



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

**The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities  
Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018**  
**Guidance notes for conditions for hiring out horses**  
**July 2018**



# Contents

Introduction .....	3
What is in and out of the scope: Hiring out horses.....	3
In scope criteria .....	4
Out of scope criteria.....	4
Overview of the conditions and explanatory guidance .....	5
Part A – General Conditions (Schedule 2 of the Regulations) .....	6
1.0 Licence Display .....	6
2.0 Records .....	6
3.0 Use, number and type of animal.....	6
4.0 Staffing .....	6
5.0 Suitable Environment .....	8
6.0 Suitable Diet .....	12
7.0 Monitoring of behaviour and training of animals .....	13
8.0 Animal Handling and Interactions .....	15
9.0 Protection from Pain, Suffering, Injury and Disease .....	15
10.0 Emergencies .....	19
Part B – Specific Conditions: Hiring out horses (Schedule 5 of the Regulations) .....	21
2.0 Eligibility .....	21
3.0 Supervision.....	21
4.0 Suitable Environment .....	22
5.0 Suitable Diet .....	22
6.0 Protection from Pain, Suffering & Disease .....	22
7.0 Equipment .....	24
Higher Standards .....	26

# Introduction

1. This guidance is aimed at local authority inspectors in England and should be read in conjunction with the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 (SI No.486) <sup>(1)</sup>. Guidance documents are available for each licensable activity under the regulations: dog breeding, pet selling, hiring out horses, boarding for dogs, boarding for cats, home boarding for dogs, dog day care and keeping or training animals for exhibition. There is also Procedural Guidance on the general issues that apply to all activities including on how to assess the star rating of establishments.

## What is in and out of the scope: Hiring out horses

2. Schedule 1 of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 (“the regulations”) defines the licensable activities for each sector. In all cases except dog breeding, the licensable activity is restricted to businesses or those operating on a commercial basis.

### ***Business Test***

3. The Regulations specify two example business tests to be considered when determining whether an activity is considered commercial, and thus within scope. They are not the exclusive factors to be considered but are examples and other factors, such as those listed in the nine badges of trade set out by HMRC, are also relevant. The regulations include the following on this issue:
4. The circumstances which a local authority must take into account in determining whether an activity is being carried on in the course of a business for the purposes of this Schedule include, for example, whether the operator—
  - (a) makes any sale by, or otherwise carries on, the activity with a view to making a profit, or
  - (b) earns any commission or fee from the activity.
5. This guidance is intended to assist inspectors in determining whether or not an activity may be subject to the regulations noting that ultimately there will be an element of judgement required.
6. Set out below are examples of the type of activity that should or should not be considered within the scope of the regulations and the indicators that should be considered when deciding whether a licence is required.
7. Local authority inspectors should take account of all elements of the advice below and weigh them against each other before reaching a decision as to whether an activity falls within scope of the regulations.

### ***Hiring out horses: definition in Schedule 1 of the regulations***

“6. Hiring out horses in the course of a business for either or both of the following purposes—

- (a) riding;
- (b) instruction in riding.

---

(1) [Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(England\) Regulations 2018](#)

7. The activity described in paragraph 6 does not include any activity—
- (a) solely for military or police purposes, or
  - (b) involving the instruction of students at a university on a course of study and examinations leading to a veterinary degree to which a recognition order under section 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966<sup>(2)</sup> relates and for as long as such an order is in force.”

## **In scope criteria**

### ***Activities that fulfil one or more of the following criteria are subject to licensing:***

1. Businesses which hire out horses for riding or for riding lessons. This includes riding schools and those that hire out horses, trekking, loan horses, pony parties (but only where the ponies are ridden), hunter hirelings, polo/polocrosse instruction and pony hire, pony and donkey rides.

## **Out of scope criteria**

### ***Activities that fulfil one or more of the following criteria are not subject to licensing:***

1. Businesses that run pony parties where none of the ponies are ever ridden – these should be licensed as animal exhibits.
2. Activities that are carried out solely for military or police purposes (e.g. riding stables that are used exclusively for these purposes).
3. Riding stables that are used exclusively for instructing veterinary students at university for the purpose of their course.
4. Individuals who occasionally lend a horse, even if a small fee is charged, where there is no profit made and no intent to make a profit.

### ***Guideline indicators of “out of scope” activities***

The following may assist consideration of the criteria listed above:

- The Government announced in Budget 2016 a new allowance of £1,000 for trading income from April 2017. Anyone falling under this threshold would not need to be considered in the context of determining whether they are a business.

---

(2) [Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966](#)

# Overview of the conditions and explanatory guidance

1. This document outlines the conditions that must be complied with in order to receive an animal activities licence for the activity of hiring out horses. The conditions set out in schedules to the regulations are given in bold throughout this document, whilst the explanatory guidance notes are provided as bullet points.
2. In order to receive a licence a business will need to meet all of the minimum standards outlined in this document. In addition, businesses are encouraged to apply higher standards. A business that meets the higher standards will be able to gain a 4 or 5 star rating in the Animals Activity Star Rating System and will qualify for a longer licence (e.g. two or three years as opposed to a one-year licence) and thereby pay a lower licence fee.
3. Whilst applying the higher standards is optional, certain standards are required in order to attract the higher star ratings. To distinguish required higher standards from optional ones they have each been given a specific colour which is used in each guidance document. Higher standards that appear in blue text are required in order for a business to be classed as high standard, whereas those that appear in red text are optional. See the Procedural Guidance for a full explanation of the Animals Activity Star Rating System and how it incorporates a risk assessment of the business.
4. Paragraph numbering in the following parts of this guidance document relate to the numbering of the conditions in the relevant Schedules of the regulations.

## Part A – General Conditions (Schedule 2 of the Regulations)

### 1.0 Licence Display

**Condition** (paragraph numbers relate to the numbering in the Regulations)

**1.1 A copy of the licence must be clearly and prominently displayed on any premises used for the licensable activity.**

**Guidance**

- The licensed premises address must be displayed on the licence.
- This must be displayed in a public-facing area of the premises such as the entrance.

**Condition**

**1.2 The name of the licence holder followed by the number of the licence holder's licence must be clearly and prominently displayed on any website used in respect of the licensable activity.**

### 2.0 Records

**Conditions**

**2.1 The licence holder must ensure that at any time all the records that the licence holder is required to keep as a condition of the licence are available for inspection by an inspector in a visible and legible form or, where any such records are stored in electronic form, in a form from which they can readily be produced in a visible and legible form.**

**2.2 The licence holder must keep all such records for at least three years beginning with the date on which the record was created.**

### 3.0 Use, number and type of animal

**Condition**

**3.1 No animals or types of animal other than those animals and types of animal specified in the licence may be used in relation to the relevant licensable activity.**

**3.2 The number of animals kept for the activity at any time must not exceed the maximum that is reasonable taking into account the facilities and staffing on any premises used for the licensable activity.**

**Guidance**

- The licence conditions must clearly state the numbers of horses permitted at the premises for the activity.

### 4.0 Staffing

**Condition**

**4.1 Sufficient numbers of people who are competent for the purpose must be available to provide a level of care that ensures that the welfare needs of all the animals are met.**

## **Guidance**

- Personnel with experience of working with horses must actively oversee daily horse care and ensure optimal welfare for all horses. Staff or at least one member of staff must have a recognised qualification such as a relevant OFQUAL regulated Level 2 qualification and/or suitable experience/ training such as having run an equine establishment before.
- Where there is evidence that the welfare needs of the animals are not being met, the inspector should consider if the staffing levels are appropriate. The inspector should take into account:
  - The size of premises,
  - The layout of the premises i.e. how many horses are stable kept or field kept,
  - The qualifications / experience of the staff,
  - Advice from the council's veterinary officer,
  - Use of part-time or voluntary staff.

## **Higher Standard**

- **At least one member of key staff must hold an OFQUAL regulated Level 3 qualification or higher.**

## **Condition**

- 4.2 The licence holder or a designated manager and any staff employed to care for the animals must have competence to identify the normal behaviour of the species for which they are caring and to recognise signs of, and take appropriate measures to mitigate or prevent, pain, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour.**

## **Guidance**

- Suitable and sufficient training of staff must be demonstrated to have been carried out in the following areas with relevant records of induction:
  - Animal welfare, including recognising poor welfare,
  - Animal handling,
  - Cleanliness and hygiene,
  - Feeding and food preparation,
  - Disease prevention and control,
  - Recognition and first aid treatment of sick or injured animals.

## **Condition**

- 4.3 The licence holder must provide and ensure the implementation of a written training policy for all staff.**

## **Guidance**

- The training policy must be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as required and must include:
  - annual appraisal
  - planned continued professional development
  - recognition of knowledge gaps



- Use of online courses and literature
- If no staff are employed the licence holder must demonstrate their own knowledge development.
- It will be applicable to any members of staff. Training can be demonstrated by engagement with online courses and the documentation of the annual appraisal.
- Evidence of staff attendance or completion of the training must be provided

## 5.0 Suitable Environment

### *Condition*

**5.1 All areas, equipment and appliances to which the animals have access must present minimal risks of injury, illness and escape. They must be constructed in materials that are robust, safe and durable, in a good state of repair and well maintained.**

### *Guidance*

- The minimum size of a stables must be: Horses: 3.65m x 3.65m (12ft x 12ft) Large Horse: 3.65m x 4.25m (12ft x 14ft); Ponies: 3.05m x 3.05m (10ft x 10ft) Large Ponies 3.05m x 3.65m (10ft x 12ft) Mules: 3.65m x 3.65m (12ft x 12ft) Donkeys: 3.05m x 3.05m (10ft x 10ft, Large donkeys: 3.05m x 3.65m (10ft x 12ft) and must allow room for horse to lie down and move around.
- Stall positioning and dimensions must allow room for the horse to lie down but not turn around and have sufficient space behind the stall for the horse to be able to back out with ease. Stalls must have adequate bedding and a non-slip floor.
- Timber must be of good quality, well-kept and any damaged areas sealed or over clad. Wood must be smooth and treated and properly maintained to render it impervious.
- Interior surfaces, including floors, must be even, impervious and able to be disinfected, where appropriate. Floors must have a non-slip, solid surface.
- There must not be any sharp edges, projections, rough edges or other hazards which present risk of injury to a horse.
- Doors must be strong enough to resist impact, scratching and chewing, and must be capable of being effectively secured. Door width must be minimum 4ft wide and must be bolted top and bottom. The height of the door must allow the horse to look out with the head comfortably over the door unless it can be shown that there is a valid reason to not allow heads out. Doors must allow safe access/egress for horse and handler. Doors must open outwards or through slide mechanism.
- Door openings must be constructed such that the passage of water/waste is not impeded, or allowed to gather due to inaccessibility.
- Gaps or apertures must be small enough to prevent a horse's head passing through, or entrapment of any limb or body parts.
- Windows and fittings must be safety glass/ mesh protected with no obtrusive fittings and encourage air flow.
- Drainage must be effective to ensure there is no standing or pooling of liquids. A minimum gradient of 1:80 is advised to allow water to run off. Waste water must not run off into adjacent stables.

- Stables must open onto secure areas so that horses are not able to escape from the premises.
- Fields must be safe and securely fenced (ideally using post and rail, at least 1.25m (4ft) high, plain taut wire, well maintained hedging or electric fencing with gates).
- For establishments that carry out instruction in riding on site, there must be a safe riding area (e.g. an arena or a field), which must have clear access for the licensed premises, with a minimum size of 20m x 40m with well-maintained access and egress and protection from horses escaping onto public land. A safe suitable area must be provided to carry out rider assessments. The riding surface must be well maintained and there must be management systems to maintain the surface and control levels of dust.
- Fields must be free from dangerous objects and poisonous plants and weeds otherwise horses must be fenced away where this is not possible.
- There must be a suitable annual pasture management plan for fields.
- Accommodation must be regularly inspected for damage and potential injury or escape points and the results of these inspections recorded. Damaged accommodation must be repaired or replaced immediately.
- Pony lines and tie up areas must be well maintained.

### **Higher standard**

- **Size of stable must exceed minimum requirements. Horses will not be in reach of each other to bite and there will be room to work around them. Horses will be in view of each other, unless kept singly for management reasons, such as isolation or stallion management purposes.**

### **Condition**

**5.2 Animals must be kept at all times in an environment suitable to their species and condition (including health status and age) with respect to—**

- (a) their behavioural needs,**
- (b) its situation, space, air quality, cleanliness and temperature,**
- (c) the water quality (where relevant),**
- (d) noise levels,**
- (e) light levels,**
- (f) ventilation.**

### **Guidance**

- Horses must be monitored to check if they are too hot or too cold. The licence holder must be able to demonstrate the steps taken if a horse is showing signs of heat or cold intolerance, such as providing rugs for horses. There must be provision of adequate indoor and outdoor rugs for each horse subject to the individual needs of a horse as dictated by breed/type and if stable or field kept.
- Horses must have access to shelter in the form of purpose built or natural cover, when kept in fields. With a purpose built shelter, the entrance must be wide enough to offer access/egress of min 2 horses to minimise risk of injury.

- Where working horses are stall kept they must spend a significant part of their day out of the stall. Stall kept horses must be fastened so that they can access food and water and lie down in comfort.
- Bedding materials must have minimal dust and be of sufficient depth to encourage horses to lie down.
- Where rubber floor matting is used in stables it must be regularly cleaned and there must be a small amount of bedding material.
- Sleeping areas need to be dry, draught-free, well ventilated and clean as well as large enough to allow all the animals housed to rest together fully outstretched, turn around unimpeded and move around comfortably.
- Animals held or displayed outdoors must have suitable protection from adverse weather conditions.

### ***Condition***

#### **5.3 Staff must ensure that the animals are kept clean and comfortable**

##### ***Guidance***

- Stables must be cleaned on a regular basis, with faeces cleared daily.
- All horses kept must benefit from a regular routine grooming and other health regimes as needed - this would include once a day inspection, attention to coat, teeth, ears and hooves and inspection for parasites.

### ***Condition***

#### **5.4 Where appropriate for the species, a toileting area and opportunities for toileting must be provided.**

##### ***Guidance***

- Dung collection must be a central part of pasture management to ensure an effective parasite control programme and to enhance grass recovery. Dung must be removed from fields a minimum of twice weekly. Alternatively, there should be a programme for harrowing larger areas in conjunction with resting/rotation system for pasture to ensure horses are not on the pasture directly after harrowing.

### ***Condition***

#### **5.5 Procedures must be in place to ensure accommodation and any equipment within it is cleaned as often as necessary and good hygiene standards are maintained. The accommodation must be capable of being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.**

##### ***Guidance***

- Stables must be kept in a clean condition in accordance with a documented procedure which must detail the routine daily cleaning regime and the procedure for cleaning between periods of occupation.

### ***Condition***

#### **5.6 The animals must be transported and handled in a manner (including for example in relation to housing, temperature, ventilation and frequency) that protects them from pain, suffering, injury and disease.**

### **Guidance**

- Any animals received or consigned must be transported according to the regulations laid down in current legislation.
- Leaving horses in vehicles must be minimalised and animals must never be left unattended in a car or other vehicle where doing so may pose a risk to the horse.
- All vehicles and equipment must be clean before use.

### **Condition**

**5.7 All the animals must be easily accessible to staff and for inspection. There must be sufficient light for the staff to work effectively and observe the animals.**

### **Guidance**

- Where practicable this should be natural light, but artificial light must be available.
- Artificial lights must be turned off to provide a period of darkness overnight.

### **Higher standard**

- **There must be a separate secure, clean and well-lit veterinary inspection area that enables safe access to allow inspection of a horse.**

### **Condition**

**5.8 All resources must be provided in a way (for example as regards. frequency, location and access points) that minimises competitive behaviour or the dominance of individual animals.**

### **Guidance**

- When stabled each horse must have access to its own water at all times.
- Where horses are being fed together, care must be taken to ensure that all horses are receiving sufficient food.
- When field kept attention must be paid to any monopolisation of resources such as hay and water to prevent any individual horse not getting access. There must be one feeding site per horse plus an extra one.

### **Higher standard**

- **There must be an option for a permanent individual turn out paddock/pen to allow horses their own area for grazing/turnout if required owing to ill-health or domination by other horses.**

### **Condition**

**5.9 The animals must not be left unattended in any situation or for any period likely to cause them distress.**

### **Guidance**

- Horses at grass must be inspected at least once a day, or as often as necessary for the individual health and welfare of each horse, and stabled or group housed horses must be inspected at least twice a day.
- A documented system of recording observation for illness, injury or behavioural problems must be maintained.

### **Higher standard**

- Horses must be inspected at least once during the out of hours period (e.g. 1800-0800).

## **6.0 Suitable Diet**

### **Condition**

**6.1 The animals must be provided with a suitable diet, in terms of quality, quantity and frequency that reflects their needs. Any new feeds must be introduced gradually to allow the animals to adjust to them.**

### **Guidance**

- Horses must be provided with a predominantly fibre-based diet; grass, hay, haylage or a hay replacement unless there are specific concerns about an individual horse's diet, for which veterinary advice must be sought. Ideally the hay/haylage should have minimal dust and be of good nutritional value.
- Hard/concentrate feeding of horses will be determined on an individual basis around age, workload, condition health and type.
- A plan/record of the type, quantity, frequency of food each horse receives must be kept.
- If there are concerns about an individual horse's diet, qualified nutritional advice must be sought.

### **Condition**

**6.2 Feed and (where appropriate) water intake must be monitored, and any problems recorded and addressed.**

### **Guidance**

- Horses must not remain inappetent (without appetite) for longer than 6 hours without seeking veterinary advice. If there are specific concerns in relation to diet or inappetency, veterinary advice must be sought earlier.
- The body condition of every horse must be monitored on a weekly basis with the use of a weight tape, scores should be recorded as part of a horses health plan.
- Horses displaying significant weight loss/gain must be evaluated by a competent person and treated as necessary. Veterinary advice must be followed if feeding debilitated, underweight or ill horses, or those with specific dietary requirements. The premises must have the ability, where appropriate, to isolate the individual animal to ascertain whether it is eating or not if it is in a group management situation.

### **Condition**

**6.3 Feed and drinking water provided to the animals must be unspoilt and free from contamination.**

### **Guidance**

- Prepared feed must not be left out for excessive periods and must be stored away from risk of vermin and in appropriately cool and dry places.
- Clean and dry feed bins that are clearly labelled to identify the different feed types, must be in use.

- Any stored feed is kept off the floor to prevent damp.
- There must be a system in place for disposal of feed waste.

### **Higher standard**

- **There must be separate well lit, lockable, purpose built feed room with water available and additional storage for supplements.**

### **Condition**

#### **6.4 Feed and drinking receptacles must be capable of being cleaned and disinfected, or disposable.**

### **Guidance**

- Receptacles must be non-porous, cleaned at least once a week and kept free from algae.
- If damaged they must be disposed of.

### **Condition**

#### **6.5 Constant access to fresh, clean drinking water must be provided in a suitable receptacle for the species that requires it.**

### **Guidance**

- Fresh water must be provided continuously in a clean container and changed or refreshed as often as necessary.
- Automatic water bowls/troughs must be routinely cleaned and the supply of water checked.
- In fields, water troughs or buckets must be securely fixed at a convenient height to allow horses of different sizes to drink comfortably and it should not be possible for the trough or bucket to be dislodged and knocked over. Supply should be sited to minimise risk of restricted access.

### **Condition**

#### **6.6 Where feed is prepared on the premises, there must be hygienic facilities for its preparation, including a working surface, hot and cold running water and storage.**

### **Guidance**

- In establishments where staff are employed a separate hand wash basin with an adequate supply of hot and cold water must be provided for them to wash their hands. This must be connected to a suitable drainage system.
- Soap and hygienic hand drying facilities must also be available.

## **7.0 Monitoring of behaviour and training of animals**

### **Condition**

#### **7.1 Active and effective environmental enrichment must be provided to the animals in inside and any outside environments.**

### **Guidance**

- Exercise or field time forms part of this enrichment. Keeping horses permanently stabled or without exercise must be avoided. If it is necessary for veterinary

purposes, then thought must be given to enrichment in the form of feeding mechanisms and grooming.

### **Higher standard**

- All horses must have a structured management and care programme to include their exercise needs with suitable alternatives for those unable to exercise, such as additional grooming, physiotherapy etc.

### **Condition**

**7.2 For species whose welfare depends partly on exercise, opportunities to exercise which benefit the animals' physical and mental health must be provided, unless advice from a veterinarian suggests otherwise.**

### **Guidance**

- Horses must be exercised regularly, however rest periods must be factored into the weekly schedule for each horse used.
- A horse kept in a suitable field does not always require additional opportunities to exercise and may have extended rest periods.

### **Condition**

**7.3 The animals' behaviour and any changes of behaviour must be monitored. Advice must be sought, as appropriate and without delay, from a veterinarian or, in the case of fish, any person competent to give such advice if adverse or abnormal behaviour is detected.**

### **Guidance**

- The behaviour of individual horses must be monitored daily and changes in behaviour and/or behaviours indicative of stress, fear, pain and anxiety must be recorded and acted upon.
- The licence holder/manager must be able to identify horses that are anxious or fearful about contact or close proximity to people or other horses.
- Horses likely to be or showing signs of being nervous or stressed must be located in a suitable part of the establishment, bearing in mind their individual temperament.

### **Condition**

**7.4 Where used, training methods or equipment must not cause pain, suffering or injury.**

### **Guidance**

- Training must be reward based (i.e. reward desired behaviour).

### **Condition**

**7.5 All immature animals must be given suitable and adequate opportunities to—**  
**(a) learn how to interact with people, their own species and other animals where such interaction benefits their welfare, and**  
**(b) become habituated to noises, objects and activities in their environment.**

### **Guidance**

- Processes must be in place to meet the needs of young and new horses including appropriate training and slow introduction to different noises and sights that will be part of their daily routine or workload.

## **8.0 Animal Handling and Interactions**

### ***Condition***

**8.1 All people responsible for the care of the animals must be competent in the appropriate handling of each animal to protect it from pain, suffering, injury or disease.**

### ***Guidance***

- Horses must always be handled humanely and appropriately to suit the requirements of the individual horse and to minimise fear, stress, pain and distress. Horses must never be punished so that they are frightened or exhibit aversive behaviour.
- Training equipment must only be used by competent people and any potentially painful equipment must be avoided.

### ***Condition***

**8.2 The animals must be kept separately or in suitable compatible social groups appropriate to the species and individual animals. No animals from a social species may be isolated or separated from others of their species for any longer than is necessary.**

### ***Guidance***

- Horses are usually best kept in social groups. If for any reason a horse must be separated from the social group, it must be ensured it still has sight of other horses if possible.
- A policy must be in place for monitoring the introduction of new horses to existing groups, to avoid stress to either new or resident animals.

### ***Condition***

**8.3 The animals must have at least daily opportunities to interact with people where such interaction benefits their welfare.**

### ***Guidance***

- Horses must be interacting with people through daily grooming and exercise.
- If kept at grass all year they may not have interaction for daily grooming but will need interaction for health and injury checks.

## **9.0 Protection from Pain, Suffering, Injury and Disease**

### ***Conditions***

**9.1 Written procedures must—**

**(a) be in place and implemented covering—**

- (i) feeding regimes,**
- (ii) cleaning regimes,**
- (iii) transportation,**
- (iv) the prevention and control of the spread of, disease,**
- (v) monitoring and ensuring the health and welfare of all the animals,**



- (vi) the death or escape of an animal (including the storage of carcasses);
- (b) be in place covering the care of the animals following the suspension or revocation of the licence or during and following an emergency.

**9.2 All people responsible for the care of the animals must be made fully aware of these procedures.**

**Guidance**

- The procedures must demonstrate how the conditions outlined in this guidance are met.

**Condition**

**9.3 Appropriate isolation, in separate self-contained facilities, must be available for the care of sick, injured or potentially infectious animals.**

**Guidance**

- Adequate isolation facilities for animals with infectious diseases must be provided. This may be on site or at another location, such as a local veterinary practice.
- When a new horse enters the premises, the horse must be kept in isolation for a minimum of 14 days and must not have direct contact with other horses or any equipment used in the care of other horses.
- Where an infectious disease is present in the premises, barrier nursing procedures, and people trained in these, must be implemented in accordance with the advice of the attending veterinarian. This includes use of protective clothing and footwear changed between enclosures; cleansing and disinfection of materials in contact with the affected group of animals; washing of hands; separate use and storage of equipment and segregation of waste.
- There must be a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health assessment for management of infectious diseases including coverage for zoonoses and use of Process Operation Management Systems.
- Members of the public must not be given access to or handle sick animals.

**Condition**

**9.4 All reasonable precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread among animals and people of infectious disease, pathogens and parasites.**

**Guidance**

- Procedures must be in place, and understood by all staff, to prevent the introduction of infectious disease and spread from any infected animals.
- If there is evidence of external parasites (fleas, ticks, lice, mites) the horse must be treated according to best practice and using a product authorised for use by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate where necessary. Records of such treatment must be kept.
- A preventative plan must be in place, including effective grassland management and use of current anthelmintics alongside faecal egg counts where necessary.

**Condition**

**9.5 All excreta and soiled bedding for disposal must be stored and disposed of in a hygienic manner and in accordance with any relevant legislation.**

### **Guidance**

- There must be a muck heap located away from any stables, at least 10 metres distant, which must be removed from the site at regular intervals.
- Siting and storage of any muck heap must comply with environmental legislation and avoid contamination of waterways.

### **Condition**

**9.6 Sick or injured animals must receive prompt attention from a veterinarian or, in the case of fish, an appropriately competent person and the advice of that veterinarian or, in the case of fish, that competent person must be followed.**

### **Guidance**

- When a competent person suspects a horse of being ill or injured, a veterinarian must be contacted for advice immediately and any instructions for treatment recorded. Minor ailments can be dealt with by a competent person.

### **Condition**

**9.7 Where necessary, animals must receive preventative treatment by an appropriately competent person.**

### **Guidance**

- Homoeopathic vaccination is not an acceptable form of preventative treatment.
- Vaccinations must only be administered by a veterinarian.
- Routine and documented treatment must be in place for internal and external parasites.
- Consideration must be given to biosecurity and horse travel movements in determining a vaccination plan.

### **Condition**

**9.8 The licence holder must register with a veterinarian with an appropriate level of experience in the health and welfare requirements of any animals specified in the licence and the contact details of that person must be readily available to all staff on the premises used for the licensable activity.**

### **Guidance**

- The name, address and telephone contact number, including out of hours provision, of the veterinarian used by the establishment must be displayed in a prominent place, close to the telephone and accessible to all members of staff.

### **Condition**

**9.9 Prescribed medicines must be stored safely and securely to safeguard against unauthorised access, at the correct temperature, and used in accordance with the instructions of the veterinarian.**

### **Guidance**

- Any medication given must be prescribed/recommended for the individual horse by a veterinarian, and each instance must be recorded.
- All treatment must be completed to the instructions given by the veterinarian.
- Prescription only medications (POMs) must be kept in a lockable container with a responsible person nominated as key holder/issuer of medications.

- Records of POMs administered must be recorded in horse passports by the veterinarian or owner where required.
- All unused medication must be disposed of appropriately which may require return to the veterinarian who prescribed them.

### **Condition**

**9.10 Medicines other than prescribed medicines must be stored, used and disposed of in accordance with the instructions of the manufacturer or veterinarian.**

### **Guidance**

- Care must be taken in disposal of sharp instruments such as needles into an appropriate yellow sharps container, and emptied accordingly as hazardous waste. They must be securely stored by a competent person.

### **Condition**

**9.11 Cleaning products must be suitable, safe and effective against pathogens that pose a risk to the animals. They must be used, stored and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and used in a way which prevents distress or suffering of the animals.**

### **Guidance**

- The choice of cleaning and disinfectant products must be based on suitability, safety, compatibility and effectiveness.
- Cleaning and disinfection products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Staff using cleaning products must be competent in the safe use of detergents and fluids. Cleaning products must be kept entirely out of the reach of animals, and must never be left in stables.
- Standing water must not be allowed to accumulate due to the possibility of pathogens and biting flies residing in these moist environments.
- Any equipment that has been used on an infectious or suspected infectious animal must be cleaned and disinfected after use or disposed of.

### **Condition**

**9.12 No person may euthanase an animal except a veterinarian or a person who has been authorised by a veterinarian as competent for such purpose or—**  
**(a) in the case of fish, a person who is competent for such purpose;**  
**(b) in the case of horses, a person who is competent, and who holds a licence or certificate, for such purpose.**

### **Guidance**

- The licence holder must be able to demonstrate which veterinary practice/competent person is to be called.
- The passport for the horse must be available so that the veterinarian/competent person can check the identity of the animal.
- A record of all animals euthanased, the carcass disposal route and the identity of the individual that carried it out must be kept for 36 months.

### **Condition**

**9.13 All animals must be checked at least once daily and more regularly as necessary to check for any signs of pain, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour. Vulnerable animals must be checked more frequently. Any signs of pain, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour must be recorded and the advice and further advice (if necessary) of a veterinarian (or in the case of fish, of an appropriately competent person) must be sought and followed.**

### **Guidance**

- Horses must be checked for signs of illness, injury, stress, fear, anxiety and pain, and/or abnormal behaviour for that horse and to ensure that their needs are being met.

### **Condition**

**9.14 *Any signs of pain, suffering, injury, disease or abnormal behaviour must be recorded and the advice and further advice (if necessary) of a veterinarian (or in the case of fish, of an appropriately competent person) must be sought and followed.***

## **10.0 Emergencies**

### **Condition**

**10.1 A written emergency plan, acceptable to the local authority, must be in place, known and available to all the people on the premises used for the licensable activity, and followed where necessary to ensure appropriate steps are taken to protect all the people and animals on the premises in case of fire or in case of breakdowns for essential heating, ventilation and aeration or filtration systems or other emergencies.**

### **Guidance**

- Entrances and fire exits must be clear of obstructions at all times.
- There must be a Preventative Fire Risk Assessment that includes location map re access/egress for people and horses.
- Suitable firefighting, prevention and detection equipment must be provided and maintained in good working order. Any buildings must have at least one working smoke detector (or other suitable fire detection system) installed in a suitable location on each separate level / floor of the property.
- There must be awareness about entrapment of horses and the procedures to release them.
- Emergency drills must be regularly practised and practices recorded with any failings noted and addressed in the procedures. Drills must be undertaken at least annually, or as determined by fire risk assessments. All new members of staff must have this as part of their induction programme.
- There must be a plan for accommodation for the horses should the premises become uninhabitable even if just field provision is available.
- There must be contingency planning for extreme weather.

- There must be an accessible and current human and equine first aid kit available for client use and an accident reporting procedure which complies with the Health and Safety Executive.
- There must be a portable human first aid kit available for use off property, where applicable, and a list of people qualified in first aid on display.

### **Conditions**

- 10.2 The plan must include details of the emergency measures to be taken for the extrication of the animals should the premises become uninhabitable and an emergency telephone list that includes the fire service and police.**
- 10.3 External doors and gates must be lockable.**
- 10.4 A designated key holder with access to all animal areas must at all times be within reasonable travel distance of the premises and available to attend in an emergency.**

### **Guidance**

- A reasonable distance would, in normal conditions, be interpreted as no more than 30 minutes travelling time.
- In a non-domestic setting, an emergency contact name / number must be displayed on the outside of the premises.
- Internal gates and doors to stabling should not be locked to ensure safe evacuation of horses and people in an emergency situation.

### **Higher standard**

- **A competent person must be on site at all times.**

## **Part B – Specific Conditions: Hiring out horses (Schedule 5 of the Regulations)**

### **2.0 Eligibility**

#### ***Condition***

#### **2.1 The licence holder must—**

- (a) hold an appropriate formal qualification, or have sufficient demonstrable experience, in the management of horses, and**
- (b) hold a valid certificate of public liability insurance which—**
  - (i) insures the licence holder against liability for any injury sustained by, and the death of, any client, and**
  - (ii) insures any client against liability for any injury sustained by, and the death of, any other person, caused by or arising out of the hire of the horse.**

#### ***Guidance***

- The licence holder must have employers' liability insurance if required.
- This must be displayed along with the copy of the licence.

#### ***Condition***

#### **2.2 The certificate mentioned in subparagraph (1)(b) must be clearly and prominently displayed at the premises.**

### **3.0 Supervision**

#### ***Condition***

#### **3.1 The activity must not at any time be left in the charge of a person aged under 18 years.**

#### ***Guidance***

- This includes managing the establishment and dealing with clients.

#### ***Conditions***

#### **3.2 No horse may be hired out except under the supervision of a person aged 16 years or more unless the licence holder is satisfied that the person hiring the horse is competent to ride without supervision.**

#### **3.3 The following must be clearly and prominently displayed at the premises—**

- (a) the full name, postal address (including postcode) and telephone number of the licence holder or other person with management responsibilities in respect of the activity;**
- (b) instructions as to the action to be taken in the event of a fire or other emergency.**

## **4.0 Suitable Environment**

### ***Condition***

**4.1 It must be practicable to bring all the horses at the premises under cover.**

### ***Guidance***

- There must be access to safe shelter appropriate for seasonal conditions for all horses whether stables or field facilities such as a field shelter or barn or suitable natural shelter in the form of hedges or trees. This can include off-site facilities.

### ***Conditions***

**4.2 Suitable storage must be provided and used for feed, bedding, stable equipment and saddlery.**

**4.3 All arena surfaces must be suitable for purpose, well drained, free of standing water and maintained regularly to keep them level.**

## **5.0 Suitable Diet**

### ***Condition***

**5.1 At all times when any horses are kept at grass, adequate pasture, shelter and clean water must be available for them.**

### ***Guidance***

- Grazing must be managed with routine dung removal to ensure there is adequate pasture and where this is not possible hay must be provided.

### ***Conditions***

**5.2 Supplementary feed and nutrients must be provided to any horse when appropriate.**

**5.3 Each horse must be fed a balanced diet of a quantity and at a frequency suitable for its age, health and workload to enable it to maintain an appropriate physical condition.**

### ***Higher standard***

- Independent specialist nutritional advice must be sought as appropriate for individual horses and documented alongside the weekly body condition scoring. Records must evidence individual health plans and monitoring for horses in connection with dietary requirements. There must be legible and up to date feed chart on display that informs correct feeding amounts for individual horses.

## **6.0 Protection from Pain, Suffering & Disease**

### ***Condition***

**6.1 The horses must be maintained in good health and must be in all respects physically fit.**

### ***Guidance***

- All horses must have a structured management and care programme including foot care, worming and veterinary care. This must be set out on an annual calendar or diary.
- Saddles and tack must be checked for safety and for correct fit for the horse at least annually. Saddles should also be checked more often with young horses and when horses gain/lose weight or undergo muscle development changes.

- Tack should be checked to ensure that it correctly fits the rider.
- All horses must have a dental check at least once a year by a veterinarian or someone qualified by the British Association of Equine Dental Technicians.

### **Condition**

**6.2 There must be a preventative healthcare plan in place agreed with the appointed veterinarian or appointed veterinary practitioner.**

### **Guidance**

- The health plan must demonstrate the measures taken to prevent and control disease alongside any medication or treatments for each horse.

### **Higher standard**

- Each horse will have its own specific care plan detailing age and any health related conditions.

### **Condition**

**6.3 A daily record of the workload of each horse must be maintained and available for inspection at any reasonable time.**

### **Guidance**

- This record will set out hours of work that each horse has undertaken and must be maintained over the course of that year.

### **Higher standard**

- Records must evidence individual monitoring and training plans for horses in connection with individual training needs to complement their use within a riding school. This must be accompanied with evidence of regular and effective checks with saddler for comfort and fit.

### **Condition**

**6.4 Each horse must be suitable for the purpose for which it is kept and must not be hired out if, due to its condition, its use would be likely to cause it to suffer.**

### **Guidance**

- There will be records to demonstrate that each horse workload/regime is balanced to meet the needs of each individual horse including maximum weight of rider.

### **Condition**

**6.5 Any horse found on inspection to be in need of veterinary attention must not be returned to work until the licence holder has, at the licence holder's expense, obtained from and lodged with the local authority a veterinary certificate which confirms that the horse is fit for work.**

### **Guidance**

- This will include the horse being lame, underweight or any back or teeth problems impacted by riding.



### ***Condition***

- 6.6 Each horse's hooves should be trimmed as often as is necessary to maintain the health, good shape and soundness of its feet and its shoes should be properly fitted and in good condition.**

### ***Guidance***

- If shod, their shoes must be properly fitted by a registered farrier. The frequency of trimming and shoeing for each individual horse must be recorded and available for inspection.

### ***Condition***

- 6.7 An area suitable for the inspection of horses by a veterinarian must be provided.**

### ***Guidance***

- This must be a semi dark stable to inspect eye and heart function and a level firm surfaced trotting up area which allows the veterinarian to fully examine the horse and observe any signs of lameness.

### ***Condition***

- 6.8 The following must not be hired out—**
- (a) a horse aged under three years;**
  - (b) a mare heavy with foal;**
  - (c) a mare whose foal has not yet been weaned.**

### ***Guidance***

- A mare can be exercised during the first six to eight months of pregnancy but she should not be used two to three months before foaling, unless veterinary advice suggests otherwise. Care must be demonstrated on ensuring that a mare is not overworked.

### ***Condition***

- 6.9 The licence holder must keep a register of all horses kept for the licensable activity on the premises and each horse's valid passport showing its unique equine life number and microchip number (if any).**

### ***Guidance***

- The licence holder may be deemed to be the keeper of the horse, in the absence of the owner, and has a legal responsibility to ensure that the horse has the correct, and up to date, identification document. Where available, the microchip number of each new horse must be checked by a veterinarian and local authority inspector to ensure it corresponds to that in the passport.
- This only applies to those horses being used for the activity.

## **7.0 Equipment**

### ***Condition***

- 7.1 All equipment provided to clients must be in good and safe condition and available for inspection at any reasonable time.**

## **Guidance**

- Riders must use the correct Personal Protective Equipment for the activity e.g. hats, riding boots, gloves and body protectors as required. Riding hats must meet current safety standards and be worn at all times when mounted and any hats provided must be stored, clean and fit for purpose with clearly documented records of regular safety checks.
- Saddlery and associated equipment must be in a good state of repair and checked for safety.
- Jumps and equipment used in riding lessons must be fit for purpose and checked weekly for safety.
- Rider registration forms must be completed that are regularly updated and include emergency contact details and client health conditions.

## **Higher standards**

- Initial assessments must be undertaken for new riders and details of assessment recorded.
- Documented risk assessment must be available for all such equipment, for example horse clippers, horse walker, yard blowers, arena levelling equipment and any additional therapy based machines or equipment.
- Documented risk assessment must be available for activities, including PPE requirements that include appropriateness of PPE relative to differing tasks and situations.

## Higher Standards

For each activity, a number of higher standards have been agreed. Meeting the higher standards is optional but is the only way to gain a higher star rating. The higher standards are classified in to two types: **required** and **optional** and are outlined in the relevant guidance documents for the activity in question. To distinguish required standards from optional ones they have each been given a specific colour which is used in each guidance document. **Higher standards that appear in blue text are required**, whereas **those that appear in red text are optional**. To qualify as meeting the higher standards, the business needs to achieve all of the required higher standards as well as a minimum of 50% of the optional higher standards. During an inspection, the inspector should assess whether or not the business meets the required number of higher standards

### Required

- There must be an option for a permanent individual turn out paddock/pen to allow horses their own area for grazing/turnout if required owing to ill-health or domination by other horses.
- Horses must be inspected at least once during the out of hours period (e.g. 1800-0800).
- All horses must have a structured management and care programme to include their exercise needs with suitable alternatives for those unable to exercise, such as additional grooming, physiotherapy etc.
- Each horse will have its own specific care plan detailing age and any health related conditions.
- Records must evidence individual monitoring and training plans for horses in connection with individual training needs to complement their use within a riding school. This must be accompanied with evidence of regular and effective checks with saddler for comfort and fit.
- Initial assessments must be undertaken for new riders and details of assessment recorded.
- Documented risk assessment must be available for all such equipment, for example horse clippers, horse walker, yard blowers, arena levelling equipment and any additional therapy based machines or equipment.
- Documented risk assessment must be available for activities, including PPE requirements that include appropriateness of PPE relative to differing tasks and situations.

### Optional

- At least one member of key staff must hold an OFQUAL regulated Level 3 qualification or higher.
- Size of stable must exceed minimum requirements. Horses will not be in reach of each other to bite and there will be room to work around them. Horses will be in view of each other, unless kept singly for management reasons, such as isolation or stallion management purposes.
- There must be a separate secure, clean and well-lit veterinary inspection area that enables safe access to allow inspection of a horse.

- There must be separate well lit, lockable, purpose built feed room with water available and additional storage for supplements.
- A competent person must be on site at all times.
- Independent specialist nutritional advice must be sought as appropriate for individual horses and documented alongside the weekly body condition scoring. Records must evidence individual health plans and monitoring for horses in connection with dietary requirements. There must be legible and up to date feed chart on display that informs correct feeding amounts for individual horses.



© Crown copyright 2018

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v.3. To view this licence visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/) or email [PSI@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:PSI@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:  
[animal.welfare@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:animal.welfare@defra.gsi.gov.uk)