



**Australian Government**

**Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations**

# **RGRPSH408A Manage horse health and welfare**

**Release: 1**

## **RGRPSH408A Manage horse health and welfare**

### **Modification History**

Not Applicable

## Unit Descriptor

### Unit descriptor

This unit of competency specifies the outcomes required to monitor and maintain horse health and welfare; undertake health management programs for horses; ensure provision of safe, compliant and secure housing arrangements; determine horse health problems; decide upon treatment for horses; administer treatment; monitor horse's progress; and plan horse health emergency procedures.

To undertake this unit the candidate will have already achieved or be able to demonstrate competence in the practical care and management of harness or thoroughbred racing horses and application of OHS standards in the workplace.

This unit of competency operates in workplace environments of racing stables, paddocks, yards, racecourses and public areas.

Licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements may apply to this unit, check with your State Principal Racing Authority for current license or registration requirements.

## Application of the Unit

### Application of the unit

This unit of competency supports senior stablehands, leading hands, trainers and others authorised to manage horse health and welfare.

Competencies attained in this unit apply to the harness and thoroughbred codes of the industry. Consequently when performance criteria are applied they will relate to the harness or thoroughbred code and statements of attainment will reflect this distinction.

This unit can be contextualised for other industries while also maintaining the integrity of the unit.

## Licensing/Regulatory Information

Refer to Unit Descriptor

## Pre-Requisites

### Prerequisite units

## Employability Skills Information

**Employability skills**      This unit contains employability skills.

## Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

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Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.

## Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Plan horse health and emergency care procedures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Health and emergency care protocols</b> and programs are developed and relayed to staff.</li> <li>2. Horses are housed in suitable and approved premises that are maintained to health and safety standards specified by <b>rules of racing and other regulations</b> .</li> <li>3. Health status of individual horses is assessed.</li> <li>4. Characteristics, signs and symptoms of healthy and sick or injured horses are reviewed.</li> <li>5. <b>Communicable diseases</b> are identified and control measures implemented.</li> <li>6. Signs and symptoms of distressed or injured horses are identified and prioritised.</li> </ol>
Undertake health management programs for horses.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Dental health programs are overseen.</li> <li>8. Vaccination programs are implemented.</li> <li>9. Parasite control programs are implemented.</li> <li>10. Hoof maintenance programs are overseen.</li> <li>11. <b>Health records</b> are compiled and updated.</li> </ol>
Decide upon treatment for horses.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Health care and management are determined.</li> <li>13. Prognosis for <b>common illnesses and injuries</b> is discussed.</li> <li>14. Need for <b>veterinary assistance</b> is determined.</li> <li>15. Need for <b>specialist</b> advice is determined.</li> <li>16. <b>Treatment options</b> are evaluated and preferred option is selected for common injuries and illnesses.</li> </ol>
Administer treatment and monitor horse's progress.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. Medication or treatments are administered according to stable procedures, directions, and industry and animal welfare regulations.</li> <li>18. Methods of administering medication, recording treatment and monitoring <b>injectible medication</b> are known.</li> <li>19. Oral medication is administered.</li> <li>20. Topical medication is administered.</li> <li>21. <b>Inhalants</b> are administered.</li> <li>22. Horses are bandaged.</li> </ol>

## Required Skills and Knowledge

## **REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.

### **Required skills**

- applying OHS workplace procedures
- applying safe handling and work practices when dealing with horses
- administering medication and treatments
- assessing vital signs of horses
- assessing and responding to illnesses or injuries in horses
- calming and restraining horses
- communicating with employer, stable staff, horse health specialists and others using assertive communication techniques to gather and relay information related to managing health and welfare of horses
- complying with animal welfare policies in the care and management of horses
- developing health and emergency care protocols and programs
- dealing with emergencies
- discussing treatment options
- evaluating risks associated with catching and handling horses
- giving and receiving instructions
- identifying behaviour of individual horses
- identifying and using different treatments in accordance with directions
- identifying illnesses and injuries
- incorporating safe work practices into all horse handling activities
- reporting horse irregularities to stable nominated person
- reading and interpreting workplace documentation, including relevant rules of racing
- relating to people from a range of social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds and with varying physical and mental abilities
- supporting others in handling and providing treatment to horses in the appropriate manner
- written communication skills to compile and maintain horse health records and associated procedural documentation.

### **Required knowledge**

- appropriate horse housing
- communication procedures within stable and wider racing industry
- common horse behaviour, social traits and vices
- common illnesses and injuries in horses
- dental programs
- effective working relationships, including teamwork
- emergency protocols and quarantine measures
- handling techniques for horses

**REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

- horse first aid
- horse health record systems
- hoof maintenance programs
- methods of restraining horses
- parasite programs
- prohibited substances
- racing industry animal welfare requirements
- racing industry safety requirements, including safe operating procedures
- relevant rules of racing
- signs and symptoms of communicable diseases
- types of medication and treatments
- vaccination programs.

# Evidence Guide

## EVIDENCE GUIDE

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The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

### **Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit**

The evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit must be relevant to workplace operations and satisfy all of the requirements of the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge and the range statement of this unit and include evidence of the following:

- knowledge of the requirements, procedures and instructions that are to apply when managing horse health and welfare
- implementation of procedures and techniques for the safe, effective and efficient provision of horse health and welfare
- working with others to implement and complete horse health and welfare procedures that meet required outcomes
- consistent timely completion of horse health and welfare management procedures that safely, effectively and efficiently meet required outcomes.

Evidence should be collected over a period of time using a range of racehorses of different ages and sexes, and at different stages of preparation in racing stable and track environments

### **Context of and specific resources for assessment**

Competency must be assessed in a racing workplace that provides access to the required resources or simulated environment approved by the relevant State Principal Racing Authority. Assessment is to occur under standard and authorised work practices, safety requirements and environmental constraints. It is to comply with relevant regulatory requirements or Australian Standards requirements.

Assessment of the practical components of this unit will be by observation of relevant skills.

The following resources must be available:

- a variety of harness or thoroughbred horses
- materials and equipment relevant to assessing candidate's ability to manage horse health and



## EVIDENCE GUIDE

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### Method of assessment

welfare

- safe handling areas, such as racing stables and racetracks
- work instructions and related documentation.

Assessment methods must satisfy the endorsed Assessment Guidelines of the Racing Training Package.

The suggested strategies for the assessment of this unit are:

- written and/or oral assessment of candidate's required knowledge
- observed, documented and firsthand testimonial evidence of candidate's application of practical tasks
- inspection of completed work
- simulation exercises conducted in a State Principal Racing Authority approved simulated environment.

Where performance is not directly observed any evidence should be authenticated by supervisors or other appropriate persons.

Holistic assessment with other units relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role is recommended, for example:

- RGRCMN401A Maintain and monitor OHS procedures and environmental work practices.

### Guidance information for assessment

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands (e.g. literacy and numeracy demands) and the needs of particular target groups (e.g. people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people with a language background other than English, youth and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds).

## Range Statement

### RANGE STATEMENT

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The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording in the performance criteria is detailed below.

## RANGE STATEMENT

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The range statement provides details of how this competency can be used in the workplaces of the racing industry to manage horse health and welfare. Workplaces include harness and thoroughbred racing stables and racecourses, training tracks and public areas.

***Health and emergency care protocols*** may include:

- advice to other organisations, as required by rules and regulations
- horse management:
  - comprehensive record keeping
  - routine health checks
  - equipment and gear cleanliness
  - handling and monitoring horses
  - hazard identification
  - maintaining first aid and treatments stores
  - notifiable diseases
  - permissible medication and treatments
  - quarantine measures
  - veterinary or specialist advice and assistance
  - stable and yard cleanliness
- risk control measures:
  - controlling insects and rodents
  - disinfection and hygiene measures
  - fire drills
  - health programs
  - isolation or quarantine of sick horses
  - monitoring movement of horses
  - vaccinations and boosters
  - waste disposal
- staff management:
  - access to and administration of treatments
  - communication procedures
  - emergency drills
  - literacy and numeracy skills
  - training.

***Situations requiring emergency care*** may include:

- acute illness, for example colic
- arterial blood loss
- communicable disease
- electric shock
- fracture

## RANGE STATEMENT

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***Rules of racing and other regulations*** may include:

- fire
- trauma, including track or road accident.
- Australian and local rules of racing of the state or territory regulatory racing body
- Livestock Act
- local government regulations, for example:
  - buildings
  - disposal of waste
- national and state codes of practice; federal, state and territory legislation; and local government regulations covering animal welfare
- OHS legislation and regulations
- race club and training track regulations
- rules of racing related to prohibited substances, including substances listed below as well as other items defined by racing regulatory authority from time to time:
  - acidifying agents
  - alkalising agents
  - analgesics
  - antihistamines
  - anti-inflammatory agents
  - bronchodilators
  - buffering agents
  - diuretics
  - general and local anaesthetics
  - hormones
  - muscle relaxants
  - narcotics
  - respiratory stimulants
  - sedatives
  - tranquillisers
  - vasodilators
  - vitamins administered by injection.

***Health status of individual horses*** is assessed:

- by routine health checks
- prior to travelling or racing
- upon first entering stables
- when illness or injury is suspected.

## RANGE STATEMENT

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- Methods to assess health status of individual horses*** may include:
- checking for:
    - illness or injury
    - shock or distress
    - lameness
    - soreness
  - checking quality and quantity of manure and urine
  - feeling for heat or swelling
  - monitoring feed and water intake
  - monitoring vital signs
  - observing behaviour.
- Communicable diseases*** may include:
- anthrax
  - equine influenza
  - glanders
  - hendra virus
  - Japanese encephalitis
  - rattles
  - ringworm
  - salmonellosis
  - strangles.
- Indicators of communicable diseases*** may include:
- blisters, ulceration or erosions
  - dead horses
  - nervousness or other behaviour changes
  - profuse, bloody diarrhoea
  - rapid spread of signs and symptoms throughout stable
  - recent overseas contact
  - unexplained lethargy, listlessness or depression
  - unusually high numbers of sick horses
  - severe hacking cough.
- Health records information*** will include:
- dates and times of:
    - arrival at stables
    - assessing vital signs
    - illness or injury
    - treatments and vaccinations
  - features of horse identification
  - name of horse
  - name of person administering treatment
  - prescribed treatments administered

## RANGE STATEMENT

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***Health care and management***  
may include:

- treatment instructions
- vital signs at rest.
- administration of treatments
- communication procedures when horses are treated
- disease prevention and control
- emergency care
- emergency phone numbers, for example veterinarian or fire department
- permissible treatments
- procedure for recording treatments
- procedure for recording and reporting vital signs
- routine health checks
- replenishing supplies of first aid kits
- system of referral for injury treatment
- staff access to first aid treatments and materials.

***Common illnesses or injuries***  
may include:

- illnesses:
  - circulatory disorders
  - eye, nose and mouth disorders
  - digestive disorders
  - metabolic disorders
  - musculo-skeletal disorders
  - neurological disorders
  - respiratory disorders
  - skin disorders
- injuries:
  - bruises
  - falls
  - girth galls
  - joint injuries
  - sprained ligaments or tendons
  - strained muscles
  - tack rubs
  - wounds.

***Need for veterinary assistance***  
may include:

- horse may:
  - be insured
  - have to be treated with racing competition

## RANGE STATEMENT

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prohibited substances

- have to be withdrawn from competition
- require prescription medication
- require stitching or specialist injury management or treatment
- illness may be:
  - contagious condition
  - notifiable disease
  - passed on to humans
- illness or injury may be:
  - life threatening or have consequences to ongoing career of horse
  - result of neglect or non-compliance with duty of care.

*Specialists* may include:

- chiropractors
- dentists
- farriers
- massage therapists
- veterinary surgeons.

*Treatment options* may include:

- acupuncture
- chiropractic
- exercise, for example walking or swimming
- hydrotherapy
- ice and heat
- laser
- massage
- pharmaceutical
- rest
- ultrasound.

*Injectible medication* may be given:

- by adhering to animal welfare guidelines
- in accordance with rules of racing
- intramuscular
- intravenous
- intra-articular
- subcutaneous
- under veterinary supervision.

*Injectible medication considerations* include:

- alcohol swabs
- correct dosage of medication
- cleanliness of surroundings
- enlisting help of assistant

## RANGE STATEMENT

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- fitting restraints, for example bit or twitch
  - injection site
  - injection type:
    - antibiotics
    - vaccinations
    - vitamins
  - method of injection to suit prescribed treatment
  - needle gauge
  - race meeting blood samples
  - procedure for loading syringe
  - preparing horse, for example skin swabbing or tapping
  - record keeping
  - rules of racing
  - sterile needles and syringes
  - sharps container
  - syringe disposal
  - using only veterinary-prescribed substances.
- Inhalants* may include:
- oxygen
  - prescribed veterinary treatments
  - steam.

## Unit Sector(s)

**Unit Sector**                      Harness and thoroughbred racing codes

## Co-requisite units

**Co-requisite units**

## **Functional Area**

**Functional Area**            Racing performance services