

Horse Assessment Exam

General Description and Emphasis: Examinees will be presented one horse that they will evaluate for body condition, appearance under saddle and training level when ridden. They will then be asked to make recommendations as to appropriate feeding, shoeing (if applicable), conditioning and training in order for the horse to be healthy and the rider to progress forward in their goals. They may also offer potential problem solving recommendations as suitable. Examinees will be judged by the thoroughness and correctness of their analysis as well as the professionalism and respect shown to horse and rider when trying the horse and making recommendations.

Procedures:

1. Introduction
The examinee will introduce themselves and explain the assessment process to the horse owner. They will ask the horse owner what their goals are and what challenges they are currently facing in working towards those goals.
2. Body condition assessment
The examinee will do an assessment of the horse's body condition and hoof care and make recommendations where applicable. They will provide commentary on what they see and ask questions of the horse owner as needed to clarify aspects of the horse's condition and how they may relate to the horse's current care protocol and training.
3. Visual evaluation under saddle
The examinee will ask the owner to show them a synopsis of one of their normal training sessions. This is not a lesson but the examinee is expected to guide the horse owner as needed. The goal is to have the owner feel comfortable showing their training strengths and weaknesses. The examinee encourages the owner to make safe choices in respects to the elements they chose to show.
4. Ridden evaluation
The examinee will ride the horse to assess where they are at in their training in respect to their response to the aids, gait training, and overall training level. A tactful approach that is sensitive to the physical and mental state of the horse is paramount. The examinee should narrate what they are feeling and explain what approach they are using as they try the horse. They can also feel some of the challenges the owner may be facing however this is NOT a training session.
5. Recommendations to owner and proposal for potential problem solving
After riding the horse the examinee will approach the horse owner and summarize what they have seen and felt in the horse during the assessment. They will discuss their observations in a positive fashion while offering constructive criticism and recommendations.

Finally a potential training plan can be made along with some ideas for troubleshooting any problems that may have come up in the assessment.

Equipment: The horse owner will bring equipment that is relevant to training their horse. The examinee may ask for a change of tack but only if they provide a reason for doing so, and must get permission to do so from both the judge and the horse owner. It is recommended, but not required, that the examinee brings a notebook and pen in order to write down notes and impressions in order to make sure they include all relevant information in their final discussion with the horse owner, however their notes will not be judged.

Location: The evaluation can take place inside or outside depending on what suits the horse and horse owner best. The examinee may change location based on their needs, the safety of horse and examinee, or based on the issue they are addressing when they are trying the horse themselves, however they need to ask the judge's permission for the location change and provide an acceptable reason for doing so. The examinee must be in full view of the judges and the horse owner at all times.

Element	Description	Notes		Score
Body Condition and Shoeing Assessment Methodology	The examinee assesses the muscling and general body condition of the horse by examining and potentially palpating the horse in the appropriate places. The examinee projects knowledge and confidence in their approach and assesses systematically,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examinee approaches the horse confidently, safely and with respect ● Examinee is systematic in their approach ● Examinee palpates and manipulates horse in a way that demonstrates their knowledge of how to properly judge body condition and shoeing 		

	asking questions where appropriate.			
Visual Evaluation Under Saddle Methodology	The examinee asks the owner to show them a synopsis of a normal training session. The examinee offers the horse owner guidance and encouragement to help facilitate proper evaluation of the horse's gaits, response to the aids and training level. The examinee makes the owner feel comfortable showing their horses strengths and weaknesses, and asks questions when appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examinee offers guidance without teaching in order that they can best examine horse and rider • The examinee is encouraging and helps the horse owner be confident • The examinee communicates with the rider regarding what they observe. • Comments are constructive and respectful 		
Ridden Evaluation Methodology	The examinee rides the horse harmoniously and with the appropriate seat and aids for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examinee rides horse harmoniously and appropriately for training stage and conditioning 		

	<p>that horse's training level. Rider systematically tries the gaits, figures, and movements in a way that gives them a good picture of the horse's training, and potential solutions.</p> <p>Note: The goal of the ride is to make recommendations and discern any potential issues and advice that can be given, NOT to show off or show up the horse owner, and the horse should be ridden accordingly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examinee systematically tries appropriate gaits and movements ● Examinee remained focused on trying the horse in order to make actionable recommendations. ● Examinee communicates to 		
<p>Delivery of Recommendations</p>	<p>Recommendations are given through clear explanations by the examinee to the horse owner in the presence of the judge. The recommendations are actionable and appropriate, with alternatives offered if possible depending</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clear explanations ● Actionable and appropriate recommendations ● Examinee explains in a way that is understandable given the owner's knowledge and adjusts based on whether the horse owner appears to 		

	<p>on whether the horse owner is able to carry out recommendations. Recommendations are delivered in a way that is understandable, respectful and constructive, and are presented as a conversation as opposed to a diatribe or speech. The judge may ask further questions regarding certain conclusions after the consultation with the owner is over.</p>	<p>understand the comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommendations are respectful and constructive 		
Overall Professionalism	<p>The examinee uses professional language when discussing horse and rider, and frames any changes that need to be made in a constructive manner. They ask permission from the owner to handle or ride their horse and treat the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examinee uses professional language when discussing horse and rider ● Examinee makes sure to respect the horse owner and asks permission to handle their horse or adjust equipment ● Examinee projects 		

	horse, rider and their equipment with respect.	a positive and helpful attitude		
Correctness of Body Condition Evaluation	<p>Evaluation of body condition and farrier work should be correct and based on a foundational knowledge of body condition, muscling and hoof health.</p> <p>Note: This is a test for instructors, not farriers or veterinarians. A comment of “You should ask your vet/farrier about...” or “I noticed something here that your vet or farrier should look into” is a sufficient and valid recommendation in many cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body condition is assessed correctly • Farrier work is assessed correctly • Relevant information provided by owner is responded to with correct recommendations, which can include further consultation with a vet or farrier 		
Correctness of Ridden and Visual Evaluation of Horse Under Saddle	<p>Evaluation of training level, response to aids, and the horse’s gaits are correct and the recommendations given by the examinee are</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training level is assessed correctly and recommendations appropriate • Response to the aids is assessed correctly and 		

	<p>appropriate given the horse's training level and the rider's abilities. The examinee formulates educated and correct responses to any information or questions the horse owner presents that is relevant to the horse's training.</p> <p>Note: Recommendations may include future recommendations currently not in the rider's skill set, or recommendations that could be carried out by the owner's trainer provided that that is made clear.</p>	<p>recommendations appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Gaits are assessed correctly and recommendations are appropriate● Relevant information provided by owner is responded to with correct recommendations		
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