

Certificates in Equine Transport

Information Sheet for NTF members (updated January 2025)

Under animal welfare regulations, those directly responsible for the welfare of horses during transport which is conducted as part of an economic activity (i.e. your business) must hold a Certificate of Competence where the journey is over 65 kms (40 miles).

A single journey begins when the first horse is loaded and ends when the last horse is unloaded at the final destination. Only when a break of 48 hours is taken, does a new official journey begin. This means that the journey time to a race meeting consists of the combined outward and return legs but excludes the time the horses are at the races.

This is in addition to transport authorisations and vehicle approvals (see separate advice sheet).

Levels of certificates

Drivers and attendants are required to hold certification. The attendant is the person responsible for the loading, welfare during transportation and unloading of the horses. This could be the driver, travelling head person or groom.

A person travelling with the horses to lead them up at the races but with no responsibility for loading, unloading or equine welfare during transport is not required to hold a certificate.

A transport company may require you to supply at least one member of staff who holds the Attendant Certification even if their driver holds the driver/attendant certificate.

The driver will, of course, need the correct driving licence for the vehicle and a driver CPC if the lorry is over 3.5 tonnes.

Types of certificate:

The qualification can be for just driver or driver/attendant and the certificate will be specific to the role and the length of journey.

- **Short journeys**

Under 65 kms but less than 8 hours Level 3 Award in transporting horses by road on short journeys.

- **Long journeys**

For journeys over 65 kms or 8 hours Level 3 Principles of Transporting Horses on long journeys (this covers short journeys as well). These qualifications were previously known as CET and ACET

An employee can only undertake the duties they hold the certificate for, so someone with the attendant only certificate cannot drive the horse box. A certified driver/attendant who receives a driving ban will then only be able to perform attendant function.

Single Animal Exemption

The Regulation does not apply to journeys where the animal is a single animal accompanied by its owner or other responsible person. DEFRA treats this exemption as applicable up to a ratio of four people to four animals.

If the single animal exception applies, then no one transporting the animals would need any kind of certification as transport under this exemption is outside the scope of the Regulations. However, there is no guarantee that other EU countries have taken the same view so caution should be exercised when undertaking journeys outside the UK.

Obtaining the qualification

The awarding body is 1st4Sport and more information about the qualification can be found on their website: <https://www.1st4sport.com/>

Training is offered through a number of providers including the British Racing School, National Horseracing College and Hadden Training. 1st4Sport can provide a current list of other providers.

Duration of qualification

Level 3 Transport qualifications (attendant and attendant/driver) are valid for life. DEFRA do occasionally request an update to the qualification certificate to suit modern technology. 1st4Sport are approved to issue replacement certifications even if transporting exams were not completed with them or a while ago in the updated format (2 years ago).

Contacts

1st4Sport

<https://www.1st4sport.com/qualifications/equine>

British Racing School

<https://brs.org.uk/course/transport-qualification/>

Northern Horseracing College

<https://www.thenhc.co.uk/courses/training-supervisory-admin/the-transport-of-horses-qualifications/>

Hadden Training

<https://www.haddontraining.co.uk/courses/horse-transport/>

Government website – see Certificate of Competent

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transporting-animals-in-great-britain>