



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

RTE3148A Assess conformation of horses

Release: 1

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Modification History

Not applicable.

Unit Descriptor

This competency standard covers the functions required to assess conformation of horses. It requires the application of skills and knowledge to identify desirable and undesirable conformation in horses and to report on conformation using standard conformation terminology. Assessing conformation also includes reporting on the horse unsoundness, blemishes, the way of going and vices. The work in this standard is likely to be carried out as part of a team or independently.

Application of the Unit

Not applicable.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

Not applicable.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Not applicable.

Elements and Performance Criteria

Elements and Performance Criteria

Element	Performance Criteria
1 Objectively assess a horse's conformation	1.1 Conformation of horse is reported on using standard conformation terminology. 1.2 Desirable conformation of a horse is reported on using standard conformation terminology. 1.3 Occupational health and safety hazards are continually identified while handling horses, risks assessed and suitable controls implemented.
2 Assess unsoundness and blemishes in the horse	2.1 Unsoundness and blemishes of the fore limbs are identified and reported. 2.2 Unsoundness of the hind limbs are identified and reported. 2.3 Unsoundness and blemishes of the hooves are identified and reported. 2.4 General unsoundness and blemishes are identified and reported.
3 Report on the way of going of horses	3.1 Essential elements of the way of going of the horse are identified and reported on. 3.2 Natural gaits of the horse are identified and reported on. 3.3 Defects in the way of the going of the horse are identified and reported on.
4 Report on the undesirable vices and habits of horses	4.1 Vices dangerous to people are identified and reported on. 4.2 Vices dangerous to horses are identified and reported on.

Required Skills and Knowledge

Not applicable.

Evidence Guide

What evidence is required to demonstrate competence for this standard as a whole?

Competence in this standard requires evidence of the ability to assess conformation of horses. It also requires the ability to identify vices, blemishes in horses and identify natural gaits and the horses way of going. Competence in safe horse handling techniques should also be demonstrated. Evidence must also be demonstrated in the implementation of safe workplace and positive environmental practices.

What specific knowledge is needed to achieve the performance criteria?

Knowledge and understanding are essential to apply this standard in the workplace, to transfer the skills to other contexts and to deal with unplanned events. The knowledge requirements for this competency standard are listed below:

Relevant occupational health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice.

Recognise and report on desirable and undesirable conformation using accepted conformation terminology .

Recognise and report on common vices in horses.

Safe horse handling techniques.

Recognise and report on desirable and undesirable natural gaits.

What specific skills are needed to achieve the performance criteria?

To achieve the performance criteria, appropriate literacy and numeracy levels as well as some complementary skills are required. These include the ability to:

handle horses safely

maintain accurate data documentation

identify horse conformation

communicate effectively with staff.

What processes should be applied to this competency standard?

There are a number of processes that are learnt throughout work and life which are required in all jobs. They are fundamental processes and generally transferable to other work functions. Some of these are covered by the **key competencies**, although others may be added. The questions below highlight how these processes are applied in this competency standard. Following each question a number in brackets indicates the level to which the key competency needs to be demonstrated where 0 = not required, 1 = perform the process, 2 = perform and administer the process and 3 = perform, administer and design the process.

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| 1. How can communication of ideas and information (2) be applied? | Communicate to other team members the type of assistance required when assessing conformation of the horse. Reporting assessment outcomes back to supervisors or other relevant persons. |
| 2. How can information be collected, analysed and organised (3)? | Information regarding horse conformation is collected, analysed and organised. |
| 3. How are activities planned and organised (3)? | Conformation process should be planned and organised. |
| 4. How can team work (2) be applied? | A team approach may be used when assessing horses conformation. |
| 5. How can the use of mathematical ideas and techniques (2) be applied? | Mathematical techniques may be used to calculate volume and percentages. Measurement will be used in assessing horse conformation. |
| 6. How can problem solving skills (2) be applied? | Problem solving may be used when administering the process of assessing the horses conformation. |
| 7. How can the use of technology (2) be applied? | Technology may be used to source and communicate information and in the process of assessing conformation of the horse. |

Are there other competency standards that could be assessed with this one?

This competency standard **could** be assessed on its own or in combination with other competencies relevant to the job function, for example:

RTE2148A Handle young horses

RTE4106A Supervise raising young horses

There is essential information about **assessing this competency standard for consistent performance and where and how it may be assessed**, in the Assessment Guidelines for this Training Package. All users of these competency standards must have **access** to the **Assessment Guidelines**. Further advice may also be sought from the relevant **sector booklet**.

Range Statement

Range of Variables

The Range of Variables explains the range of contexts within which the performance and knowledge requirements of this standard may be assessed. The scope of variables chosen in training and assessment may depend on the work contexts

What characteristics may be assessed when assessing **conformation** of the horse?

Overall conformation, balance, conformation in relation to purpose, height, head (forehead, eyes, ears, nostrils, jaw, teeth), neck, chest (barrel), back, loin, hindquarters and tail carriage; forelimbs - tendons, wither, shoulder, upper arm, forearm, cannon, pastern; joints of the forelimb - elbow, knee (carpus), fetlock, pastern, coffin; hindlimbs - tendons, femur, gaskin, cannon, pastern; joints of the hindlimb - hip, stifle, hock, fetlock, pastern, coffin; feet, colour, action and way of going, blemishes, vices, limb deviations.

What may some **desirable conformation** features include?

Head should show desirable breed sex characteristics, alert carriage of head and ears, strong, smoothly arched neck, level back with short, strong coupling, croup of sufficient length and neatly turned to give the animal a balanced appearance, well-muscled quarters, straight strong legs with ample bone, superior action, strong full chest and breast with proper slope of shoulder, long gently sloped pasterns.

What **OHS** requirements may be relevant to this standard?

Relevant occupational health and safety hazards identification, risk assessment and risk control measures:

Calm and positive actions at all times when handling horses in minimising the risk of kicks or bites from frightened or escaping animals.

Manual handling Codes of Practice should be strictly observed.

Awareness of the constant workplace hazard of kicks, bites and crushing from horses

Safe working practices, including the need to communicate proposed actions with horses to all personnel in close proximity to avoid

accidents.

All procedures must be carried out in compliance with the provisions of the Workplace Health and Safety Acts, their regulations and the relevant Codes of Practice.

How may the horses **natural gait** be determined?

Observation of the horse walking and trotting. When conformation is assessed as part of a team, the horse handler may move the horse directly towards the person carrying out the conformation assessment. By doing this the assessor can determine what type of action the horse has and also if it is lame.

Horses with good action should move their legs straight and true with a spirited snappy movement. Horses that 'plait' their front legs have undesirable structure, as do horses that 'paddle' with their front legs.

What **vices** may a horse exhibit?

Pacing, chewing, bucking, rearing, cribbing, wind sucking, weaving, rug tearing, eating bedding, shying, bolting, walking away when being mounted.

For more information on contexts, environment and variables for training and assessment, refer to the Sector Booklet.

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.