



PONY CLUB
AUSTRALIA

Pony Club Australia

Foundation Coach Course Outline

2026

Section A: Copyright and course classification information

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3. Copyright
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Section B: Course information

1. Nomenclature

1.1	Name of the qualification	PCA National Foundation Coach
1.2	Nominal duration of the course	<p>The course is designed to be flexible. The candidate can work at their own pace. However, the practical examination should be undertaken within two years of course registration.</p> <p>Any candidate deemed not yet competent (NYC) in any section of the assessment must be reassessed within 12 months.</p> <p>Unsupervised: Estimated 12 hours Supervised: Minimum 11 hours Volume of learning: Approximately 23 hours.</p>

2. Vocational or educational outcomes

2.1	Purpose of the course	<p>This course is intended to provide candidates with the following general and vocational education outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach Pony Club riders working through E and D Proficiency certificates
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3. Development of the course

3.1	Industry / enterprise / community needs	<p>The outcomes of this course meet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community need for coaches who can introduce riders to owning and riding horses safely and responsibly whilst upholding equine welfare. • The social need for horse owners to have an evidence-based foundation for horse ownership and management. • The Club need to have qualified coaches coaching PCA Club members at rallies/musters. • The PCA Centre need to have qualified coaches coaching PCA Centre Member riders. • The need for social, economic and environmental sustainability for horse sport in Australia.
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4. Course outcomes

<p>4.1</p>	<p>Foundation skills</p>	<p>Foundation skills applicable to the outcomes of this course are identified in the units of competency (ie. learning, reading, writing, oral communication, numeracy and employability).</p> <p>Candidates will need a good understanding of the English language as course material is only available in English. They must be able to read, write and interpret documents as they will be required to complete assessment tasks such as short/ long answer questions, as well as forms.</p> <p>Candidates can make application for alternative forms of assessment (for example, oral assessment instead of written assessment).</p>
<p>4.2</p>	<p>Recognition given to the course</p>	<p>The course will be recognised as sufficient to teach E and D Pony PCA members without supervision.</p>

5. Course procedures

<p>5.1</p>	<p>Course structure</p>	<p>To achieve a PCA National Foundation coach qualification, the candidate must complete the following seven core units.</p> <p>There are no electives or specialisations in this course.</p> <p>Units are grouped into the following seven national units:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ASC Community Coaching Essential Skills 2. Coaching Pony Club Riders 3. Horse Care 4. Horse Behaviour and Training 5. Riding Skills (the teaching of) 6. Mentored Coaching Practice 7. Practical Coaching Assessment <p>Unit 1 is conducted online. Units 2-5 will be completed/recorded in the official workbook and signed off by a mentor prior to the practical assessment.</p> <p>The content of each unit is listed below.</p> <p>Please note that the hours are provided as a guide only. More experienced and knowledgeable candidates may take less time to complete the workbook-based assessments.</p>
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Unit #	Unit title	Unsupervised hours	Nominal (supervised) hours
1	ASC Community Coaching Essential Skills Course		
1.1	Safeguarding	20min	
1.2	Who you coach	20min	
1.3	Where you coach	20min	
1.4	What you coach	20min	
1.5	How you connect	20min	
1.6	How you engage	20min	
1.7	How you deliver	20min	
1.8	How you improve	20min	
2	Coaching Pony Club Riders		
2.1	PCA rider syllabus	20min	
2.2	The role of the coach	30min	
2.3	Safety and risk management	30min	
2.4	Coaching children	30min	
2.5	Teaching commands, terminology and arena figures	30min	
2.6	Planning	30min	
2.7	Control of a group	30min	
3	Horse Care		
3.1	Basic horse management and handling	30min	
3.2	Points, colours and markings	30min	
3.3	Grooming	30min	
3.4	Care of the hooves	30min	
3.5	Saddlery, tack and equipment	30min	
4	Horse behaviour and training		
4.1	The Rider's Tool kit	30min	
4.2	Ground work	30min	
5	Riding Skills		
5.1	Mounting and Dismounting, Holding the Reins	30min	
5.2	Rider Position	30min	
5.3	Control of the horse	30min	
5.4	Jumping Poles	30min	
5.5	Simple Mounted Games	30min	
6	Mentored Coaching Practice		Min. 10 or RPL
7	Practical Coaching Assessment		
7.1	Practical coaching assessment of riding on the flat		0.5
7.2	Practical coaching assessment of poles or games		0.5
	Total unsupervised hours (guide only)	12	
	Total nominal (supervised) hours (guide only)		Min. 11
	Total hours (guide only)	23	

5.2	Entry requirements	<p>1. Essential entry requirements</p> <p>Candidates must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be at least 16 years of age to receive the PCA National Foundation Coaching Qualification • Meet the requirements for working with children in the relevant Australian State/Territory • Read, understand and sign the Coach’s Code of Conduct • Be a financial member of Pony Club Australia. 	
6. Assessment			
6.1	Assessment strategy	<p>Method</p> <p>Direct observation</p> <p>Written</p> <p>Questioning</p> <p>Third-party evidence</p>	<p>Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment by mentors during coaching practice • Assessment by assessors during practical coaching assessment • Assessment of worksheets and related activities in the Foundation Coaching Workbook • Mentors are encouraged to use questions when checking and signing off workbooks • Evidence of completion of Sport Australia online Community Coaching General Principles <p>All assessment must be completed in accordance with human/equine health and safety standards, and biosecurity and infection control policies and procedures.</p>
6.2	Recognition of Prior Learning	<p>Recognition of Prior Learning will be considered for Unit 3 upon written application documenting the candidate’s experience coaching riders at - or comparable to, E, and D riders, or on the basis of holding another formal horse riding coaching qualification or having worked at a riding school for a period of time. If RPL is granted for Unit 3, the candidate will still need to be assessed as competent in all other units, including Unit 7.</p>	
6.3	Assessor competencies	<p>One assessor will be present at the practical assessment of Unit 7.</p> <p>The option of video assessment will only be considered in circumstances which make face-to-face assessments extremely difficult.</p> <p>Assessors are current PCA National Level 1 coaches.</p> <p>Other assessors as approved by State offices.</p> <p>Assessors will be provided with information on acceptable standards and the conduct of fair, valid, reliable and flexible assessments. Assessors must declare any conflict of interest prior to assessment so that it can be managed. Conflicts might include a family relationship, a close personal friendship, a business partnership (including sponsorship, horse ownership/leasing or competing the other’s horse, direct or indirect financial gain or a coaching arrangement).</p>	

6.4	Mentor competencies	<p>A mentor must have a current accreditation at least one level higher than the candidate (ie. PCA National Preliminary Coach) and be familiar with the current Pony Club Australia Coaching Syllabus and Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Chief Coaches will be able to provide an indication of any costs involved for mentoring, depending on your location and level of experience.</p>
6.5	Presenters	<p>From time to time, clubs, zones/regions, states and PCA may provide specialist training workshops or presentations to supplement coach learning and updates.</p> <p>Where workshops are conducted, presenters must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an accredited coach at the same level (or higher) as the course being presented and be approved by the State/Territory Coaching Panel; and • Have excellent presentation skills and preferably have also completed a presenter training course • Believe in and uphold the PCA Aims and Objectives <p>Specialist presenters must have qualifications in their area of expertise (eg farrier, veterinarian, horse training).</p>

7. Delivery

7.1	Delivery modes	<p>This course is delivered via a combination of online, written and face-to-face formats. Candidates with special needs or who are from rural/remote areas and have difficulty in undertaking any of the assessment tasks should consult with their State Chief Coaches' Panel.</p> <p>Examples of flexible delivery and assessment modes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using oral questioning instead of written worksheets where appropriate. • Video assessment of the practical coaching tasks for assessment purposes where necessary (eg. for a coach in a remote area).
7.2	Resources	<p>Pony Club Australia Foundation Coaching Manual</p> <p>The PCA NATIONAL Foundation Coaching Manual is the primary reference for the PCA NATIONAL Foundation Coaching qualification.</p> <p>Pony Club Australia Foundation Coaching Workbook</p> <p>Candidates will need to obtain, complete and submit a PCA NATIONAL Foundation coaching workbook. The workbook correlates with the table of contents for the manual.</p> <p>Pony Club Australia Rider Manuals (E and D)</p> <p>Candidates should be familiar with the rider manuals that their students will be using.</p>

7.2	Resources (continued)	<p>Sport Australia online Community Coaching Essential Skills</p> <p>The Community Coaching Essential Skills course has been developed by SportAustralia to assist coaches to learn the basic skills of coaching, particularly those coaches working with children.</p> <p>The course contains eight units, covering a range of general coaching topics including safeguarding in sport, who you coach, where you coach, what you coach, how you coach, how you engage, how you deliver, how you improve. It takes approximately three hours to complete, and there is assessment included at the end of each unit.</p> <p>The course is free of charge to Australian coaches and can be accessed at Essential skills course Sport Australia</p>
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8. Pathways and articulation

8.1	Pathways and articulation	<p>Completion of the PCA National Foundation Coaching qualification is a precursor for the PCA National Preliminary Coaching qualification.</p>
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9. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation

9.1	Ongoing monitoring and evaluation	<p>The Pony Club Australia Coaching Advisory Council (CAC) will formally review the course content, structure and process at least every four years or as required, after which an update will be released.</p> <p>The monitoring and review of the Course Outline, Manual and Workbook will be undertaken in consultation with coach leaders in each state and territory.</p> <p>PCA may update content more frequently where considered necessary, such as when progress in scientific understanding or practical application has been made. In those cases, materials may be updated and any enrolled candidates will be informed of any changes. Updates will be clearly marked on materials.</p>
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Units of competency

UNIT CODE	1
UNIT TITLE	Australian Sports Commission - Community Coaching Essential Skills
APPLICATION	This unit describes the general performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required for sports coaching. It requires the ability to understand general coaching principles. The unit applies to all coaches. The course can be access through the PCA Academy tile on your Just Go profile.
ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1.1 Safeguarding in sport	Protecting everyone in sport
1.2 Who you coach	Engagement
1.3 Where you coach	Space, Equipment, and facilities
1.4 What you coach	Session planning and preparation
1.5 How you connect	Communication
1.6 How you engage and organise	Stakeholder management
1.7 How you deliver	Group management
1.8 How you improve	Self – reflection and assessment
PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE	The candidate must be able to apply their knowledge of community coaching essential skills to the scenarios with which they are presented in the online training.
KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE	The candidate must show evidence of their knowledge of community coaching essential skills through their completion of the Sport Australia online course as well as their performance at the practical coaching assessment.
ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS	Assessment will be in the form of a certificate of completion of the course, provided by the Australian Sports Commission.

UNIT CODE	2
UNIT TITLE	Coaching Pony Club Riders
APPLICATION	This unit describes the skills, knowledge and approach necessary to coach E and D riders. It requires the ability to read lesson plans and deliver, identify and manage risks and control a group of riders.
ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
2.1 PCA Rider Syllabus	1. Know the structure of the PCA syllabus
2.2 The Role of the Coach	1. State legal responsibilities of the Pony Club coach 2. Demonstrate behaviour appropriate to the PCA Code of Conduct 3. Implement practices to ensure the welfare of riders and horses
2.3 Safety and Risk Management	1. Identify safe riding facilities and equipment at Pony Club activities 2. Identify precautions to prevent injury to riders and horses 3. Know how to use some basic risk management tools to estimate and mitigate risk 4. Describe what to do in case of an accident 5. Outline basic first aid procedures in the case of injury 6. Know the basic steps to accident reporting
2.4 Coaching Children	1. Know why children come to Pony Club and their motivation to learn 2. Identify important physical growth and social and emotional development characteristics of children and how these characteristics influence the way children learn and the implications this has on planning activities
2.5 Teaching commands, terminology, and arena figures	1. Know how to give clear commands for safe and effective teaching 2. Know how to position oneself in relation to riders for maximum supervision 3. Know basic arena figures

<p>2.6 Planning</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know how to read and deliver a riding lesson plan appropriate to develop E and D riding and ground work skills 2. Know the important elements of a warm up and cool down
<p>2.7 Control of a Group</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know how to brief riders on safety practices, procedures and appropriate behaviour 2. Explain group forms of riding including single file, open order 3. Use standard teaching commands and terminology to control the movements of a group 4. Describe a loose horse protocol
<p>PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE</p>	<p>The candidate must show evidence of the ability to complete tasks outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit through their responses to the questions and activities in the PCA NATIONAL Foundation Coaching Workbook as well as during interactions with their mentor.</p>
<p>KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE</p>	<p>The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to effectively read understand and deliver lesson plans to E and D riders.</p>
<p>ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS</p>	<p>Assessment must be in the form of written responses in the PCA NATIONAL Foundation Coaching workbook or as otherwise negotiated. Mentors will sign-off each unit in the workbook.</p>

UNIT CODE	3
UNIT TITLE	Horse Care
APPLICATION	This unit describes the horse care knowledge that coaches are required to teach to E and D riders. It requires the ability to understand and explain basic horse care and management with an emphasis on human safety and horse welfare. The unit applies to all coaches of E and D riders who may be coaching children and beginners.
ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
3.1 Basic Horse Management and Handling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know the key elements of suitable housing for a horse or pony in the paddock 2. Know how to approach, catch, lead and tie up a horse, using a quick release knot, correctly and safely 3. Know how to turn out a horse alone and/or in company
3.2 Points, colours and markings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the points of the horse, colours and markings to D level Pony Club
3.3 Grooming	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and use grooming equipment
3.4 Care of the hooves	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the importance of daily foot care 2. Know how to safely pick up the feet of a quiet horse

3.5 Saddlery, tack and equipment	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Know the parts of a saddle and snaffle bridle.2. Explain procedure for cleaning, caring for and storing saddlery safely3. Know the steps to saddle/unsaddle and bridle/unbridle a quiet horse/pony
PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE	The candidate must show evidence of their horse care knowledge through their responses to the questions and activities in the PCA National Foundation Coaching Workbook and interactions with their mentor.
KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE	The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to effectively teach horse care and handling to E and D riders.
ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS	Assessment must be in the form of written responses in the PCA National Foundation Coaching workbook or as otherwise negotiated. Mentors will sign-off each unit in the workbook.

UNIT CODE	4
UNIT TITLE	Horse Behaviour and Training
APPLICATION	<p>This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to teach the basic theory and application of horse behaviour and training to E and D riders.</p> <p>It requires the ability to understand and communicate the principles of horse behaviour and training to E and D riders.</p>
ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
4.1 The rider's toolkit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain pressure-release training (negative reinforcement) 2. Explain reward training (positive reinforcement) 3. Explain punishment and why it should be avoided
4.2 Ground work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the importance of safe ground work and what that entails
PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE	The candidate must show evidence of the ability to understand and apply horse behaviour and training principles to their coaching of E and D riders through their responses to the questions and activities in the PCA NATIONAL Foundation Coaching Workbook and interactions with their mentor.
KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE	The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to explain and show evidence-based horse behaviour and training to E and D riders.
ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS	Assessment must be in the form of written responses in the PCA NATIONAL Foundation Coaching workbook or as otherwise negotiated. Mentors will sign-off each unit in the workbook.

UNIT CODE	5
UNIT TITLE	Riding Skills
APPLICATION	<p>This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to teach basic arena riding to E and D riders. Arena riding includes small jumps and simple mounted games.</p> <p>It requires the ability to teach basic riding and horse control and structure a riding session appropriately.</p>
ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
5.1 Mounting and dismounting, holding the reins	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach correct procedure for mounting and dismounting 2. Teach the rider to hold the reins in two hands 3. Lead a ridden horse from either side
5.2 Rider Position	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the correct position of the rider in the saddle 2. Recognise common faults in rider position 3. Communicate position corrections to riders in an effective manner
5.3 Control of the horse.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know the natural aids and when and how they should be used 2. Teach riders the aids to stop, slow, go forward and turn under saddle 3. Teach riders to walk and trot 4. Teach riders to change direction 5. Teach rider transitions
5.4 Jumping Poles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know how to teach basics of jumping poles 2. Know distances of trot poles
5.5 Simple mounted games	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know where to locate the rules for Mounted Games and Novelties 2. Know some simple mounted games

PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE	The candidate must show evidence of the ability to teach riding skills to E and D through their responses to the questions and activities in the PCA National Foundation Coaching Workbook and interactions with their mentor.
KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE	The candidate must be able to demonstrate the essential knowledge required to teach basic skills in arena to E and D riders.
ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS	Assessment must be in the form of written responses in the PCA National Foundation Coaching workbook or as otherwise negotiated. Mentors will sign-off each unit in the workbook.

UNIT CODE	6
UNIT TITLE	Mentored coaching practice
APPLICATION	This unit provides the practical experience necessary to consolidate the knowledge and skills gained through units 1-5.
ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
6	Undertake at least 10 hours of coaching under the supervision of a mentor or similarly qualified person such as a Chief Instructor.
PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE	The candidate must show evidence of at least 10 hours of coaching through their log of hours in the PCA NATIONAL Foundation Coaching Workbook, signed by their mentor, another suitably qualified supervisor or in the case of a riding school, their employer.
KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE	The candidate must be able to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of coaching to be considered to have met the minimum amount of mentored/supervised coaching to satisfy the mentor/supervisor that they can effectively and confidently coach E and D riders, especially in a group setting.
ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS	Assessment must be in the form of at least 10 hours of mentored coaching, supervised and signed-off by a mentor or similarly qualified supervisor. Practical assessment for Unit 7 will not occur until a mentor is satisfied that the candidate has demonstrated sufficient practical coaching skills to be expected to pass Unit 7, Practical Coaching Assessment.

UNIT CODE	7
UNIT TITLE	Practical Coaching Assessment
APPLICATION	This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to safely and effectively coach E and D riders without supervision. It requires the ability to poles, mounted games and ground work) to a small group of E riders.
PRE-REQUISITE UNIT	The candidate must be deemed competent in Units 1-6 prior to commencing this unit.
ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
7.1 Practical coaching assessment of a groundwork or flatwork lesson	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish and maintain conditions for safe practice 2. Conduct satisfactory lesson introduction, demonstration & warm-up 3. Deliver appropriate lesson content showing satisfactory general coaching skills 4. Provide constructive feedback to riders
7.2 Practical coaching assessment of a Jumping poles or mounted games lesson	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish and maintain conditions for safe practice 2. Conduct satisfactory lesson introduction, demonstration & warm-up 3. Deliver appropriate lesson content showing satisfactory general coaching skills 4. Provide constructive feedback to riders
PERFORMANCE EVIDENCE	The candidate must show evidence of the ability to independently coach two x 30-minute lessons, 1 x groundwork or flatwork lesson, 1 x jumping poles or mounted games lesson with a small group of E/D riders under practical assessment conditions.
KNOWLEDGE EVIDENCE	The candidate must be able to demonstrate the application of essential knowledge required to safely and effectively conduct four lessons suitable for E/D riders (ie. knowledge gained through Units 1-5).

ASSESSMENT CONDITIONS

On the day of assessment, the candidate must present their workbook with all exercise pages initialled by their mentor. This includes the pages in Unit 2.2 where the candidate has placed their own initials against each item in the PCA Coaches' Code of Conduct, as well as the Mentor Statement to the Practical Assessor with the mentor's full signature (found in Unit 6 of the workbook).

Assessment must be in the form of:

- Observation of two practical coaching sessions and assessment against the standard criteria.

Training and assessment venue minimum requirements:

- Access to three to six E/D level Pony Club riders
- A marked 20 x 60m area with a level, non-slip riding surface for conducting the flatwork or groundwork lesson
- A minimum of 40 m x 70m area with a level, non-slip riding surface for conducting the jumping pole or mounted games lesson
- Jumping poles (sufficient poles)
- Mounted games/novelty/ sporting equipment
- A quiet area suitable for confidential discussions to take place
- All assessment must be completed in accordance with human/equine health and safety, and biosecurity and infection control policies and procedures.



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