

NVQ Standards

The following sets out a summary of the skills and knowledge required for the 3 NVQ levels.

NVQ1 Horse Care

An understanding of the basic principles of horse care and, working under supervision, showing some knowledge and practice of looking after a well mannered horse in the stable and at grass.

Candidates for the Award are assessed for knowledge and practical ability in the following areas:

Routine Horse Care

- know importance of various daily inspections and routines for horse care
- know the correct use and maintenance of stable equipment, grooming kit, saddlery
- be able to muck out
- be able to groom and wash a horse
- know how to tie up a horse
- know how to stand up a horse in the stable and/or outside
- be able to lead and turn a horse in walk
- know how to trot out a horse in hand
- know the types of bedding

Watering and Feeding

- know the general principles and importance of cleanliness
- recognise good and bad quality feed
- give feed to stabled and grass kept horses
- report any changes in feeding habits
- maintain clean fresh water supply

Rugging Up

- put on various types of rugs and rollers

Yard Duties

- keep work areas clean and tidy
- keep yard well swept and free from hazards

- maintain muck heap in a tidy condition

Saddlery

- clean tack
- tack up and untack

Care of the horse at grass

- check fields and enclosures for safety
- turn out horses
- catch horses and bring in from field

Health and Safety

- recognise and report hazards
- comply with legislation and codes of practice
- use equipment safely
- report accidents
- wear correct clothing for the job
- use safe lifting techniques
- dispose of waste correctly

Conduct

- maintain good working relationships

Additional Units

For candidates doing the riding unit:

- check tack and equipment
- mounting and dismounting
- adjust girth and stirrups
- walk, trot and canter in an enclosed space
- change direction and pace

NVQ 2 Racehorse Care

Must understand the general management and requirements of horses for their health and well-being and should be able to care for stabled and grass kept horses during all seasons.

Candidates should work under regular but not constant supervision.

For the riding unit they must be capable of riding a thoroughbred racehorse on the road, in an enclosed area and on training gallops.

This qualification requires a demonstration of many skills common to both the racing and breeding sectors. Candidates must take the appropriate optional units in either racing (riding), racing (non-riding) or breeding in order to achieve the full qualification.

Candidates will be assessed for knowledge and practical ability in the following subject areas:

Clothing

- know various types of rug and their uses
- wash and store rugs
- apply stable and tail bandages
- understand the principles of bandaging

Grooming

- groom and wash horses
- pull, trim and plait

Saddlery

- fit tack, boots, breast plates and martingales
- maintain and clean tack
- fit lungeing equipment

Horse Health

- know the structure of the foot and its function
- understand the shoeing procedure
- recognise signs of health and ill health
- be able to treat minor wounds and carry out basic nursing
- know when to call a veterinary surgeon
- understand the importance of regular worming and vaccinations

- have a basic understanding of the “characteristics” of the horse
- know the points of the horse and simple anatomical terms

Horse Care

- present a horse for routine inspection
- restrain a horse
- care for a horse after exercise

Lungeing

- Lunge (or long rein) a quiet horse for exercise
- have knowledge of suitable surfaces for lungeing

Grassland management

- have a basic knowledge of good pasture and grassland maintenance
- know plants which are poisonous to horses
- understand the importance of daily inspection of fields, gates, fencing, water and routine picking up of droppings from small paddocks

Travelling

- prepare a horse for travelling
- load and unload

Health and Safety

- identify hazards and evaluate the risks in the workplace
- reduce the risks to health and safety in the workplace

Watering and feeding

- know the advantages and disadvantages of different types of watering systems and the importance of water to the horse
- know a variety of common feed stuffs and their respective values
- have a practical knowledge of how to prepare cooked cereals, sugar beet pulp and a bran mash
- be able to put out feeds according to a feed chart
- recognise good and bad quality feed

Maintain effective working relationships

- maintain and develop personal performance
- establish and maintain effective working relationships

Optional units – candidates must achieve one of the following options:

Racing (Riding)

- be able to ride fit racehorses on public roads, in an enclosed area and in walk, trot and canter on the training gallops
- have correct position in these paces
- take horse to race meeting, adhere to race course entry procedure, lead horse up and care for horse after racing

Racing (non-riding)

- take horse to race meeting, adhere to race course entry procedure, lead horse up and care for horse after racing
- assist with the specialist care of race horses
- assist with care of race horses after exercise

Breeding

- assist with teasing and covering
- keep simple stud records
- give basic assistance towards foaling
- assist in handling mare and foal

NVQ 3 Racehorse Care and Management

Candidates must take optional units in either racing (riding), racing (non-riding) or breeding.

The candidate must demonstrate an ability to look after a small yard of horses stabled and at grass and, if taking the racing option, be able to ride a variety of racehorses under a range of circumstances, or oversee the training process.

Candidates will be assessed on:

Horse health

- Take and record temperature, pulse and respiration
- recognise and treat minor injuries, minor ailments, sickness and lameness
- know when to call a veterinary surgeon and what information to give
- administer medicines in food, water or by syringe orally
- have knowledge of worming and vaccination procedures
- recognised when the foot needs shoeing
- know what to look for in a newly shod foot
- have a basic understanding of specialist racing shoes

Feeding

- be able to monitor and organise the feed store
- plan feeding regimes to suit individual horse requirements
- understand the value of feed stuffs

Saddlery

- organise the tack room, care of its contents, and the cleaning and storage of tack
- know the correct principles and fitting of saddlery and bits in general use, including those for racehorses and the training of young horses

Horse Clothing

- know the correct use of all horse clothing
- be able to apply exercise bandages

Clipping

- clip horses

- trim and plait

Transportation

- organise transport
- load and unload horse
- care for horses during and after transportation

Training the Young Horse

- have knowledge of dealing with young, highly strung or problem horses – including those with stable vices
- be able to lunge or long rein
- assist with early training and breaking of young horses

Health and safety

- identify hazards and evaluate the risks in the workplace
- reduce the risks to health and safety in the workplace

Optional units

Racing (Riding)

- take responsibility for horses at race meetings including declaration procedures
- prepare horse for race meeting and tack up for a race
- ride a variety of racehorses for exercise and work
- school racehorses over hurdles/fences and/or ride horses through starting stalls

Racing (non-riding)

- take responsibility for horses at race meetings including declaration procedures
- prepare horse for race meeting and tack up for a race
- design and oversee the training programme for racehorses

or

Breeding

- assist with teasing and covering
- maintain stud documents
- attending to mare and foal during foaling

- care for mare and young foal

Additional units are available:

- preparation for coaching sessions
- conducting coaching sessions
- stallion handling
- maintaining and repairing structures and surfaces