and renvers
- Ride in a double bridle. The candidate must be able to:
 - Correctly fit a double bridle
 - Demonstrate a good knowledge of the action of and reasons for using a double bridle
 - Know types of bridoons and curbs.

Under Saddle – Jumping

Jumping is to be assessed over fences with a maximum height of 1.10m and minimum height of 1.00m. Course should be a minimum of nine jumps and include combinations, changes of direction, related fences and a mixture of straight and spread fences.

- Show a well-established, correct and adaptable jumping position over show jumps and cross-country fences.
 - Candidate must be looking to line with good eye contact, soft elbows and hands, following but not restricting contact and a very established lower leg position. Turns and transitions must be ridden correctly.
- Control of the horse's pace and stride.
 - Horse to be working in a relaxed and correct frame with activity, rhythm, tempo, consistent contact and control of line.
 - Horse to be working through the paces showing correct transitions, straightness and correct bend and flexion through all work.
 - Candidate to be asked to show landing on a specified leading leg. Flying changes should be automatic.
 - Candidate to demonstrate pace work.

- Sound knowledge of the use of gymnastic exercises to improve a horse's jumping.
 - Understand the use of trot and canter poles to help establish rhythm.
 - Set up gymnastic exercises for use at trot and canter and to demonstrate knowledge of gymnastic training programmes, with exercises for educating, schooling, correcting problems and improving the horse's techniques at all levels.
- Build schooling fences.
 - Show knowledge of distances and understanding of the length of a horse's non-jumping stride
- Show balance and control over a variety of cross-country terrain and fences including banks, ditches, water, apex and arrow-head fences
- Assess the horse's present performance, potential, and how it could be improved

Assessment of Different Horses

- Candidates will be tested on different horses, on the flat and over a few small training fences
- The horses supplied for the candidate to ride must be well known and approved by the Assessor prior to the Assessment. It is suggested that one horse be of Preliminary / Novice level, one of Elementary and the other Medium level. It is important that this section is conducted in a safe, approved and enclosed area
- Candidate will be given 10 – 20 minutes to ride and assess the horse in all paces followed by discussion and questioning by the Assessor. The candidate should be able to ride the horse quietly, without upsetting the balance
- The candidate must:
 - Approach the horse with a knowledgeable and visual assessment of the horse and gear
 - Demonstrate ability to assess relevant information regarding the horse before riding, i.e., tolerance to whip and spurs, level of education, mount correctly, acceptance of aids, horse's response to new surroundings
 - Give an accurate assessment of the horse's level of education and improvements which could be made.

Lungeing

The candidate should:

- Know the principles and benefits of lungeing
- Know correct equipment required for horse and handler
- Teach a horse to lunge and obey the voice
- Demonstrate control of the horse at walk, trot and canter
- Show medium trot and working canter

Long Reining

A specialist coach is required to teach and examine this module. Correct gear to include:

- Snaffle bridle with either a noseband or lungeing cavesson with reins removed
- Roller with several levels of rings
- Roller pad
- Reins to be approximately 10m long and slide easily through the rings
- Bandages or boots without buckles on all four legs and may use overreach boots

The candidate should:

- Demonstrate a good understanding of the reasons for long-reining
- Discuss the steps and equipment which may be used when starting off a young horse
- Have a very sound knowledge of the safety issues which must be observed
- Demonstrate a competent technique lungeing with two reins in a circle.

Horse Handling

- Breaking-in
 - The Candidate must have assisted a horse breaker throughout the breaking in of a horse including halter breaking, tying up
 - The Candidate is not required to break-in a horse. He/she must be able to give a clear picture of how the breaking-in is carried out
 - Discuss the general handling of foals and weanlings.
- Demonstrate safe practice.
 - Lead a horse in hand on near and off side for showing and veterinary inspection.
- Use of twitch, knee hobbles, and other methods of restraint. Apply a twitch and knee hobbles.

Horse Care and Management

- Feeding, Watering, Conditioning
 - Knowledge of the horse's digestive system. Peculiarities including stomach capacity, large and small intestine, grazing habits
 - Understanding of feed requirements
 - Types
 - Qualities
 - Purchasing
 - Methods of feeding
 - Protein
 - Fats
 - Carbohydrates
 - Fibre
 - Vitamins and minerals
 - Calcium : phosphorus ratio.
 - Know feeding and conditioning programs for different types of horses for specified work, e.g. One Day Event, Endurance Riding, Pony Club or Centre Camp, horse returning after a spell etc.
 - Know how to care for horse before, during and after strenuous work.

- Paddocking
 - Understand the management of a number of horses at grass including water, feed and fencing
 - Assess the quality of pasture in a paddock
 - Demonstrate basic knowledge of pasture management and the use of fertilisers, harrowing, topping, weed control and rotation
 - Know which weeds/plants are dangerous to horses.
- Stabling
 - Show knowledge of stable complex design including dimensions, materials, ventilation and drainage
 - Demonstrate fire precautions in stables
 - Understand the siting of and building a manure heap
 - Explain different types of bedding and preparation of stable bed
 - Explain storage of bedding, hay, and hard feed
 - Discuss construction and use of yards
 - Discuss stable routine for horses in work
 - Be able to deal with a cast horse, with assistance
 - Discuss vices and undesirable habits of stabled horses
 - windsucking, weaving, crib biting
 - biting, kicking
- Transport of horses
 - Preparation for travelling horses by road, air or sea
 - State border, international requirements and travel documentation
 - adjustment of feed and exercise
 - rugging
 - protective equipment
 - monitor for travel sickness and dehydration during and after the trip
 - introduction of feed and work after a lengthy trip.
 - Loading and unloading
 - demonstrate loading their own horse
 - discuss methods of loading difficult horses.
 - Float maintenance
 - tyre type and pressure (including spare), condition of bearings,
 - condition of floor and ramp
 - lights
 - coupling/hitch
 - be able to check braking system
 - ventilation.
 - Know the state licensing requirements for vehicles towing horse floats.

- Grooming, trimming, clipping
 - Know when, why, and how to wash a horse's sheath
 - Pull a mane and tail. Describe how to hog a mane
 - Demonstrate or discuss how to clip
 - Discuss the various types of clips and benefits of each
 - Discuss care of the clipped horse
 - Describe care of the clipping machine before, during and after use.
- Care of the foot, and shoeing
 - Describe the structure of the foot
 - Recognise changes in the foot and likely cause, i.e. neglect, poor shoeing, disease
 - Knowledge of corrective shoeing - reasons and application of, for example, feather edged shoes, grass tips, bar shoes and pads
 - Use of screw-in studs and care of same
 - Remove a shoe, trim the foot and refit a shoe under supervision of a farrier.
- Health, ailments and injuries
 - Take temperature, pulse and respiration
 - Knowledge of internal and external parasites
 - Administer a worm paste
 - Know the life cycles of large and small strongyles, bots, ascarids, tapeworm and pin worms
 - Recognise and treat lice, ringworm, ticks, onchocerca
 - Be able to recognise, know the cause of, and treat where applicable:
 - Azoturia
 - Pharyngitis
 - Colds
 - Quittor
 - Corns
 - Rain scald
 - Fistula
 - Seedy toe
 - Greasy heel
 - Stomach ulcers
 - Strangles
 - Hoof abscess
 - Tetanus
 - Laminitis
 - Heat stress
 - Be able to administer first aid to the horse
 - Apply a pressure bandage and figure of eight bandage
 - Know when to call the Veterinarian and describe the horse's symptoms
 - Carry out prescribed treatment of wounds, ailments and lameness
 - Know how to administer medication, including intramuscular injections
 - Dehydration - symptoms, prevention and treatment.
- Teeth
 - Know how to care for the horse's teeth and recognise potential problems. For example, undershot and overshot jaw.

- Soundness
 - The candidate must be able to discuss the following unsoundness and blemishes, both hereditary and acquired.
 - Bog spavin
 - Roaring and whistling
 - Bone spavin
 - Sidebone
 - Broken wind
 - Splints
 - Curb
 - Tendon problems
 - Navicular disease
 - Thoroughpin
 - Ringbone
 - Windgalls
- Describe effect of poor conformation and bad action on soundness and usefulness
- Discuss the approach to buying and selling a horse, including documentation
- Breeding and care of the young horse
- Breeding procedures and stud management
 - service of mares
 - period of gestation
 - birth
 - first handling
 - weaning of the foal
- Health and condition of the growing horse

Saddlery and Equipment

- Recognise different types of saddles
- Recognise a broken tree
- Know the principles of biting and the fit, action and use of different bits
- Protective equipment, bandages, boots, kneecaps, hock boots, tail and poll guards
- Organisation of tackroom and veterinary cabinet
- Stitch leather and splice rope
- Demonstrate five knots and their uses.

Industry Knowledge of

- Pony Club structure
- Horse racing in Australia
- Famous horses and people
- Topical equestrian events
- Olympic Games
- World Championships.