

Document Checklist for Hiring of Horses

Written procedures are required as a minimum standard for holding an animal activities licence. Failure to have these written procedures in place and to a suitable standard not only invalidates your licence, but it will also invalidate any business insurance you have as you will be in breach of your licence conditions.

Your written procedures are there to be followed so that everyday business operations take place in compliance with your licence and in the interest of animal welfare. They should therefore be written to include how you meet each of the licence conditions. The emergency contact/key holders will rely on these policies to ensure the business operates as normal in your absence. It is imperative that they are written as a step-by-step guide highlighting how the business operates on a daily basis.

Standard Operating Procedures

Preventative Healthcare Plan (signed by applicant's registered veterinarian).

This document should detail the steps taken to prevent/mitigate the risk of disease. A template can be provided if required.

This should be filled out by you and then checked and signed off by the businesses registered vet. They will be able to tell you if there's anything that needs to be added.

Training Policy

This document applies to **licence holders** as well as any paid staff and volunteers. It should detail training practices in line with the business.

- Outline how often training/CPD is undertaken
- Details what kind of training is undertaken (formal vs informal)
- Explain how training is documented/recorded
- Explain what processes are in place to review training needs
- Explain the appraisal process (if applicable)
- Explain What induction training is available for new starters (if applicable)

As a minimum, evidence of informal training should be documented every other month.

At least one full time member of staff or the applicant/licence holder **must** hold a Level 3 OFQUAL qualification in a relevant horse related topic or be able to show they have demonstratable knowledge in the industry.

Staff caring for the horses **must** hold a level 2 OFQUAL qualification in a relevant horse related topic or be able to show they have demonstratable knowledge in the industry.

Cleaning Policy

This document should detail all cleaning that is carried out across the premises. This includes cleaning vehicles after transportation, scrubbing water troughs and feed buckets, scrubbing rubber matting, cleaning of toys & any/all equipment used in relation to the horses, poo picking and waste removal, cleaning the stables (dusting, de-cobwebbing, scrubbing floors) and cleaning the isolation facilities during and after use.

- List the cleaning chemicals used as part of the activity (including things like detergent & washing up liquid) and where they're stored on the premises
- Explain the daily spot-cleaning process
- Explain the deep cleaning process

- Provide specific information on the dilution ratios for the chemicals used
- Include detailed instruction on where all cleaning equipment is kept (wheel barrows, poo picking utensils, cloths, dusters etc)
- Provide the COSHH sheets for the chemicals used
- If pests have been/are a problem at the premises, include a subheading which explains what provisions have been implemented to manage this (e.g. bait boxes or a pest contractor)
- Outline if animals are removed from areas when they're being cleaned
- Explain waste removal and management

□ **Immature Animals' Policy (Horses under 2 years of age)**

This document should outline what provisions the business has in place to accommodate the needs of horses under 2 years old.

- Outline how their everyday routine may differ to that of an older, established horse
- Explain what processes are in place to habituate them to things they may see/hear/experience around the yard (e.g. farm equipment, other animals, the farrier)
- Explain what training/habituation is undertaken to prepare them for ridden life
- Discuss what age a horse must be before starting its ridden life
- Outline how they're socialised at this age

□ **Separating/Grouping of Animals Policy**

This document should outline how the business groups horses together, taking into account different life stages/sizes/energy levels to ensure cohesive social groups and manages multi-occupancy pastures. It should also highlight the importance of separation where required.

- Explain how you prevent competition over food and water, especially in multioccupancy fields (e.g. multiple feeding and drinking sites)
- Discuss how you manage social interactions to ensure harmonious grouping
- Outline which horses live in groups and whether there are any that don't get along or have to live singly
- Explain when separation during may be necessary

□ **Feeding Policy**

This document should detail the frequency of feeding and water provision, including how often water is changed or topped up. It should also detail monitoring of food and water intake.

- Outline where food is kept on the premises and how it's stored to deter vermin
- Outline how uneaten food is disposed of
- Outline the time and frequency feeding takes place
- Outline what equipment is needed for feeding and where it's stored (e.g. hay nets, buckets, hay racks etc)
- Outline if supplements are given and where they're stored
- Discuss when vet advice would be sought and what records would be kept if eating/drinking habits dipped outside of the norm
- Link this policy with the monitoring & ensuring health policy regarding records for inappetence/changes in drinking habits
- Link this policy with the cleaning policy regarding cleaning of feeding equipment

□ **Biosecurity/Disease Control and Prevention Policy signed by the businesses registered vet**

This document should detail how you minimise and control the risk of disease entering the premises

- Outline what measures are in place to stop disease from entering your premises (e.g. all new horses must be quarantined)
- Outline what measures are in place to manage zoonoses
- Outline what measures are in place to mitigate illness when taking an animal off site
- Explain parasite control protocol (e.g. routine worming or faecal egg counts)
- Explain vaccinations/booster protocol
- Link this policy to your cleaning policy to show how the premises/associated equipment is kept clean to reduce the risk of disease manifesting
- Discuss the use of and disposal of needles (if applicable) (e.g. sharps box)
- Explain how the current isolation provisions allow for a horse to be fully isolated for up to 21 days
- Link this policy to your isolation policy to show how horses displaying illness are managed

□ **Transport Policy**

This document should outline how often you transport animals and how this is done safely in accordance with good welfare practice and law. This document is applicable even if animals are only transported in an emergency.

- Outline how animals are secured in transit (e.g. breast bar, breach bar, breakaway tie up)
- Outline how young horses are transported if this differs from adult horses
- Outline how the temperature is regulated throughout the journey
- Outline which vehicle/s are available
- Discuss what provisions are kept in the vehicle if a journey takes longer than expected (e.g. hay, bottled water, drinking buckets)
- Explain the use of tail bandages and other equipment
- Explain the need for passports
- Link this policy with the cleaning policy to show how the vehicle is cleaned after use
- Link this policy with the emergency policy to discuss the care/management of the animals if there was an accident or if the vehicle broke down

□ **Monitoring and Ensuring Health Policy**

This document should outline how often animals are checked, where observation records are kept and how often they should be filled out.

- Outline the frequency of grooming and bathing
- Explain farrier/dentist/saddler visits, their frequency and how they benefit health
- Explain any homeopathic therapies that are utilised and they benefit health (e.g. salt therapy, horse massage)
- Outline how often basic health checks are performed and the frequency (e.g. checking eyes, nose, teeth, feet)
- Discuss how long would pass before seeking vet advice if a horse were off their food or showing signs of illness/injury
- Explain what extra monitoring processes are in place for young, geriatric or less mobile horses
- Outline what is in place for medicine management and storage, with specific information relating to prescription only medications (POMs)
- Outline under what circumstances changes in behaviour or health are recorded

□ Isolation Policy

This document should outline comprehensive steps to isolate a potentially infectious or injured animal.

- Outline where the isolation facilities are on the premises
- If isolation is off-site, discuss how animals are separated prior to transfer to the facility (If isolation facilities are off site, a letter from the vet/appropriate person agreeing to this must be provided)
- Outline what dedicated equipment is kept for isolation and where it is stored (e.g. feed buckets, lead ropes, head collars, hay nets)
- Outline how equipment specifically kept for isolation is identified so that it is not put in general circulation (e.g. stored in a labelled box)
- Explain how contaminated waste is disposed of
- Outline what PPE is available, where it's stored and how it is disposed of after use
- Explain what barrier nursing provisions and techniques are used to manage infectious disease on the premises
- Explain what provisions are in place for isolating animals on restricted movement due to injury
- Outline how often animals in isolation are monitored and where the records are kept
- Outline how equipment used on/for an infectious animal is disinfected or disposed of after use
- Explain how the current isolation provisions allow for a horse to be fully isolated for up to 21 days
- Link this policy with the cleaning policy to detail how the isolation facilities and associated equipment are cleaned
- Link this policy with the biosecurity/disease control & prevention policy to show what steps are in place to minimise the risk of infectious disease entering the premises

□ Death and Escape Policy

This document should outline what would happen in the event of an unexpected death.

- Explain where the deceased animal would be stored on the premises until it could be disposed of (e.g. covered and left in the pasture with other horses removed from the area)
- Outline who the fallen stock collector is
- Outline if the licensing officer would be contacted
- Detail what records would be kept

This document should outline what would happen if a horse escaped the premises

- Outline if the microchip company would be notified
- Discuss if signs would be placed in the local area or if social media would be utilised
- Outline who the loss reported to (e.g. neighbours, licensing officer)
- Explain how a search would be carried out
- Explain what would happen if a horse escaped onto a main/busy road
- Explain what provisions are already in place to minimise the chance of escape
- Detail what records would be kept

□ Emergency Policy

This document should outline what would happen in different emergency scenarios.

- Include a list of **all** emergency contacts (fire, ambulance, power company, water company, designated key holder etc)

- **Fire** – Outline evacuation routes, what firefighting equipment is available, how horses are evacuated and kept safe during the emergency, smoke & CO2 detector locations & how often they're tested and how frequently emergency drills are practiced
- **Loss of utilities** - Outline how water could be provided if the supply was disrupted. What about gas/electric/water that's needed for the business function properly. Outline how the loss of any/all of these would impact normal operations and how would you manage in the meantime.
- **Extremes of temperature** – Outline what happens if temperatures get too high or low (e.g. lessons would be cancelled/rearranged, rugs or cooling rugs would be utilised). Outline who is most at risk (e.g. younger or elderly horses). Outline who is first aid trained and what records/additional monitoring would be implemented.
- **Extremes of weather lightning storms/flooding/snow** – Outline if monitoring is increased. Discuss what measures would be taken to reduce stress.
- **Breakdown of vehicle/accident/traffic jams** - Outline who would recover you. Outline who could collect the horses/tow the trailer so the animals wouldn't need to wait for an extended period for recovery. Discuss what additional monitoring would be undertaken & where this would be recorded. Discuss what would happen in the event of an accident whilst animals are in transit. Outline what emergency provisions are kept in the vehicle (e.g. hay, water buckets, bottled water)
- **Alternative accommodation if the premises became uninhabitable** - Discuss how the animals would be housed if the premises became uninhabitable (e.g. they'd live out or be transferred to another facility) Outline who would notify the licensing officer.
- **Alternative accommodation if the licence were revoked or suspended** – Explain that trading would cease immediately. Outline that future bookings would be cancelled until the licence was reinstated. Outline that the business would work with the licensing officer to rectify any outstanding issues so the licence could be reinstated.

□ **Repair and maintenance procedure/programme**

This document should outline where and how any repairs or defects are recorded and what maintenance jobs are planned/scheduled for the premises throughout the year. A specific diary or logbook alongside the policy is appropriate

Other Documents

□ **Site plan of premises**

This does not have to be to scale but it should show how the premises is laid out and give measurements of the stables and paddocks

□ **Public Liability Insurance Certificate**

This should be for at least £5 million cover (not to be confused with employers' liability which is different)

□ **List of qualifications & certificates**

A list of qualifications, including copies of all formal training certificates and records of informal training that have been undertaken by staff (volunteer or otherwise) and the licence holder/s must be provided.

□ **Training and development plans**

The licence holder/s and all staff (including volunteers) must have a training record and development plan.

□ **DBS Certificate**

A basic Disclosure and Barring Certificate is required to be supplied with an application. The cost and process of obtaining one is to be completed by the applicant.

Activity Specific Documents

□ **Introduction of new horses to existing groups policy**

This document should outline how new horses are introduced to the premises and how they're integrated into existing groups/herds.

- Explain the step-by-step processes for gradually introducing a new horse to an established herd/group
- Discuss the need for quarantine when a new horse arrives at the yard
- Outline what would happen if introductions didn't go as planned
- Link this policy with the grouping/separating policy to detail the importance of gradual introductions

□ **A preventative fire risk assessment**

This assessment is specific to fire and any equipment on the yard that poses a fire risk (e.g. petrol or diesel stored for vehicles, the muck heap, electric lighting or hay/stray)

- It should also include a location map showing access and exits for both people and horses

□ **A pasture management plan**

This document should outline how pastures are maintained throughout the year to ensure quality grazing, minimise worm burdens and manage poisonous plants.

- Outline how parasites are managed (e.g. harrowing the fields or faecal worm counts)
- Explain dung management
- Outline how toxic plants dealt with and how often pastures are checked for their presence (e.g. ragwort)
- Explain pasture rotation (if applicable)
- Explain seasonal management (e.g. rested in winter or reseeded in spring)
- Explain how drainage is managed to ensure paddocks do not become poached

□ **Individual feed plans for each horse (optional higher standard)**

This document should include information on daily feeds and any supplements or medications that each individual horse is receiving. Monthly body condition scores **must** be recorded. Any advice received from a vet or equine nutritionist regarding an under/overweight horse must be recorded.

□ **A form used to document initial assessments new riders (required higher standard)**

□ **Individual structured management and care programmes for each horse (required higher standard)**

These documents should outline specific information relating to each horse, including their overall care, management, training and exercise needs. Each horse should have their own healthcare folder.

- One of the documents must include the horses name, age and any existing health related conditions
- Outline the frequency of foot care, dental care, tack maintenance (saddler) worming and vet care including any existing records
- Outline the frequency of homeopathic therapies (if applicable)
- Outline their exercise needs and what routine training they undertake. This should detail suitable alternatives for horses that cannot be exercised such as extra grooming or physiotherapy

□ **Risk assessments for all available equipment and activities that take place on site including PPE needs (required higher standard)**

This assessment must cover all equipment used in line with the activity (e.g. horse clippers, horse walker, yard blower, arena levelling equipment, solarium)

And all activities that take place on site (e.g. riding, hacking, jumping, clipping, poo picking, weed maintenance, picking out feet)

It must also include what PPE is needed for each task.

RECORDS WILL BE CHECKED DURING THE INSPECTION