



Syllabus of Instruction

Proficiency Standards

Revised Edition – September 2024

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Contents

E Certificate	5
D Certificate	6
D* Certificate	7
C Certificate	9
C* Certificate	11
K Certificate	14
B Certificate	17
A Certificate	25

Certificates

The Pony Club Australia Syllabus of Instruction is built on certificate levels that enable the rider to continuously develop their skills in riding, horse care and citizenship. Members are encouraged to move through the certificates at their own pace, but in the following order:



- The E Certificate is optional but recommended.
- The D, D*, C and B Certificates are pre-requisites for the following certificates
- The D and D* have versions for older riders – for those who start work on this level around the age of 12 years older
- The C Certificate is recommended as the baseline for all members and will ensure that the rider has a good foundation of skill, safety and horsemanship.
- Candidates can progress from C to B via either the C* or the K Certificate.

Recognition

Pony Club certificates are recognised in Pony Club countries across the world, and at the higher levels demonstrate to potential employers the member's knowledge of working with and caring for horses. Certificates are often used as a pre-requisite for selection for teams competing at the state, national and international level.

Safety

At all certificate levels, riders are expected to understand correct safety practices and demonstrate correct use of appropriate safety equipment for horse handling and ground work (such as correct handling of a lead rope) and when riding (riding boots, helmet correctly fitted, body protector when jumping etc.)

Age of candidates

Members can be examined for their certificates at any age when their coach considers they meet the competency standards.

Qualification of horse/rider combinations

Horse and rider combinations for practical assessment must have attended a minimum of two working rallies in the prior 12 months and the horse must be the rider's qualified mount as per State/Territory Rules.

PCA Riding Centre members should be assessed after a minimum of six hours of supervised instruction at a PCA Riding Centre in the prior 12 months, on a familiar mount.

Assessor

An Assessor within a Club may test for E, D and D* Certificates. Each State must have a panel of Assessors for C Certificates and above. Assessors should not test C Certificate in their own Club unless circumstances make this necessary (e.g. excessive travel distances).

To remain on the Assessor's Panel, Assessors must be current, active members of a Pony Club and attend refresher courses conducted by their State or PCA. The names of Assessors on the State Panel are to be reviewed every three years.

Assessment

At the time of assessment, candidates may be asked to demonstrate skills that were previously assessed in prior prerequisite certificates.

Candidates must pass each section of the assessment to qualify for the certificate.

Assessment credits

Any section of a test passed by the candidate will be held as credit/s until such time as all sections are passed (maximum two years from original practical Assessment date).

Journals and written papers

Separate workbooks are no longer required for PCA proficiency certificate candidates.

Candidates will be required to keep a journal for C*/K and above.

Written assessments are mandatory for C and above. Candidates will complete an open book assessment as either hard copy or online, that will be forwarded to the nominated Assessor.

Manuals

Candidates will be required to work through the syllabus using Pony Club Australia resources (i.e. Certificate Manuals). Some independent study is expected for C*, K, B and A certificates.

Supplementary tests for practical sections

Supplementary testing may be required where horses or conditions are unsuitable on the scheduled day of assessment, candidates do not achieve a satisfactory level in the written assessment, or where further development is required from the rider.

Supplementary testing may be undertaken at a time agreed by the Assessor and candidate once the candidate is ready and within two years of the first assessment at this level. Where possible, one of the original assessors should be engaged for the supplementary test.

Presentation

- For ridden assessments, candidates must wear Pony Club or PCA Accredited Centre formal uniform.
- The horse must be clean and tidy, with hooves showing evidence of care.
- All tack must be clean and fit correctly, and be in good repair.
- Riders should ride in a snaffle bit where possible. If another bit is used for higher certificates, the candidate should be able to explain its action.

E Certificate

The E Certificate is recommended but not compulsory.

Candidates working through the E Certificate will be riding on the lead line or transitioning to independent riding. Assessment can be completed on a lead line. The successful E Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate the following, with assistance as required:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Be familiar with the term pressure–release (may not necessarily be able to describe it accurately but understands the importance of the release of pressure)
- Know two different ways to reward the horse (scratching and food rewards).

On the Ground

- Understand the importance of correct safety equipment for riding and ground work
- Understand the need for gloves, boots, helmet, long pants, long sleeves, shirt tucked in, and lead rope held correctly
- Catch and let go of the horse
- Lead the horse correctly
- Know that a horse needs to be tied up with a quick release knot to baling twine, at a safe length, even if they cannot tie a quick release knot yet.
- Demonstrate stop and go responses while leading.

Under Saddle

- Mount and dismount safely
- Understand some basic elements of the correct position
- Hold the reins correctly
- Be developing rising trot
- Stop / slow, go forward and turn the horse.

Horse Management

- Know these parts of the horse: nostril, mane, wither, forelock, knee, flank, fetlock, ears, forehead
- Know some colours (chestnut, bay or brown and grey)
- Know some markings (star, blaze and socks)
- Know some basic grooming tools and how to use them with assistance (dandy brush, bodybrush, curry comb, hoof pick)
- Understand what the horse requires to be healthy (roughage, water, shade, shelter, friends)
- Know how to clean tack
- Know these items of tack (bridle, bit, reins, saddle, girth, stirrups).

D Certificate

There are no prerequisites for the D Certificate, but the E Certificate is recommended preparation. The successful D Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate the following, with assistance as required:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Understand the flight response
- Understand (though may not necessarily be able to explain at this stage) pressure–release training, reward training and punishment
- Know these two ways to reward the horse: scratching and food.

On the Ground

- Understand the safety requirements for ground work
- Catch and let the horse go safely
- Tie the horse up safely
- Demonstrate stop, slow, step back, go and turn in hand
- Complete a basic ground work dressage test.

Under Saddle

- Mount and dismount safely
- Hold the reins correctly
- Demonstrate a riding position that is developing correctly
- Walk, rising trot and canter safely and in control in an enclosed arena
- Demonstrate stop/slow, go forward and turn the horse
- Complete a basic ridden dressage test
- Understand the rules of riding in groups.

Horse Management

- Know these parts of the horse: nostril, mane, wither, forelock, knee, flank, fetlock, ears, forehead, eye, muzzle, crest, neck, shoulder, back, loins, rump, tail, hock and hoof
- Know and demonstrate the correct and safe use of these basic grooming tools: dandy brush, body brush, curry comb, hoof pick
- Demonstrate correct and safe picking out of the hooves
- Know these basic requirements of the horse: roughage, water, shade, shelter, friends
- Tie a hay net safely
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Know how to clean tack
- Know these items of tack: bridle, bit, reins, cheek strap, brow band, nose band, throat lash, saddle, girth, stirrups, pommel, leathers, seat, crupper, surcingle.

D* Certificate

The D Certificate is a pre-requisite.

For assessment, D* Certificate candidates will be required to jump several fences with a height and width of 45cm. The successful D* Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the D Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Understand and recognise the flight response
- Understand and be able to explain pressure–release, reward training, punishment, habituation.

On the Ground

- Know the following foundation responses: stop, go forward, turn the shoulders left, turn the shoulders right.
- Complete a ground work dressage test.

Under Saddle

- Understand correct fitting of noseband
- Saddle and bridle a horse with assistance if necessary
- Be developing a correct riding position
- Stop with accuracy
- Demonstrate clear downward transitions
- Be able to explain the concept of self-carriage
- Demonstrate clear upward transitions
- Demonstrate correct turn and also riding on straight lines (between two points)
- Be developing an understanding of rising diagonals
- Demonstrate canter in an enclosed arena
- Ride a simple dressage test
- Know and discuss some mounted games
- Know how to ride on the road / traffic rules (including hand signals)
- Demonstrate crest release
- Walk and trot over poles
- Negotiate small jumps of height and width of 45cm.

Horse Management

- Understand the Five Domains of horse welfare
- Know the following parts of the horse: throat, elbow, pastern, dock, coronet, hips, hock, stifle, ribs, cheek
- Demonstrate the correct way to brush a tail
- Know some parts of the hoof (wall, sole, frog, heels)
- Discuss correct hoof management practices
- Know feeding and living conditions and the daily horse checklist (water, fences, gates, pasture, rug, horse).
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Know some common illnesses or minor injuries (girth gall, cold, colic, laminitis).
- Discuss correct management of tack (including checking stitching and cleaning if wet etc.)
- Identify the following items of saddlery (bridle, bit, reins, cheek strap, brow band, nose band, throat lash, saddle, girth, stirrups, pommel, leathers, seat, crupper, surcingle, cantle, waist, gullet, stirrup bar, sweat flap).

C Certificate

The D* Certificate is a pre-requisite.

For assessment, C Certificate candidates have an open book written test and a practical assessment. They will be required to jump several fences with a height and width of 65cm. The successful C Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the D* Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- An understanding of the horse's evolution and how it still influences the modern horse
- Understand the flight response and how to manage it
- Discuss the three parts of pressure-release training (light aid, stronger aid, release)
- Discuss reward training, punishment (and the pitfalls of punishment) and habituation in further detail
- Discuss classical conditioning.

On the Ground

- Demonstrate accurate stop, step back and slow from light signals
- Demonstrate accurate go and turn from light signals
- Demonstrate park
- Explain how a voice cue is trained
- Complete a ground work dressage test with accuracy and control.

Under Saddle

- Demonstrate correct riding position
- Stop with accuracy and from light signals
- Demonstrate clear downward transitions
- Change pace within each gait in self-carriage
- Demonstrate clear, accurate upward transitions
- Show correct rising diagonals
- Demonstrate canter on straight lines and 20m circles (both reins) and recognise leading leg
- Know the footfalls at trot and canter
- Ride without stirrups at walk and trot
- Ride with reins in one hand at walk and trot
- Shorten and lengthen the reins whilst riding one-handed
- Alter the stirrups and girth while mounted (at the halt)
- Demonstrate correct two-point and three-point position. Discuss when to use them.
- Demonstrate balanced riding over poles, both single and in sequence
- Negotiate small show jumps (height and width of 65cm)

- Know a range of types of show jumping fences
- Know jumping strides and distances
- Walk a show jumping course, demonstrating a knowledge of the rules and an understanding of the factors to take into consideration
- Demonstrate riding several small cross-country obstacles (max height 65cm) and talk about the factors to take into consideration when riding a course.

Horse Management

- Know these parts of the horse: poll, point of hip, hind quarters, gaskin, flank, jowl, breast, ribs, cannon bone, forearm, chestnut, and ergot
- Know these markings: star, snip, blaze, stripe, socks, stockings
- Know these colours: chestnut, bay, brown, black, palomino and grey
- Know how a horse's height is measured
- Know and demonstrate the correct use of the following grooming tools: combs, sponge, towel, bot knife
- Discuss correct hoof management practices (shoeing, trimming etc.)
- Identify the bars of the hoof
- Know these farrier's tools: rasp, knife, cutters, hammer, buffer, pincer
- Discuss the requirements for transporting horses
- Know the daily paddock checklist (water, fences, gates, pasture, rug, horse)
- Know the main rules for feeding horses
- Know how to treat: a girth gall, sore back, sore mouth
- Discuss tetanus prevention and parasite management
- Know what to have in a basic first aid kit for horses
- Discuss when to call the vet
- Know the symptoms of colic, greasy heel, lameness, minor wounds, seedy toe, a stone in the foot, strangles, thrush and laminitis
- Discuss appropriate dental care for horses
- Discuss saddle fitting
- Demonstrate a correctly fitted saddle and bridle
- Know how to care for tack (including checking stitching)
- Identify the following parts of a saddle: cantle, waist, gullet, sweat flap
- Discuss the use of martingales, breast plates, surcingles, cruppers
- Demonstrate a correctly fitted rug and safe rugging practices
- Know the horse's thermoneutral zone and understand the implications for rugging.

C* Certificate

The C Certificate is a pre-requisite. Holders of C Certificates can progress to either the C* or the K Certificate. The K Certificate is a non-jumping alternative to the C* Certificate, with elective subjects.

For assessment, C* Certificate candidates will be required to jump several fences with a height and width of 85cm.

A journal in an appropriate format of the year's riding and training is required for assessment. There is also a written, open-book assessment, which can be completed online or as a hard copy, to be marked by the Assessor.

The successful C* Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the C Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Discuss the ten principles of training
- Briefly explain the evolution and changing role of horses within human society
- Discuss the horse's memory, ability to form habits and intelligence
- Have a very thorough understanding of pressure-release and reward training
- Explain conditioned reinforcers and their use
- Understand punishment and habituation
- Explain overshadowing
- Show a developing understanding of the shaping process.

On the Ground

- Understand the importance of clear, obedient responses on the ground
- Demonstrate an understanding of the shaping process throughout ground work
- Discuss the process of training a horse to step backward from voice cue
- Know the difference between steps and strides
- Demonstrate a developing ability to move the horse's hindquarters left and right.
- Demonstrate park and head down

Under Saddle

- Discuss how a metronome can be used in horse training
- Demonstrate stop, slow and step back from light aids
- Understand the biomechanics of turn
- Ride a turn on the forehand
- Ride with reins in one hand at walk, trot and canter
- Ride without stirrups at walk, trot and canter
- Demonstrate correct position

- Be fluent with diagonal changes and be developing a feel for the correct diagonal
- Be proficient in cantering – able to achieve correct leads most of the time and correct them when they are incorrect
- Know the footfalls of all gaits
- Ride at 220, 350, 400 and 450 metres per minute with a degree of accuracy
- Discuss warming up and cooling down
- Discuss how to manage the horse when they first start going to events and competitions and have a clear understanding of safe practices in this situation
- Discuss the etiquette for the warm up arena.

Jumping

- Understand two different forms of rein release (i.e. crest and automatic (direct) release)
- Negotiate small show jumps with calmness and an understanding of good training practices (height and width of 85cms)
- Relate a discussion of shaping and punishment to jumping
- Demonstrate riding over small cross-country obstacles (at least 85cm) and show an understanding of horse fitness work for cross country
- Know the different types of cross-country obstacles.

Lungeing

- Discuss the reasons for lungeing
- Discuss correct and safe attire and tack for lungeing
- Demonstrate correct, safe lungeing practices.

Horse Management

- Discuss the Five Domains of horse welfare
- Demonstrate how to neatly plait a mane and tail
- Discuss trimming and clipping styles. Understand the reasons for not trimming horse feathers and vibrissae (whiskers)
- Discuss correct hoof management practices (shoeing, trimming etc.)
- Know the farrier's tools (rasp, knife, cutters, hammer, buffer, pincers).
- Discuss a suitable paddock checklist
- Know the daily checklist for a paddocked horse
- Understand the care requirements for both a paddocked and stabled horse
- Discuss stable bedding types
- Discuss feeding guidelines
- Discuss different types of hay and basic feeds appropriate to the local area
- Discuss letting the horse down for spell
- Discuss the process of getting a horse fit after spell

Proficiency Standard - C* Certificate



- Know when to call the vet
- Know how to take the following observations for the vet: heart rate, respiration rate, temperature, manure
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Describe a well-stocked first aid kit and the use of each item of contents
- Bandage a minor leg wound
- Be able to detect lameness
- Discuss how to treat deep wounds and skin disorders
- Discuss the identification and treatment of common ailments including laminitis, colds, greasy heel and seedy toe
- Discuss parasite control appropriate to the local area
- Discuss vaccinations for tetanus and strangles, plus other vaccinations needed for the local area.
- Discuss dental care
- Be able to tell a horse's age by looking at the teeth
- Demonstrate an understanding of correctly fitted tack including martingales
- Understand the different types of bits and their actions
- Discuss how to fit leg protection to the horse
- Explain how to maintain rugs and grooming equipment.

K Certificate

C Certificate is a pre-requisite.

The K Certificate is an alternative to the C* Certificate. K Certificate candidates will complete the C* curriculum in all areas except jumping and with an additional requirement to complete one Alternative Discipline Component of their choice plus *and* either a Community Service Component *or* a New Skill Component (detailed below).

Candidates should keep a journal of their progress in an appropriate format, which will be included in assessment. There is also a written, open book assessment, which can be completed online or as a hard copy, to be marked by the Assessor.

The successful K Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all skills required of the C Certificate, plus the following:

Rider's Tool Kit

- Discuss the ten principles of training
- Briefly explain the horse's evolution and changing role within human society
- Discuss the horse's memory, ability to form habits and intelligence
- Have a very thorough understanding of pressure-release and reward training
- Explain conditioned reinforcers and their use
- Understand punishment and habituation
- Explain overshadowing
- Show a developing understanding of the shaping process.

On the Ground

- Understand the importance of clear, obedient responses on the ground
- Demonstrate an understanding of the shaping process throughout ground work
- Discuss the process of training a horse to step backward from voice cue
- Know the difference between steps and strides
- Demonstrate a developing ability to move the horse's hindquarters.
- Demonstrate park and head down

Under Saddle

- Discuss how a metronome can be used in horse training
- Demonstrate stop, slow and step back from light aids
- Understand the biomechanics of turn
- Ride a turn on the forehand
- Ride with reins in one hand at walk, trot and canter
- Ride without stirrups at walk, trot and canter
- Demonstrate correct position

- Be fluent with diagonal changes and be developing a feel for the correct diagonal
- Be proficient in cantering – able to achieve correct leads most of the time and correct them when they are incorrect
- Know the footfalls of the gaits
- Ride at 220, 350, 400 and 450 metres per minute with a degree of accuracy
- Discuss warming up and cooling down
- Discuss how to manage the horse when they first start going to events and competitions and have a clear understanding of safe practices in this situation
- Discuss the etiquette for the warm up arena.

Lungeing

- Discuss the reasons for lungeing
- Discuss correct and safe attire and tack for lungeing
- Demonstrate correct, safe lungeing practices.

Horse Management

- Discuss the Five Domains of horse welfare
- Demonstrate how to neatly plait a mane and tail
- Discuss trimming and clipping styles. Understand the reasons for not trimming horse feathers and vibrissae (whiskers)
- Discuss correct hoof management practices (shoeing, trimming etc.)
- Know the farrier's tools (rasp, knife, cutters, hammer, buffer, pincers).
- Discuss a suitable paddock checklist
- Know the daily checklist for the paddocked horse
- Understand the care requirements for both a paddocked and stabled horse
- Discuss stable bedding types
- Discuss feeding guidelines
- Discuss different types of hay and basic feeds appropriate to the local area
- Discuss letting the horse down for spell
- Discuss the process of getting a horse fit after spell
- Know when to call the vet
- Know how to take the following observations for the vet: heart rate, respiration rate, temperature, manure
- Know the signs of a healthy horse
- Describe a well-stocked first aid kit and the use of each item of contents
- Bandage a minor leg wound
- Be able to detect lameness
- Discuss how to treat deep wounds and skin disorders

- Discuss the identification and treatment of common ailments including laminitis, colds, greasy heel and seedy toe
- Discuss parasite control appropriate to the local area
- Discuss vaccinations for tetanus and strangles, plus vaccinations related to the local area.
- Discuss dental care
- Be able to tell a horse's age by looking at the teeth
- Demonstrate an understanding of correctly fitted tack including martingales
- Understand the different types of bits and their actions
- Discuss how to fit leg protection to the horse
- Explain how to maintain rugs and grooming equipment.

Additional K Certificate Components

Before beginning the K Certificate, the candidate, in discussion with their Pony Club[®] coach and parents (if appropriate), will decide on their areas of interest, the ways in which the number of hours will be recorded and approved, and the forms of evidence to be presented to the examiners. Candidates should keep track of their progress in their journal, which will form part of assessment.

Alternative discipline component

K candidates will choose an equestrian discipline to work on and develop their skills. At least 20 hours throughout the year should be dedicated to this. The discipline could include harness driving, horse archery, clicker training or agility.

And either:

Community service component

K Certificate candidates will spend 10 – 15 hours on a project that will benefit the local equestrian community. This could include develop a website for a local equestrian charity, develop a risk management plan for club events, write a report on local trail infrastructure, write a local newspaper article on your Club, volunteer with a horse rescue organisation or Pony Club Australia.

Or:

New skill component

Candidate will spend 10-15 hours developing a new skill. This should be equestrian or related in some way. Skills could include: course designing for cross country and show jumping, clipping, float maintenance, technical large animal emergency rescue training. Other skills that will benefit Pony Club could also be proposed, such a First Aid certificate.

The new skill component could also be in the form of a research project of 2500 words in an area of interest, e.g. advanced Equitation Science principles, feeding, conformation and physiology, conditioning practices for sport horses, biosecurity risk management, technical large animal emergency rescue, event risk management or emergency and natural hazard management.

B Certificate

The C* or K Certificate is a pre-requisite.

A journal in an appropriate format of the year's riding and training is required for assessment.

Since January 2021, there is also a written, open book assessment, which can be completed online or as a hard copy, to be marked by the Assessor.

Jumping

For assessment, B Certificate candidates will be required to jump several fences with a height and width of 95cm.

Non-jumping alternative

If you are doing the **B Certificate – Alternative** you will complete the entire B certificate with the exception of the jumping and cross country actual jumping components.

Instead of the full jumping requirements you will choose one area to specialise in and document your progress over the course of a 12-month period. This documentation can be in several different forms including a journal, an oral presentation or a multi-media presentation.

Further details for the journal and the **B Certificate - Alternative** can be found in the B Manual.

The successful B Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all the skills of either the C* or the K Certificate, plus the following:

Ethology and Biomechanics (How the horse works)

Explain the following:

- The horse's memory
- Context-specific learning
- Social behaviour
- Dominance patterns
- Cognition (the horse's mental abilities)
- Over-training
- Equine intelligence
- The fear (flight) response
- The horse's temperament
- Equine biomechanics (muscles and the vertebral column)
- Step, stride and gait
- Directions of horse's legs
- The stance phase and the swing phase
- Backward and slowing muscles
- Turns
- Lateral movements.

Rider's Tool Kit

- The foundation aids and responses:
 - Demonstrate and explain:
 - Go forward
 - Slow/stop
 - Step back
 - Direct turn of the front legs (left and right)
 - Indirect turn of the front legs (left and right)
 - Yield of the hindquarters (left and right).

- Learning theory
 - Explain:
 - Habituation
 - Systematic desensitisation
 - Response prevention
 - Approach conditioning
 - Stimulus blending
 - Counter conditioning
 - Overshadowing.
 - Operant conditioning
 - Negative reinforcement
 - Positive reinforcement
 - Negative punishment
 - Positive punishment
 - Stimulus control
 - Combined reinforcement.
 - Classical Conditioning
 - Shaping Responses
 1. Basic attempt
 2. Obedience
 3. Rhythm
 4. Straightness
 5. Contact
 6. Proof

- Explain why punishment is ineffective and should be avoided

On the Ground

- Foundation responses in hand
- Handler positions
- Correct use of the whip for groundwork
- Contact
- Demonstrate and explain:
 - Go forward
 - Stop
 - Park
 - Turn
 - Head control
 - Yielding hindquarters.

Lungeing

- Know principles, benefits, and potential dangers of lungeing
- Recognise a suitable area for lungeing
- Understand safe practices to be adopted when lungeing
- Know correct equipment required for horse and handler, and their purpose
- Demonstrate control of the horse at walk, trot, canter and show a few lengthened trot strides
- Candidate to:
 - Start horse off correctly
 - Demonstrate a warm up phase without side reins
 - Cool down without side reins.

Under Saddle

- Assessment of different horses
 - Ride and assess different horses and give accurate feedback using correct terminology (the horses provided to be well mannered, known to the Assessor and suitable for the task).
- Rider Position
 - Position at all paces becoming well-established and showing some depth, enabling the rider to apply aids smoothly and accurately
 - Rising and sitting trot.
- Know the three phases of the aids
- Using the whip correctly
- Foundation responses under saddle
 - For each foundation response (go forward, stop, turn, yield) be able to describe:
 - Basic attempt
 - Obedience

Proficiency Standard - B Certificate



- Rhythm
- Straightness
- Contact
- Proof.
- Explain and demonstrate the following:
 - Rhythm and tempo
 - Straightness
 - Impulsion
 - Self-carriage
 - Laterality (same sidedness of the horse).
- Explain and demonstrate the difference between abduction and adduction
- Explain and demonstrate the difference between a direct and indirect turn
- Explain and demonstrate the difference between turning and yielding
- Starting the horse off correctly
 - Explain the importance of warming up and demonstrate its application
 - Knowledge of arena tracks and rules
 - Explain the following movements
 - Shoulder-in
 - Shoulder-fore
 - Renvers, travers and half-pass
 - Leg yield
 - Turn on and turn about the forehand.
- Ride the following movements in a 20m x 60m arena and explain the aids
 - Medium walk and free walk on a long rein
 - Working trot and canter
 - Lengthened strides at trot and canter – must cover more ground – including across the diagonal and on a circle
 - Halt
 - Circles to 10m at walk and trot and 15m at canter
 - Serpentine at trot
 - Walk-canter transition
 - Counter canter – 2m loop off the long side
 - Change the canter lead through trot and walk.
- Knowledge of Pony Club Australia and FEI (EA) dressage rules.

Jumping

NOTE: Riders doing the **B Certificate – Alternative** still need to know some of this information, but do not have to jump showjumping or cross country fences.

The jumping component should be assessed over several fences with a height and width of 95cm.

- Demonstrate the correct seat for jumping (two and three-point positions)
- Maintain a balanced position over fences on varied terrain including:
 - Drop fences, banks and ditches
 - Combinations, related-lines and bounces.
- Calculate take-off points
- Demonstrate and explain tempo
- Calculate and explain stride length
- Jump a variety of fences and combinations, demonstrating tempo, line and rhythm in showjumping and cross-country
- Jumping grids
- Understand and show use of poles and/or cavaletti and grids including trot and canter exercises to improve the horse's jumping
- Demonstrate and explain shaping jumping responses
 - Basic attempt
 - Obedience
 - Rhythm
 - Straightness
 - Contact
 - Proof.
- Land on the correct lead after jumping a fence (candidate should recognise when they need to rebalance and correct canter lead)
- Show lengthening and shortening of the canter stride and understand the application of this when riding related lines
- Demonstrate knowledge of pace, riding at 350, 400 and 450 metres per minute
- Be able to build simple schooling fences and combinations
- Plan a simple showjumping course
- Walk and discuss a jumping course, both showjumping and cross-country
- Know Pony Club Australia and FEI (EA) rules for showjumping and horse trials.

Horse Management

- Equine welfare
 - Explain the Five Domains of horse welfare
 - Explain the difference between care and welfare
 - Explain the four essential needs.
- Feeding and living conditions
 - Paddockging

Proficiency Standard - B Certificate



- Explain basic paddock assessment and management
- Know the daily checklist of paddocked horses
- Stabling
 - Know how to care for the fully stabled horse to maintain training and health.
 - Outline a stable routine
 - Describe different types of bedding and their maintenance
 - Have knowledge of stereotypies, so-called 'vices' and their causes and solutions
 - Recognise obvious and subtle signs of ill health
 - Describe the equine digestive system.
- Feeding
 - Know types of feed and be able to assess value and quality
 - Feed appropriately for a horse's workload
 - Basic knowledge of feed programs and plan a diet for:
 - Horse not in work
 - Horse in light work (3-4 days per week)
 - Horse in full competition work for all disciplines
 - Rest day.
 - Conditioning the horse:
 - Prepare a horse for strenuous work, for example, a Pony Club One Day Event
 - Care for the horse before, during and after strenuous work including knowledge of feed program on the day of competition.

The healthy horse

- Health, Ailments, Injuries
 - Parasite Control
 - Knowledge of bot flies and effective control
 - Demonstrate knowledge of internal and external parasites and their control.
 - Administer a deworming paste
 - Be able to recognise, know the cause of, and where applicable, treat the following:
 - A cold
 - Rain scald
 - Gastric ulceration or stomach ulcers
 - Heat stress and dehydration
 - Strangles
 - Hoof abscess
 - Tetanus
 - Laminitis.

Proficiency Standard - B Certificate



- Have and describe a well-stocked first aid kit
 - Be able to administer first aid to the horse.
 - Bandaging
 - Apply a pressure, stable and figure of eight bandage.
 - Know when to call the Veterinarian and be able to carry out prescribed treatment of wounds, ailments and lameness
 - Know how to administer an intramuscular injection in the neck
 - Understand the importance of regular equine dental care.
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- Soundness
 - Discuss the following causes of unsoundness
 - Splints
 - Tendon Problems
 - Windgalls
 - Knowledge of breathing issues, including roaring and whistling
 - Buying or selling horses
 - Steps to consider
 - Grooming your horse
 - Groom efficiently and effectively to show ring standard.
 - Plaiting for competition
 - Clipping
 - Explain care for the clipped horse and understand the different types of clips. Identify types of clips (full, belly, trace, hunting and blanket)
 - Know how to clean a sheath
 - Care of Feet and Shoeing
 - Understand the principles of shoeing and recognise a well shod horse.
 - Know the parts of the foot and how they function (heel, bulbs of heel, cleft and point of frog, bars, wall, toe, white line, coronet band and the bone structure)
 - Studs (for horse shoes)
 - Removing and replacing a shoe
 - Hoof boots.

Proficiency Standard - B Certificate



- Transporting horses
 - Explain what parts of the float or truck need regular maintenance.
 - Have knowledge of maintenance of brakes, lights, floor, ramp, tyres, hitch and ball, breeching bar or safety chain.
 - Demonstrate appropriate horse protection
 - Preparing horse transportation
 - Preparing a horse to travel
 - Loading and unloading.

- Saddlery
 - Bandage for exercise, competition and travel
 - Fit tack correctly
 - Knowledge of treeless saddles
 - Know the following five groups of bits/bridles and their action: snaffle, double bridle, gag, curbs and bitless.
 - Be familiar with common examples of bits and their actions
 - Knowledge of bitless bridles
 - Be familiar with biting allowed for Pony Club competitions.
 - Maintaining tack (care, cleaning and storage of tack and equipment)
 - Fitting boots and leg protection
 - Sophisticated knowledge of rugs and rugging in relation to equine thermoregulation

- Breeding
 - Gestation period
 - Forms of insemination
 - Foaling
 - Weaning

A Certificate

The B Certificate is a prerequisite.

The A Certificate is the highest award of the Pony Club and provides a comprehensive assessment in horse mastership for well trained and experienced members.

The Candidate must present for the test on a qualified horse suitable for this level and able to demonstrate all requirements of the A Certificate.

Candidates will be examined riding experienced and 'green' horses on the flat and will be asked to assess each horse and discuss its ongoing training program.

The successful A Certificate rider should be able to demonstrate all the skills of the B Certificate, plus the following:

Under Saddle - on the Flat

- Show correct paces on a horse working towards self-collection
- Perform and explain the aids for each of the following movements using correct and appropriate terminology:
 - Medium trot and canter
 - Half pirouette at walk
 - Simple change of leg
 - Counter canter
 - Rein back
 - Shoulder-in at trot.
- The candidate must:
 - Show an established position and be able to maintain the correct position while applying the aids. Position to be consistent and correct on both reins with an effective lower leg
 - Have a sound knowledge of training terms, e.g. impulsion, rhythm, tempo, self carriage, etc., and of the stages of training
 - Be able to change the horse's frame, outline and length of stride and maintain its balance throughout all work
 - Be able to assess the way the horse is working and recognise when the horse is out of balance and be able to improve it

Proficiency Standard - A Certificate



- Use simple exercises/school figures, to show horse is willing to move away from the leg, accept driving and restraining aids, and control line of travel and straightness in the horse
- Show good use of allocated area and understanding of exercises and school figures appropriate to the horse's training and performance on the day
- Encourage the horse to work with a softer, rounder back
- Demonstrate/have knowledge of exercises to improve the rider's position
- Be able to give feedback using correct and appropriate terminology.
- There should be some discussion on whether the rider has trained the horse, and how long the combination has been together. The horse should:
 - Be forward, active and show relaxation
 - Be consistent in rhythm and tempo in all paces with an even acceptance of the bridle on both reins
 - Be forward and obedient in transitions both within the pace and from one pace to another
 - Show correct flexion and bend.
- Demonstrate half pass, *travers* and *renvers*
- Ride in a double bridle. The candidate must be able to:
 - Correctly fit a double bridle
 - Demonstrate a good knowledge of the action of and reasons for using a double bridle
 - Know types of bridoons and curbs.

Jumping

Jumping is to be assessed over fences with a height and width of up to 1.10m. Course should be a minimum of nine jumps and include combinations, changes of direction, related fences and a mixture of straight and spread fences.

- Show a well-established, correct and adaptable jumping position over show jumps and cross-country fences.
 - Candidate must be looking to line with good eye contact, soft elbows and hands, following but not restricting contact and a very established lower leg position. Turns and transitions must be ridden correctly.
- Control of the horse's pace and stride.
 - Horse to be working in a relaxed and correct frame with activity, rhythm, tempo, consistent contact and control of line.
 - Horse to be working through the paces showing correct transitions, straightness and correct bend and flexion through all work.
 - Candidate to be asked to show landing on a specified leading leg. Flying changes should be automatic.
 - Candidate to demonstrate pace work.

- Sound knowledge of the use of gymnastic exercises to improve a horse's jumping.
 - Understand the use of trot and canter poles to help establish rhythm.
 - Set up gymnastic exercises for use at trot and canter and to demonstrate knowledge of gymnastic training programs, with exercises for educating, schooling, correcting problems and improving the horse's techniques at all levels.
- Build schooling fences.
 - Show knowledge of distances and understanding of the length of a horse's non-jumping stride
- Show balance and control over a variety of cross-country terrain and fences including banks, ditches, water, apex and arrow-head fences
- Assess the horse's present performance, potential, and how it could be improved

Horse Behaviour

- Understand evolution of the horse
- Herd behaviour
- Flight Responses
- Operant Conditioning
- Punishment
- Classical Conditioning
- Five Domains of Horse Welfare
- Problem Behaviours

Biomechanics

Explain the following

- The Gaits
- Biomechanics of jumping
- Biomechanics of dressage movements
- Quantitative Gait Analysis
- Anatomy and Biomechanics of the Spine
- The Hoof
-

Foundation Training

- Mouthing
- The role of scientific principles such as shaping, operant conditioning, habituation, classical condition, overshadowing in foundation training
- The Candidate must have assisted a trainer throughout the foundation training of a horse including halter training, teaching the horse to tie, introducing the saddle and bridle and carrying a rider
- The Candidate is not required to do the foundation training but must be able to give a clear picture of how it is carried out
- Discuss the general handling of foals and weanlings.
- Demonstrate safe practice.

- Lead a horse in hand on near and off side for showing and veterinary inspection.

Training the OTT (Off the Track Horse)

Demonstration understanding of:

- Considerations when choosing an OTT horse
- Pre-ride ground work
- Ridden assessment consideration of the OTT
- Under saddle training
- Introducing jumping
- Cantering and the Standardbred

Assessment of Different Horses

- Candidates will be tested on different horses, on the flat and over a few small training fences
- The horses supplied for the candidate to ride must be well known and approved by the Assessor prior to the Assessment. It is suggested that one horse be of Preliminary /Novice level, one of Elementary and the other Medium level. It is important that this section is conducted in a safe, approved and enclosed area
- Candidate will be given 10 – 20 minutes to ride and assess the horse in all paces followed by discussion and questioning by the Assessor. The candidate should be able to ride the horse quietly, without upsetting the balance
- The candidate must:
 - Approach the horse with a knowledgeable and visual assessment of the horse and gear
 - Demonstrate ability to assess relevant information regarding the horse before riding, i.e., tolerance to whip and spurs, level of education, mount correctly, acceptance of aids, horse's response to new surroundings
 - Give an accurate assessment of the horse's level of education and improvements which could be made.

Lungeing

The candidate should:

- Know the principles and benefits of lungeing
- Know correct equipment required for horse and handler
- Teach a horse to lunge and obey the voice
- Demonstrate control of the horse at walk, trot and canter
- Show medium trot and working canter.

Long Reining

A specialist coach is required to teach and examine this module. Correct gear to include:

- Snaffle bridle with either a noseband or lungeing cavesson with reins removed
- Roller with several levels of rings

- Roller pad
- Reins to be approximately 10m long and slide easily through the rings
- Bandages or boots without buckles on all four legs and may use overreach boots

The candidate should:

- Demonstrate a good understanding of the reasons for long-reining
- Discuss the steps and equipment which may be used when starting off a young horse
- Have a very sound knowledge of the safety issues which must be observed
- Demonstrate a competent technique of lungeing with two reins in a circle.

Breeding and Husbandry

Demonstrate understanding of:

- Breeding procedures and serving mares
- Stallion and mare fertility
- Care of pregnant mares
- Gestation and birth
- Foal handling
- Weaning
- Health conditions of the growing horse
- Gelding horses
- End of life care

Horse Management

- Transport of horses
 - Preparation for travelling horses by road, air or sea
 - State border, international requirements and travel documentation
 - adjustment of feed and exercise
 - rugging
 - protective equipment
 - monitor for travel sickness and dehydration during and after the trip
 - introduction of feed and work after a lengthy trip.
 - Loading and unloading
 - demonstrate loading their own horse
 - discuss methods of loading difficult horses.
 - Float maintenance
 - tyre type and pressure (including spare), condition of bearings,
 - condition of floor and ramp
 - lights
 - coupling/hitch be able to check braking system
 - ventilation.

Proficiency Standard - A Certificate



- Know the state licensing requirements for vehicles towing horse floats.
- Know feeding and conditioning programs for different types of horses for specified work, e.g. One Day Event, Endurance Riding, Pony Club or Centre Camp, horse returning after a spell etc.
- Know how to care for horse before, during and after strenuous work.
- Paddocking
 - Understand the management of a number of horses at grass including water, feed and fencing
 - Assess the quality of pasture in a paddock
 - Demonstrate basic knowledge of pasture management and the use of fertilisers, harrowing, topping, weed control and rotation
 - Know which weeds/plants are dangerous to horses.
- Stabling
 - Show knowledge of stable complex design including dimensions, materials, ventilation and drainage
 - Demonstrate fire precautions in stables
 - Understand the siting of and building a manure heap
 - Explain different types of bedding and preparation of stable bed
 - Explain storage of bedding, hay, and hard feed
 - Discuss construction and use of yards
 - Discuss stable routine for horses in work
 - Be able to deal with a cast horse, with assistance
 - Discuss vices and undesirable habits of stabled horses
 - windsucking, weaving, crib biting
 - biting, kicking
- Grooming, trimming, clipping
 - Know when, why, and how to wash a horse's sheath
 - Demonstrate or discuss how to clip
 - Discuss the various types of clips and benefits of each
 - Discuss care of the clipped horse
 - Describe care of the clipping machine before, during and after use.
- Care of the foot, and shoeing
 - Describe the structure of the foot
 - Recognise changes in the foot and likely cause, i.e. neglect, poor shoeing, disease
 - Knowledge of corrective shoeing - reasons and application of, for example, feather edged shoes, grass tips, bar shoes and pads
 - Use of screw-in studs and care of same
 - Remove a shoe, trim the foot and refit a shoe under supervision of a farrier.

Fitness

- Training the performance horse
- Aerobic vs Anaerobic metabolism
- Monitoring horses through exercise
- Design a fitness improvement program

Nutrition

- Knowledge of the horse's digestive system. Peculiarities including stomach capacity, large and small intestine, grazing habits
- Nutritional Pyramid
- Feed components -
 - Types and quantities
 - Methods of feeding
 - Protein, fats, carbohydrates, fibre
 - Vitamins and minerals
 - Calcium : phosphorus ratio.

Horse Health

Recognise and treat a range of diseases:

- Diseases and disorders
- Parasite management
- Gastrointestinal disorders
- Respiratory diseases
- Skin conditions
- Hoof disorders
- Metabolic disorders
- Conformation
- Heat stress

Administer first aid

- Take temperature, pulse and respiration
- Administer a worm paste
- Apply a pressure bandage and figure of eight bandage
- Carry out prescribed treatment of wounds, ailments and lameness
- Know how to administer medication, including intramuscular injections

- Teeth
 - Know how to care for the horse's teeth and recognise potential problems.
- Soundness
 - The candidate must be able to discuss the following unsoundness and blemishes, both hereditary and acquired.
 - Bog spavin
 - Bone spavin
 - Sidebone
 - Broken wind
 - Splints
 - Windgalls
 - Curb
 - Tendon problems
 - Navicular disease
 - Thoroughpin
 - Ringbone
 - Capped hock
 - Describe effect of poor conformation and bad action on soundness and usefulness
 - Discuss the approach to buying and selling a horse, including documentation

Saddlery and Equipment

- Recognise different types of saddles
- Recognise a broken tree
- Know the principles of biting and the fit, action and use of different bits
- Protective equipment, bandages, boots, kneecaps, hock boots, tail and poll guards
- Organisation of tack room and veterinary cabinet
- Demonstrate five knots and their uses.
- Fitting Gear
- Protective gear for horses

Industry Knowledge of

- Pony Club structure
- Horse racing in Australia
- Topical equestrian events
- Olympic Games