



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

RGRPSH501A Plan and adapt training and conditioning programs for racehorses

Release: 1

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Modification History

Not Applicable

Unit Descriptor

Unit descriptor

This unit of competency specifies the outcomes required to develop training and conditioning plans for racing horses, assessing the horse's adaptation to the plan and modifying the program for individual horses.

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 the application of OHS standards in the workplace.

This unit of competency operates in work 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, trainers and others authorised to prepare and condition horses for racing.

The unit focuses on the competencies associated with preparing horses of various ages and abilities for Australian racing programs. Harness and thoroughbred racing occurs under different conditions consequently when performance criteria are applied they will relate to harness or thoroughbred horses and statements of attainment for this unit 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

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
Evaluate individual horse's current fitness and education.	1. Behavioural indicators of fitness and health are evaluated. 2. Physiological indicators of fitness and health are evaluated. 3. Performance indicators of fitness and adaptation to workload of current education program are assessed.
Prepare conditioning programs for horses.	4. Options for training horses in first preparation are determined. 5. Options for training horses returning from injury are determined. 6. Options for adapting training programs for improved fitness status are evaluated. 7. Conditioning program is prepared and documented for individual horses and relayed to others.
Review individual horse's performance.	8. Trackwork times and behaviour are evaluated. 9. Corrective or remedial gear is considered to improve individual performance. 10. Diet is reviewed and modified as required. 11. Horse's performance is compared to racing goals. 12. Driver or rider is appointed, giving due consideration to capabilities of horse, in order to maximise horse's performance.

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

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

Required skills

- adapting exercise and training programs according to individual animal responses and specific stages of racing preparation
- applying horse health and emergency care procedures
- applying safe handling and work practices when dealing with horses
- communicating with stable staff, horse health specialists and others using assertive communication techniques to gather and relay information related to training and conditioning programs for racehorses
- complying with animal welfare policies in the care and management of horses
- dealing with emergencies
- evaluating horse response to exercise

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- identifying normal, abnormal and distressed horse behaviour
- identifying symptoms and signs of adaptation and adaptive failure response to training and conditioning programs
- identifying, fitting and explaining purpose of corrective gear and equipment
- identifying, fitting and explaining purpose of protective gear and equipment
- maintaining OHS workplace procedures
- measuring trackwork times and distances and comparing performance to racing requirements
- 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 applying training and conditioning programs to horses in appropriate manner
- written communication skills to document training and conditioning programs and record observations post-exercise.

Required knowledge

- classes and types of racing in Australia
- communication procedures within stable and wider racing industry
- current industry performance requirements for racing
- current trackwork times for various distances and stages of racing preparation
- impact of nutrition and general health on horse performance
- industry terminology related to racing horses
- OHS obligations and racing safe operating procedures
- protocols for trackwork on public tracks
- racing industry animal welfare requirements
- variations in conditioning program requirements for various ages and classes of horses.

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

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 planning and adapting training and conditioning programs for racehorses
- implementation of procedures and timely techniques for the safe, effective and efficient planning adapting, evaluating and modifying of training and conditioning programs
- working with others to implement and complete programs that 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 horses that are being educated and trained in a commercial racing stable under the care of a licensed trainer and the required resources. 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:

- access to commercial racing training establishments, training and racetracks, and a variety of harness or thoroughbred horses that are currently in training
- materials and equipment relevant to assessing candidate's ability to plan, adapt and modify training and conditioning programs for racehorses
- work instructions and related documentation.

EVIDENCE GUIDE

Method of assessment

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.

Where performance is not directly observed any evidence should be authenticated by supervisors or other appropriate persons, at least one of whom should be approved by the State Principal Racing Authority. This unit may be assessed in a holistic way with other units of competency relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role, for example:

- RGRPSH401A Relate anatomical and physiological features to the care and treatment of horses
- RGRPSH408A Manage horse health and welfare
- RGRPSH409A Determine nutritional requirements for racing horses.

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

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.

The range statement provides details of how this competency can be used in the workplaces of the racing industry to plan and adapt training and conditioning programs for racehorses. Workplaces include harness and thoroughbred racing stables and racecourses, training tracks and public areas.

Types of behavioural indicators

- horses are eating up their feed and drinking

RANGE STATEMENT

include:

sufficient water

- horses are willing to complete work tasks and activities
- horses are settled in stables or yards
- horses are showing signs of lameness or pain.

RANGE STATEMENT

Physiological indicators of fitness include:

- absence of signs or symptoms of inadequate cooling
- absence of signs or symptoms of physiological distress, such as:
 - colic
 - exertional rhabdomyolysis (tying up)
 - thumps
- absence of signs or symptoms of swelling, heat or soreness
- blood and other test results are within normal parameters
- horse's weight is within appropriate parameters
- temperature, pulse and respiration are within normal parameters.

Performance indicators used to evaluate a horse's response to current workload include:

- horses are able to complete work and exercise tasks
- horses are recovering to resting temperature, pulse and respiration after work or exercise tasks within acceptable time frame
- work or exercise tasks are completed within acceptable time frames.

Factors to consider for horses in their first preparation for racing include:

- exercise speed and duration are appropriate for fitness status, giving consideration to the need to avoid overexcited animals working faster or longer than was planned
- horse's ability to settle into training environment
- length of time between breaking and commencing first training period
- length of time in training before a spell to allow recovery and adaptation time as well as a mental break from a racing routine
- more conditioning time is required to allow for physical adaptation of musculo-skeletal, cardiovascular and respiratory systems
- physical maturity of horse
- track or exercise facility conditions, for example:
 - track rating
- track surface condition.
- consultation and monitoring under veterinary supervision

Considerations for horses returning from injury include:

RANGE STATEMENT

- length of time out of training since injury
- location of injury and tissue damage sustained
- need for controlled exercise to aid recovery
- need for ongoing therapy or management of injured tissue
- options of using alternative methods of exercise, including swimming
- prognosis for returning to competitive racing performance post-injury
- significance of track conditions to the type of injury sustained, for example:
 - heavy or deep tracks
 - wet or slippery surfaces.

RANGE STATEMENT

Options for adapting training programs include:

- changing training venue:
 - changing climatic location, for example:
 - lower humidity
 - more or less rain
 - change in size of training enterprise, for example large versus small training establishment
 - change in racing direction
- introducing variation in exercise types, for example:
 - hacking out
 - jogger
 - riding (harness)
 - ponging
 - swimming
 - treadmill or walker
- training from paddock rather than from stable
- training on or away from race meeting venues
- varying length of time or frequency of exercise periods
- working horses in company or alone
- working horses with a pacemaker.

Preparing conditioning programs for horses includes:

- horse's confidence working close to others
- individual horse's current stage of fitness
- individual horse's personality and behaviour
- length of training session
- type of work included over a week, for example:
 - in water
 - on beach
 - on hills
 - on public or private track.

Factors to consider when reviewing trackwork times and behaviour include:

- are trackwork times within acceptable parameters for a particular track and conditions
- is horse willing to go past others during trackwork
- is horse willing to work close to others
- is horse worked with others or alone to gain these times.

Corrective or remedial gear may

- assorted bits

RANGE STATEMENT

include:

- blinkers or hood
- harness specific:
 - ear muffs
 - head check
 - lugging pole
 - nosebands
 - spreaders
- thoroughbred specific:
 - barrier blanket
 - ear muffs
 - martingale
 - nosebands.

Factors to consider when diet is reviewed include:

- access to fresh pasture
- appropriate volume of feed
- balance of concentrates and roughage in diet
- changed eating patterns
- drinking appropriate volume of water daily
- horse's appetite
- levels of protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals in the diet
- presence of potentially diet-related illnesses, including:
 - colic
 - deficiency in electrolytes indicated in blood tests
 - excessive sweating or insufficient sweating
 - exertional rhabdomyolysis (tying up)
 - horse being diagnosed with ulcers
- teething conditions leading to inability to eat hard feed temporarily.

Performance compared to racing goals includes:

- a more effective assessment of horse readiness to run may be required, for example:
 - blood tests
 - fast workout with another known horse or group of horses
 - fitness test
- animal welfare and racing guidelines for the amount of work
- does horse need a few trials and/or races to reach peak performance

RANGE STATEMENT

- expected time frame to first trial or race
- hormone control, for example:
 - mares
 - stallions versus geldings
- race class or type that horse is being prepared for
- specialist advice required to review fitness, for example:
 - farrier
 - therapist
 - veterinarian
- trainer style, methods and size of establishment versus horse response.

Unit Sector(s)

Unit Sector Harness and thoroughbred racing codes

Co-requisite units

Co-requisite units

Functional Area

Functional Area Racing performance services