

COACHING HORSEMANSHIP IN THE RACING INDUSTRY

Handbook



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FOREWORD

The British Horseracing Authority's initiative to launch a coaching programme aimed at professional racing grooms and stud staff is a great step forward for racing in general and horsemanship in particular.

Anyone working in a racing yard or Thoroughbred stud will be very fortunate to be in a position to receive high class coaching throughout their careers and have someone to turn to for help and advice.

Racing Coaches are selected for their wealth of experience in the industry and, through their coach education and coaching qualifications, are now in a great position to pass on their knowledge and skills to the next generation of racing's professional workforce.

This Rider Coaching Programme Handbook will not only act as a refresher and guide to coaches but provides direction in "how" to coach as well as "what" to coach. The very thorough and easy to understand way that the coaching process has been outlined makes this Handbook not just useful for racing coaches, but a must-read for any coach regardless of their sport.

The safety and welfare of racing's staff and horses can only be improved by an aspiration for everyone to reach their optimum potential through a structured and well organised programme of coaching and development.

As a former Jockey it was always a pleasure to ride well-produced horses that had been trained and ridden correctly during their preparatory work. Without doubt this enhanced their racecourse performance.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to be involved with coaching in the industry so I hope you will get as much enjoyment from reading the Handbook as I have, and my thanks and congratulations go out to everyone who has been involved.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kevin Darley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small heart-like flourish above the 'i' in "Darley".

Kevin Darley
Former Champion and Classic Winning Jockey

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been produced by the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) to support the training and development of coaches working in the horseracing and breeding industries.

It is hoped that many senior and experienced staff working in the sector will take the opportunity to train as coaches thereby enhancing their own career pathway and, in turn, developing those wishing to improve their horsemanship skills.

Coaching is provided in a number of ways and the coaches will select one or more forms of delivery that best suit the participant to provide ongoing support, guidance and education to encourage each jockey to achieve his or her optimum potential.

This handbook aids the development of the specific coaching skills including planning, delivering, reviewing and reflecting. It also provides information on 'what' to coach with the objective of all racing coaches working to a common standard and promoting the highest possible level of horsemanship.

SECTION ONE

HOW TO COACH

This section is about how to coach. It covers the principles of coaching and defines what coaching is – and it can mean different things to different people in different circumstances.

In the horseracing industry, it is about providing a route for participants to develop their skills and knowledge, thereby giving them the best opportunity to progress in their chosen career.

At the heart of any good coaching programme is communication. This section looks at how coaches can recognise different learning styles and the importance of providing the best learning experience for participants.

It addresses a range of coaching styles. A coach should learn to recognise when to intervene and when to simply listen. They should understand the importance of providing a positive learning environment and how to plan a coaching session.

The importance of setting goals and targets should not be underestimated. Planning, delivering and reviewing coaching sessions are integral to supporting and progressing participants.

And every coach should strive for self-improvement. Coaches can learn from each other and share good practice. They should reflect on their own performance as well as support and develop others. Coaching is a journey without end but with unique and career-enhancing highlights along the way.



1. WHAT IS COACHING?

Coaching is a process that aims to improve the performance of horse and rider and/or groom. There are many variations of coaching including educating, teaching, instructing and training. However, there is a huge difference between teaching someone and helping them to learn.

In the racing industry, the coach's role is to help the individual to improve their own performance: in other words, help them to learn. Coaching develops people's skills and abilities by motivating and guiding them towards an improved performance.

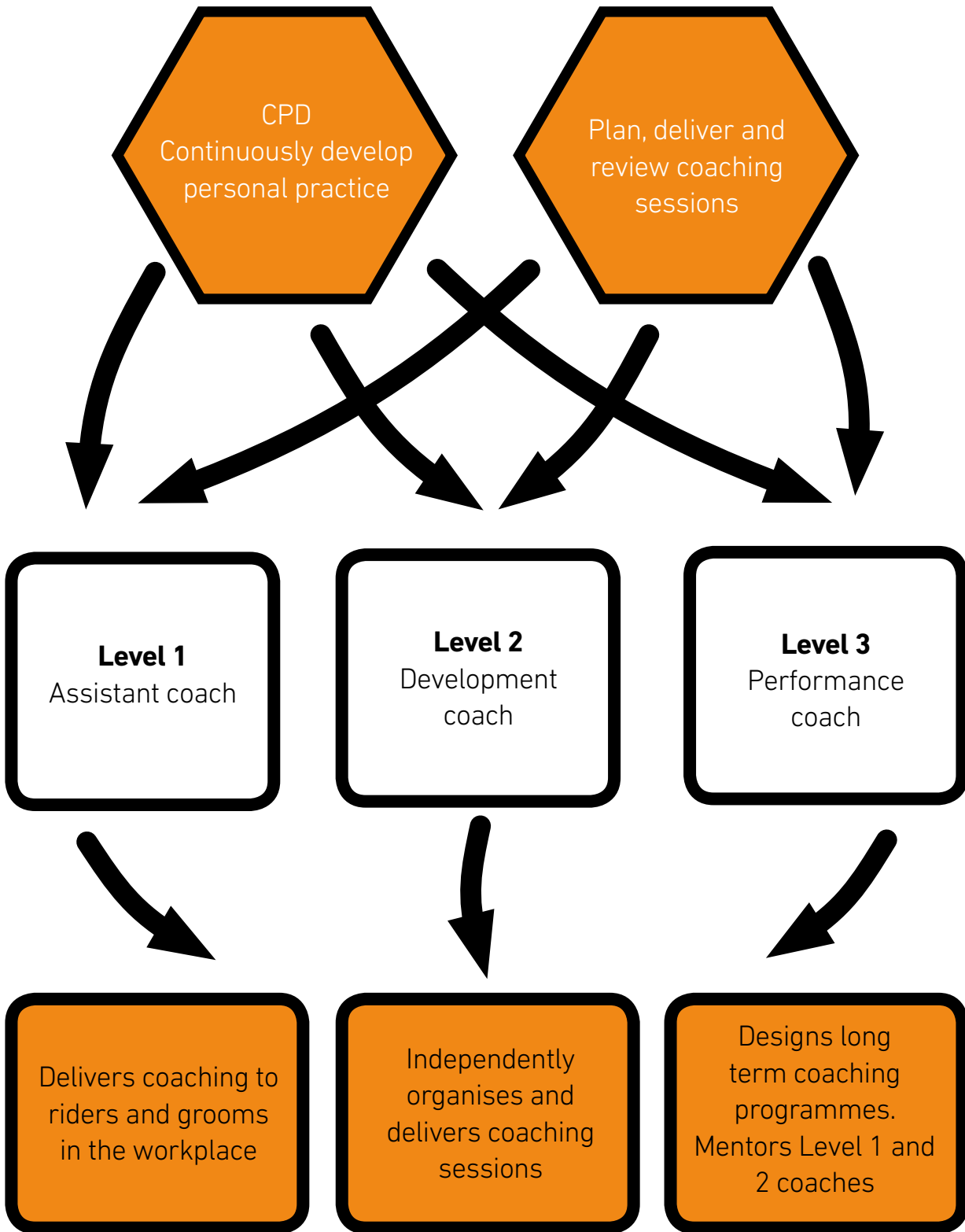
The main attributes that make a good equestrian coach are the ability to inspire their learners and help to develop their personal confidence and self-belief. A good coach understands that there are many elements involved in the coaching process which may extend beyond teaching and nurturing basic skills. On occasion, the coach may need to develop life skills such as developing a balanced work and home life ethic, promoting working relationships with others and dealing with failures.

To be successful as a coach in this sector the individual must have an in-depth knowledge of the horse and horsemanship skills, be willing and able to keep up to date with rules and regulations and to share their experience and insight on racing from their own experiences.

Coaches should always seek to improve themselves both in horsemanship and as a coach. To this end a career structure has been developed in the racing industry which enables and encourages progression as someone embarks on their coaching pathway.



STRUCTURE OF HORSEMANSHIP COACHING



The above diagram illustrates the roles, responsibilities and progression routes for coaches in the racing industry.

Level 1 Coach (Assistant Coach)

Key responsibilities include:

- a. Assistant to more qualified coaches – work with a mentor.
- b. Prepare a safe working environment.
- c. Establish positive working relationships.
- d. Deliver, conclude and review prepared activities.
- e. Continuously develop personal practice.

Level 2 Coach (Development Coach)

Key responsibilities include:

- a. Take responsibility for preparing, delivering and concluding coaching sessions.
- b. Review participants' needs.
- c. Plan to develop work rider's performance whilst maintaining a safe, progressive environment.
- d. Establish and maintain working relationships.
- e. Measure rider's progress.
- f. Monitor personal coaching practice.

Level 3 Coach (Performance Coach)

Key responsibilities include:

- a. The use of goal setting to plan and deliver sessions which will aid long term rider development.
- b. Mentor Level 1 and 2 coaches.
- c. Prepare for, deliver and review coaching sessions.
- d. Monitor and evaluate coaching sessions and personal practice.

Whatever background or discipline, coaches learn from other coaches. Many great coaches live by simple values including:

"Coaching aims to enhance the performance and learning ability of others"

"A good coach explains, a great coach inspires"

"Coaching is an individual's capacity to enhance someone else's performance and learning"



2. COACHING CODE OF CONDUCT

As members of an important sporting profession, coaches must demonstrate a high degree of honesty, integrity and competence at all levels. The need for coaches to understand and act upon their responsibilities is of critical importance to the sport of horseracing, as is the need to protect the key concept of participations – career advancement, enjoyment and achievement. These values are implicit within good coaching practice and promote a professional image of the practitioner.

This Code is intended to provide guidance on the standard of conduct that is required of a Level 1 coach. Whilst it cannot set out prescriptive rules to cover every possible situation, the Code will help the coach to recognise integrity, ethical and compliance issues and how to deal with them.

A Level 1 Coach must:

- a. Uphold high personal standards and act in a way that upholds public confidence in the integrity of racing and does not cause any harm to the good reputation and interests of the BHA.
- b. Act with care and diligence.
- c. Know and comply with all the relevant policies, procedures and guidelines.
- d. Set a balance between working relationships and friendships with individuals.
- e. Take responsibility for the well-being, safety and protection of horse and rider.
- f. Maintain a work environment free of discrimination, harassment and intimidation.

- g. Communicate with, and provide feedback to participants, in a manner that reflects respect and care.
- h. Recognise and accept when individuals need to be referred to other coaches or professionals.
- i. Treat employers, owners and work colleagues with courtesy and respect.
- j. Take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest, report those that cannot be avoided and cooperate in their management.
- k. Comply with employers and the yard manager whilst on the yard.

This Code of Conduct outlines what the BHA considers to be good coaching practice in the contexts of the specific requirements of horseracing.



Good coaching practice must reflect the following key principles:

RIGHTS

Coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in the sport of horseracing.

RELATIONSHIPS

Coaches must develop a relationship with learners and colleagues based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.

RESPONSIBILITIES – PERSONAL STANDARDS

Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.

RESPONSIBILITIES – PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to their learners, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and demonstrate a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR COACHING IN THE RACING INDUSTRY

In general terms, one aid to exercising good judgement about your conduct is to ask yourself these questions when considering a course of action:

- Would I, or my employer, be embarrassed if my actions were to become public knowledge?
- Does what I am about to do have the potential to harm my reputation or that of my employer?
- Would this have negative consequences for racing in Great Britain?
- Will what I am about to do have the potential to adversely impact upon my career as a professional in the horseracing industry?

If your answer to any of these questions is a “yes” or if you are unsure of the answer, you are strongly advised to reconsider whether you should proceed with your intended course of action.

GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

A coach must:

- Behave honestly and in a way that upholds public confidence in the integrity of racing and does not cause any harm to the good reputation and interests of the BHA.
- Act with care and diligence.
- Know and comply with all relevant policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Obey the law.
- Operate within the Rules of Racing.
- Maintain a work environment free of discrimination, harassment and intimidation.
- Communicate with, and provide feedback to, participants in a manner which reflects respect and care.
- Treat the public and racing professionals with courtesy and respect.
- Take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest, report those that cannot be avoided, and cooperate in their management.

PUBLIC BEHAVIOUR

Coaches are encouraged to take care that they do not behave in any way that would bring themselves, their employers or racing into disrepute. In this context examples of inappropriate behaviour would include foul and abusive language, drinking alcohol or arriving at work in any form of intoxicated state.

USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Despite the existence of privacy options, many items published in social media are publicly accessible and it can be difficult to guarantee that sites are fully private. As such, always start with the assumption that anything you say can be read by anyone, anywhere, at any time and remember that the internet has a long memory. Always exercise good judgement when posting and be aware that inappropriate comment via social media can negatively affect you and/or horseracing.

CONFIDENTIALITY

One of the principal responsibilities as a coach is to build a good relationship with their learner, with trust being a key factor of this. It is therefore imperative that confidentiality is maintained. Whilst coaching can be a partnership arrangement between a number of stakeholders, it is important that a learner's permission is gained before disclosing any information or feedback to others.

SAFEGUARDING

The welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone. Racing is a physical sport and young people are its lifeblood. It is important that they can take part in a safe and positive way that encourages them to be involved and work in the sport and industry.

A coach is in a unique position of trust, often working in a one-to-one situation with learners who consider their coach as a confidante. It is therefore important that coaches are aware of their role and responsibilities when working with young people. This not only is the basis of being a good coach but also helps prevent situations where false allegations of poor practice or abuse may arise.

All coaches working in the racing industry are required to undertake appropriate safeguarding training.



3. FUNDAMENTALS OF COACHING IN HORSERACING

The following points will guide the new coach towards establishing the basics of coaching:

- a. Recognise the needs and wants of the riders and grooms you are helping.
- b. Understand the culture of racing and the chain of command of officials within the sport.
- c. Have a thorough knowledge of the rules and regulations, especially in regard to health and safety on the yard and when riding work.
- d. Be aware of your legal responsibilities including safeguarding.
- e. Develop good communication skills and constantly strive to improve them.
- f. When coaching, the coach is a role model, dress and behave in a professional manner at all times.
- g. Lead from the front and support from the rear. Make all coaching inclusive, even someone on the injured list can become involved.
- h. Concentrate on the performance, not the outcome. Set achievable, but challenging goals for riders.
- i. Praise in public, criticise in private.
- j. Recognise the contribution of others within the process – owners, trainers, sponsors, colleagues.
- k. Be flexible in your methods and approach, use your listening skills to full advantage.
- l. Network through media, reading, or liaising with stakeholders and other coaches to broaden experience and knowledge.

4. CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY A LEVEL 1 COACH (COACHING ASSISTANT)

The term coaching assistant is applied to Level 1 coaches to represent the amount of responsibility they are expected to hold at this level. In team sports such as football, hockey where a team of coaches are employed, the role of an assistant coach is to help a more qualified coach to deliver the coaching session.

In the working racing environment, the role of a Level 1 coach will be interpreted slightly differently, as on many occasions the coach will be the only person delivering coaching on the yard or when riding work.

The qualified Level 1 coach will have access to a more qualified coach who will be available as a mentor as and when required.

The expected contributions made by a Level 1 coach in racing are:

- prepare for the delivery of coaching activities
- prepare for activities, taking into account rider or grooms' needs and motives
- establish a safe working/riding environment
- deliver prepared activities of the coaching sessions
- establish working relationships with participants and others
- conclude the activities
- evaluate and review the effectiveness of coaching activities
- continuously develop personal skills and expertise.



5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COACH

The responsibilities of a coach are important and far reaching. A coach has a pivotal role in supporting others achieve their optimum potential. Coaches must understand their responsibilities in relation to:

- health and safety
- safeguarding
- data protection
- equality and diversity
- emergency procedures
- reporting to a responsible person.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety of horses and riders is an integral part of daily routine within the racing industry. Accidents and incidents will undoubtedly occur in a high risk sport, and therefore the importance of following safe working practices and procedures cannot be overstated.

Those in a senior position, including employers, coaches and yard managers have a "duty of care" for junior employees. When a "duty of care" is breached, an action of negligence may be brought resulting in possible litigation and court proceedings.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires organisations to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of employees (coaches, grooms, riders etc) and non-employees such as owners and sponsors who enter the premises. There should not be an over-reaction to the need for safety, just a respect for safety procedures.

SAFEGUARDING

All coaches should be aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and should undertake appropriate safeguarding training and assessment.

DATA PROTECTION

The Data Protection Act 1998 was passed to regulate how personal information is used and stored and protects people from misuse of their personal details. However, as technology and cyber security advances, a new directive is to be introduced from the European Union, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). These guidelines will legalise some major and much-needed updates giving people more in-depth rights on information collected about them and how their information is used and stored.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

All coaches are required to adhere to the British Horseracing Authority's Equality and Diversity Policy. An overview is as follows:

The British Horseracing Authority (BHA) is committed to providing equal opportunities to all employees and contractors regardless of age, race, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin, physical or mental disability, sex, sexuality, or marital status.

It is the policy of BHA to establish and maintain a working environment, terms and conditions of service, and employment practices which will ensure that no individual receives less favourable treatment on the ground set out in this policy.

Selection criteria and procedure will be reviewed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their merit and ability to carry out the responsibilities involved.

All employees will be given equal opportunity, and where appropriate and possible, training to enable them to progress within the company.

DISCRIMINATION

It is unlawful to discriminate, directly or indirectly, in recruitment or employment on the grounds of the following 'protected characteristics':

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Religion or Belief
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment.

Employees should not harass, victimise, abuse or intimidate others on any grounds.

Harassment is unwanted conduct to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Victimisation occurs where someone is subjected to a detriment because he or she has made a complaint (or is proposing to make a complaint) about discriminatory treatment, either as an internal grievance or as proceedings before a tribunal.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Despite safety measures being put in place, working with and riding racehorses is a high-risk occupation and on occasion accidents will occur.

If a rider falls off whilst riding work, go immediately to the injured person, requesting that other riders pull up and keep the area around the injured person clear. Ask someone to dismount and catch the loose horse. Send someone for help.

If the rider is conscious ask if they have any pain in a particular area, assess the casualty to see if a visit to hospital is needed. If the rider is unconscious call 999 immediately and assess whether the airway is open and breathing normal, before placing them in the recovery position and keeping them warm with constant monitoring until help arrives. If the casualty is not breathing, commence CPR immediately.

If an accident happens it must be recorded in the Accident Book which should be kept on the yard for such a purpose. The coach should complete a detailed account of the incident with a drawing of where and how it happened. The rider (where possible) should complete their personal details and an independent witness should verify that a true account of the event has been recorded. Accident reporting documents must be retained for three years after the date of the incident. Where an injured person is under 18 years, all accident forms should be kept for three years after their eighteenth birthday.

All coaches working in the racing industry are required to hold a current first aid qualification.

REPORTING TO A RESPONSIBLE PERSON

A Level 1 coach is not expected to take responsibility for significant decision making, however it is imperative that concerns are voiced to someone in higher authority. Below is a table of common issues and to whom they are reportable:

Area of Concern	Reported To
Coaching	More qualified coach Personal mentor Yard supervisor
Horse Welfare	Employer Yard Manager British Horseracing Authority
Riders/Grooms	Employer Safeguarding Officer Yard Manager



6. PLANNING A COACHING SESSION

It is the responsibility of every coach to ensure that learning takes place in a suitable and safe environment. Possible risks associated with the coaching environment, horses, riders, the equipment, the activity to be carried out, the coaching method and level of supervision provided must all be assessed prior to the start of the session. In addition to a risk assessment it is important to have a plan for the coaching session to provide structure and allow for development and progression.

A coaching session plan will detail:

- the date, time and venue of the session
- the purpose of the session
- facilities and equipment needed and provided
- description of the warm up, main body of the session including any specific exercises used, key learning points, the cool down and an evaluation of how the session went and what could be done differently to greater effect.

With further experience the coach will develop plans to include short and long term goals for riders they work with regularly.

MANAGING RISK AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

One of the most important tasks a coach must undertake before coaching is an assessment of risk in order to maintain the safest environment possible for the coaching session. Examples of risk include:

- Riders' health and fitness, experience and competence should be assessed.

- Horses' temperament, fitness and level of training needs to be taken into account before planning the activity.
- Session plan should take into account the experience and capability of horses and riders.
- Weather – many thoroughbred horses dislike the wind and rain causing a change in attitude and performance. Bright sunlight can be blinding for riders.
- Ground conditions/surfaces – type of surface and condition in an indoor or outdoor enclosed arena or ground conditions on the gallops.
- Equipment – maintenance of starting stalls and hurdles or fences. A record of repairs and maintenance should be kept.
- Tack and equipment – tack should be checked for unsafe stitching or wear and tear. Riders should wear skull caps and body protectors which meet current safety standard.
- Coaching method – appropriate for individuals and/or all riders in a group.
- Supervision – adequate help available if using starting stalls or hurdles. First aid cover and a qualified first aider.

RISK EVALUATION

Risks are listed as low, medium or high depending on the likelihood of occurrence and the severity of the risk involved. Steps should be taken to keep all risks as minimal as possible. Risk assessments are ongoing throughout the session. Precautions and actions to prevent an incident include:

- Eliminate the risk – assess all riders in an enclosed school before allowing on the gallops.
- Reduce the risk – ensure each rider wears a body protector and gives repeated, clear safety warnings when on the gallops.
- Accept the risk – if the risk is low and unlikely to occur, should it happen the result will be minimal.

Coaches should ensure they have:

- insurance policies covering public liability and personal accident
- a first aid certificate
- details of the venue address, postcode and grid reference
- a mobile phone (with reception).



RACEHORSE SIMULATOR CENTRE – RISK ASSESSMENT

Location	Racehorse Simulator Centre	Area	Adjacent to gymnasium	
Activity	Use of mechanical horse simulator for fitness and training purposes			
No. of people exposed	One at a time throughout the training session	Under 18?	Yes	
Hazards Identified				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simulator has moving parts, i.e. the head and neck – entrapment of fingers or clothing and trip hazard • Unsupervised access by visitors (non-employees) • Falls from simulator – riders relying on balance • Hard floor surface 				
Existing Control Measures				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simulator bolted to floor • Suitable flooring • Electrical systems safety checked • Trained, competent staff using all equipment • Induction given to all new users of the simulator • Simulator bolted to frame for stability and minimal uncontrolled movement when in use • Individual under supervision – others kept clear of simulator • Age and size restrictions applied by supervising staff • Adequate room for installation, and lighting suitable and sufficient for the purpose intended • First-aiders and first aid facilities on site 				
Hazard Severity		Likelihood of Occurrence		
	4 = Unacceptable		4 = Likely	
	3 = Moderate		3 = Quite possible	
✓	2 = Low		2 = Possible	
	1 = Very low	✓	1 = Unlikely	
Hazard rating: severity x likelihood = 2				
Further Control Measures are Required by Priority		Date	Completed	Completed by
No further control measures deemed necessary, but review any incidents				
The following residual risk assessment must be carried out after the above controls are in place.				

ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL RISK

Hazard Severity		Likelihood of Occurrence	
	3 = Acceptable		3 = Quite possible
✓	2 = Low		2 = Possible
	1 = Very low		1 = Unlikely

Date of assessment		Review date		Carried out by	
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Position	Health and Safety Adviser	Signed	
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COACHING PLANS

When delivering coaching sessions on any level it is helpful to remember the “What, Why and How” of coaching.

- **What** is the purpose of the coach – what are the rider and coach aiming to achieve from the session?
- **Why** is this important to the participant and to the sport?
- **How** is the session going to be structured to maximise the learning experience? By coaching an individual in the way they like to learn, the learning experience may be enhanced.



EXAMPLE COACHING SESSION PLAN

Date: 10 February 2015	Participant(s): Joe	Horse(s): Ranger	Equipment/resources: Horse, gallop, correct riding equipment, video and playback equipment, radio/mobile phone, first aid kit
Session goal(s): Riding a fit racehorse on the gallops for routine canter work, maintaining a balanced, effective position throughout			
Time (mins)			
Task/Exercise			
15	Warm-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk, trot and canter on warm-up area 		Coaching Points/Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain effective, balanced position Horse to be responsive and relaxed Awareness of other riders and horses Importance of smooth, balanced transitions
10	Main content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steady canter in a string at appropriate distance from other horses for seven furlongs Set off and pull up smoothly with consideration for others Communicate with other riders as appropriate Work on position and balance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set off in balanced manner, keeping suitable distance from other riders and maintaining control of horse Establish and maintain effective, balanced position Horse to be responsive and relaxed Awareness of other riders and horses Importance of smooth, balanced transitions
15	Cool-down: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ease horse down, walk round on a relaxed rein while still maintaining control Feedback on horse's performance 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of pulling up correctly and checking horse for soundness Awareness of horse's recovery Feedback on own and horse's performance
Evaluation of session and action for next session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback on position, balance and effectiveness at the time and also through video review at a later point Action for next session is to lead the string and set the pace Become familiar with riding different horses 			

SHORT AND LONG TERM GOALS

Goal setting is a process whereby a rider and a coach devise an individual plan to help the rider achieve their ambitions. Goals focus the user on what is important, aid motivation and adherence and help organise training by emphasising improvement and progress. Goal setting can loosely be divided into short, medium and long term goals. All three link together to form the accumulation of a longer term ambition.

- Short term goals – often also referred to as process goals. These goals are within the control of the rider. They are individual attainments leading towards an improvement in performance, for example improving balance and body position, or correct use of the aids.
- Medium term goals – known as performance goals. Performance goals are just about within the rider's control. They include developing and perfecting skills such as schooling or riding work.
- Long term or outcome goals are dependent on others and where the participant has no ultimate control over their achievement. For example, an outcome goal to lead up a horse at the Cheltenham Festival meeting is depended on horse performance, training campaigns and organisational plans.

The use of 'SMART' targets, helps to keep goal setting within this framework.

Specific	more detailed goals see greater improvement and motivation
Measurable	progress needs to be assessed to gauge improvements
Achievable/Attainable	stretch and challenge but always keep the outcome achievable
Realistic	the participant must believe they can achieve the goal or they will lose interest in working toward it
Time related	set deadlines and dates to keep targets on track



COACHING STYLES

To best respond to a learner’s preferred learning style, a coach may develop a range of coaching styles and methods of delivery. These include:

- **TELL AND SHOW** – this is a dictatorial method of delivery that is often used with large groups. It is effective when there are safety issues and with beginner riders, as well as when introducing new skills.
- **QUESTION AND EMPOWER** – learning is done by the learner. With this method of delivery, participants are inspired to develop cognitive skills towards their own improvement. The coach questions a rider about their own performance, encourages them to make decisions and take responsibility for their own learning. This is a powerful coaching style demanding considerable skill.
- **SET UP AND STAND BACK** – this method is used to motivate and empower jockeys to learn for themselves. The Rider Coach uses structured activities that allow learning to happen through the activity. The coach encourages tactical thinking to help develop the decision-making process and stays quiet, observes, then adapts activity to provide challenges and success.

CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Despite careful planning and preparation, horses can be unpredictable and it is inevitable that there will be mishaps on occasion.

There are three main areas where a contingency plan is needed:

- Weather
- Medical emergencies
- Equipment failure

Considerations for managing incidents include:

- Have contact numbers on hand (employer/manager/senior coach), in case help is needed.
- When working in the open (for example on the gallop) ensure the yard manger knows your location (post code, grid reference).
- Write a generic contingency lesson plan to ensure continuity of the session. Lessen or increase challenges to increase confidence or motivate learners.
- With experience comes the ability to make the best decision for the situation and not the first or only decision.



8. CONCLUDING AND REVIEWING A SESSION

SESSION CONCLUSION

It is important to bring each coached session to a valid conclusion to ensure that learners have appreciated the improvements made, understood the key learning points of the lesson and have some homework to practice before the next session.

SESSION REVIEW

When reviewing progress with participants make sure that the discussion is timed appropriately. Occasionally it is helpful to make reviews within the session as well as at the end.

Identify with participants what went well during the session and recognise how further planning and varied delivery could improve the lesson format.

Discuss and agree the plan with participants and adapt future sessions to meet the new outcomes agreed.

REFLECTING

Reflecting on the coaching session is important to both coach and rider by:

- assisting coaches to develop elite coaching knowledge
- helping to initiate change
- creating links between theory and practice
- improving the decision making process
- improving understanding of the coaching process.

REFLECTION AND FEEDBACK

- Reflecting is re-living the event, thinking it over, making no judgment.
- Feedback is constructive information received on a performance to enable that performance to improve.
- Reflection without feedback rarely leads to an improved performance.

ANALYSING PERSONAL COACHING PRACTICE

The common thread uniting all types of coaching and mentoring is that they offer an opportunity for analysis, reflection and action that ultimately enable the coach to achieve success.

Methods to enhance personal coaching performance include:

- Work with a peer coach or mentor.
- Keep a reflective journal or diary.
- Seek feedback from others observing the coaching session.
- Discussion groups with other coaches.
- Analysis through video.

Using information gained from these methods, the coach can then develop a personal action plan.

9. NEXT STEPS AS A COACH

A Personal Action Plan is a plan developed by using the SMART goal setting system whereby the coach records what they want to improve, what steps they will take to implement the improvement and how long they envisage the plan will take to come to fruition. Questions the coach should ask of themselves include:

- What is my purpose as a coach?
- What is my main coaching goal – what do I specifically want to achieve?
- What steps am I taking towards achieving my end goal and how will I measure my progress?
- What is filling the void between where I am coaching now and my end goal?
- How will I overcome these obstacles to achieve my goal?
- How long will it take?

A successful action plan is not a rigid strategy and should be regularly reviewed and adapted to the coach's current needs. By dividing the plan into small attainable goals, the coach feels a sense of achievement and maintains motivation.



SECTION TWO

WHAT TO COACH

It is important to the racing industry and to participants that coaches in this sector recognise the significance of coaching to a high and common standard. For horsemanship to improve and advance, coaches must be clear about what they are coaching, as well as how they are coaching.

This section provides an outline of how riders should progress through the development of correct position and use of aids, together with gaining an understanding of the effect of the rider on the horse. Coaches should work with participants across a range of skills covering:

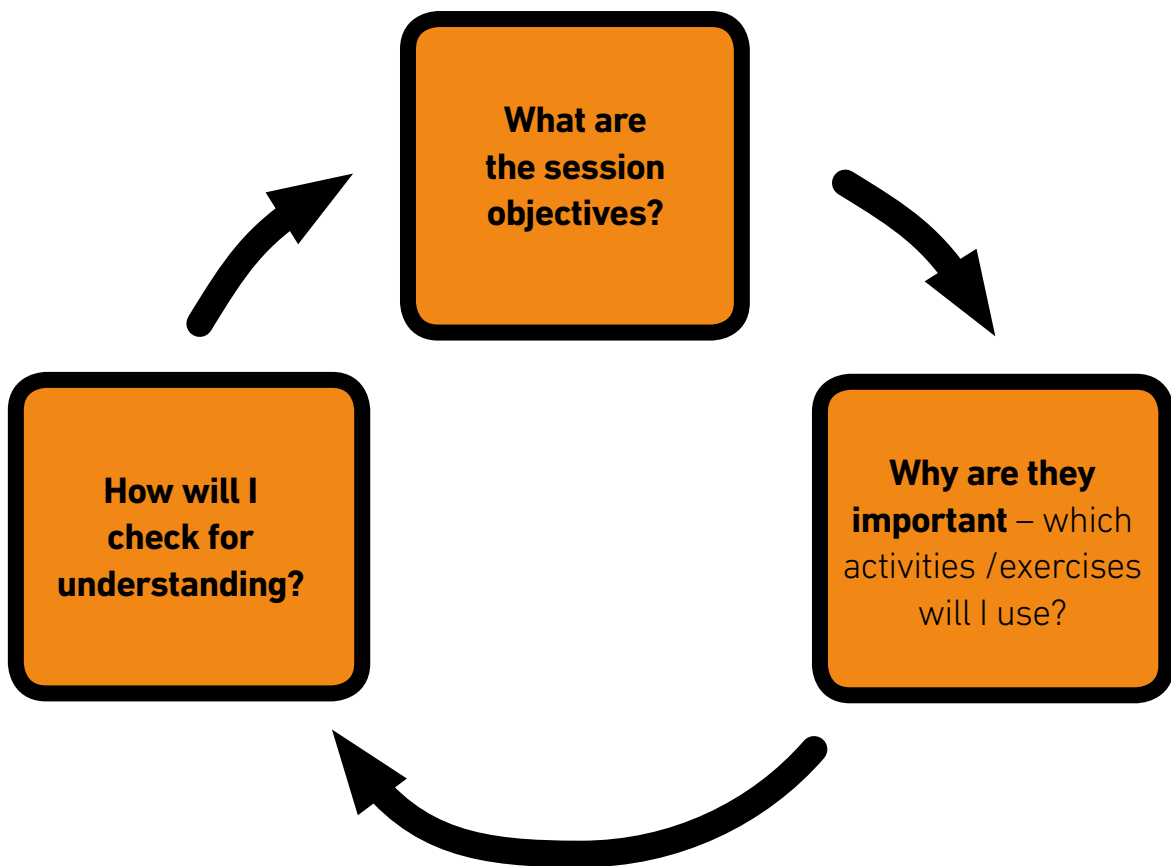
1. Rider position
2. The aids – natural and artificial
3. Fitness for riding
4. The paces
5. Disciplines/formations when riding at exercise
6. Tack and the effect it has on horse performance
7. Principles of riding at speed
8. Schooling through starting stalls
9. Schooling over obstacles
10. Feedback on horse performance
11. Horse temperament and characteristics when ridden
12. The effect of fitness, education and outside influences on horse performance
13. Horse care and welfare

When coaching ground-based horsemanship skills, standard industry good practice should be followed.

10. LESSON PLANS

At the start of a coach's career, lesson plans will help to identify what is going to be coached and provide structure to each session. A lesson plan is the coach's road map of what needs to be learned in the session and how this is going to happen. The plan should have three key ingredients:

- a. **What** – What is the purpose of the coaching session?
- b. **Why** – Is it important and which activities or exercises will achieve the session objective?
- c. **How** – will the coach check that learners have understood?



The following lesson plans are examples of how a coaching session could be structured. Each coach will need to develop their own portfolio of lesson plans to suit their own circumstances and those of their participants.

EXAMPLE COACHING SESSION PLANS

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN 1: IMPROVING BASIC RIDER POSITION

Date	Participant(s)	Horse(s)	Equipment/Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sarah Tim Tom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flash Buddy Tiger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct riding equipment. Arena Radio/mobile phone First Aid Kit
<p>Session goal: To evaluate and improve basic rider position at walk, trot and canter</p>			
Time (minutes)	Task/Exercise	Coaching points/Focus	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe walk, trot and canter on both reins, note regular or irregular stride patterns 	
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explanation of the timings of the paces- walk four time, trot two time, canter three time, gallop four time. Use exercises to assess and maintain the rhythm in each pace, eg counting strides between arena markers or riding a certain number of paces between two marked points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using an effective position and aids to maintain regularity in the paces. Developing feel and an understanding of when the paces may alter, ie on turns and circles the paces may shorten or the horse may slow down. 	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cool down. Walk on a relaxed rein, maintaining control Feedback on performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of horse's recovery and level or un-level strides after work Feedback on horse and their own performance 	
<p>Evaluation of session and action plan for next session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion of paces and questioning to confirm rider's understanding Agree that riders will ride different horses and practice assessing the paces Action plan to learn trot diagonals in next session 			

EXAMPLE COACHING SESSION PLANS

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN 2 - CORRECT USE OF THE AIDS

Date	Participant(s)	Horse(s)	Equipment/Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sliver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Horse, gallop, warm up area. Correct riding equipment. Radio/mobile phone First aid kit
<p>Session goal: Riding a racehorse on the gallop for routine fitness work, giving correct and effective natural aids</p>			
Time (minutes)	Task/Exercise	Coaching points/Focus	
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warm up Walk, trot and canter in enclosed warm up area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe and analyse rider position and effectiveness of natural aids (seat, legs, hands and voice) 	
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steady canter up gallop, setting off smoothly Maintain regular pace and rhythm through effective synchronised use of aids Apply co-ordinated aids to move up and down through horse's gears at speed Use upper body and core muscles to pull up gradually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of upper body – incline forward to increase speed, grow tall and engage core muscles to decrease speed Hands single and double bridge to keep rein contact consistent 	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cool down. Walk on a relaxed rein, maintaining control Feedback on performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of horse's recovery Feedback on horse and their own performance 	
<p>Evaluation of session and action plan for next session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and feedback on rider aids, especially in relation to increase and decreasing speed. Agree a plan to practice aids as horse travels up and down his gears on gallop. Action plan to work alongside other riders on gallop, practice aids as horse travels up and down his gears on gallop. 			

EXAMPLE COACHING SESSION PLANS

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN 3 - UNDERSTANDING THE PACES OF THE HORSE

Date	Participant(s)	Horse(s)	Equipment/Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rachel Tom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Star Buddy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arena Correct riding equipment Radio/mobile phone First Aid kit
<p>Session goal: To gain an understanding of the horse's paces, rhythm, regularity and soundness</p>			
Time (minutes)	Task/Exercise	Coaching points/Focus	
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk, trot and canter using whole arena space, on both reins Be aware of other riders Abide by the safety rules for riding in an arena with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe and analyse rider position on both reins Rider balance Rider balance in transitions 	
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to improve rider position, security and balance in walk and trot, using transitions between the paces Use basic individual and group exercises Develop rider balance in canter (sitting) on both reins Progress towards poised or jockey position in canter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain balanced effective position maintaining control of the horse Importance of smooth balanced transitions Stirrup length Head and hand positioning Upper body balance 	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cool down. Walk horse on a relaxed rein, maintaining control Feedback on performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of horse's recovery and relaxation Feedback on their and their horse's performance 	
<p>Evaluation of session and action plan for next session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion and review on position, balance and effectiveness. Agree and set practice tasks to be done before next session Action plan for next session to practice balanced position at speed within a group of riders 			

EXAMPLE COACHING SESSION PLANS

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN 4: USING SCHOOL MOVEMENTS TO IMPROVE HORSE AND RIDER PERFORMANCE

Date	Participant(s)	Horse(s)	Equipment/Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diamond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct riding equipment. • Radio/mobile phone • First aid kit
<p>Session goal: To establish the correct way of riding simple movements in the arena, thereby aiding control of the horse in an open space</p>			
Time (minutes)	Task/Exercise	Coaching points/Focus	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm up in walk, trot and canter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe rider position and effectiveness of aids. Observe horse's level of schooling/training 	
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation and demonstration of simple turns and circles • Centre line • Long diagonal • 20m circles • Progress from walk to trot • Circles in canter on both reins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach correct aids for turns and circles • Note accuracy of movements and how riding at speed may affect this • Rider position and balance 	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool down. Walk on a relaxed rein, maintaining control • Feedback on performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of horse's recovery • Feedback on horse and own performance 	
<p>Evaluation of session and action plan for next session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion and questioning to establish riders' understanding of the importance of riding correct school movements. • Agree a plan to practice turns and circles using synchronised aids • Action plan to ride different horses through simple school movements 			

EXAMPLE COACHING SESSION PLANS

SAMPLE SESSION PLAN 5: FITTING A RACING SADDLE

Date	Participant(s)	Horse(s)	Equipment/Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amy Jo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stable. Headcollar and rope. Racing saddle. Radio/mobile phone First Aid kit
Session goal: To fit a racing saddle correctly			
Time (minutes)	Task/Exercise	Coaching points/Focus	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the importance of fitting the saddle correctly Safety Comfort for horse and rider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make learners aware of the implications of poor saddle fit Check saddle for wear and tear prior to fitting 	
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate correct saddle fit Amy and Jo to fit saddle under guidance of coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give clear explanations whilst fitting saddle Observe learners fitting saddle offer prompts and feedback 	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove saddle correctly Observe Amy and Jo removing saddle Care of saddle after use How to store saddle safely Give feedback on task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give clear explanation whilst removing saddle Observe learners removing saddle Give detailed feedback and check for understanding 	
Evaluation of session and action plan for next session:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the importance of correct saddle fit and agree a goal to practice the task on a number of horses. Next session to fit a bridle correctly 			

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