



BRITISH
DRIVING SOCIETY

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2022

Unit of Competence for Carriage Driving
The Groom's Syllabus

Unit of Competence for Carriage Driving:

The Groom's Assessment Syllabus

This test is recommended as a minimum competence for a Groom to assist the Driver of a Horse Drawn Vehicle.

A human first aid certificate is highly recommended.

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Guidance Notes

Method of Assessment

This test will be assessed by direct observation of the practical performance and oral questioning of the underpinning knowledge section of the syllabus. The assessment will be in line with safe yard practice.

The driving will take place on the public highway, using the English coaching style of driving (reins held in the left hand with the right hand supporting).

Time for completion approximately 1 hour.

Assessor Guidance

The successful candidate will be capable of assisting the driver with harnessing up safely and efficiently, assisting the driver with a single turnout safely on the public highway, off road and in an enclosed area.

They will be capable of assisting in different road conditions and areas, be aware of other road users at all times, observe road traffic signs and signals, show courtesy to pedestrians and other road users and have a sound knowledge of the highway code.

They must be able to carry out checks and adjustments to the harness during the drive, take care of the Equine as instructed by the driver, maintain health and safety of Equine, self and others at all times and communicate effectively with the driver throughout the entire test.

Candidates

Candidates **MUST** be members of the BDS.
Candidates can sit this test as an isolated test.

Age of Candidates:

Age of Candidates 12 years and above

Equines/Ponies:

Equines/Ponies must be 5 years or over with a minimum of 1 year driving experience. They must be safe in traffic. They must be of a suitable size and fitness to convey the candidate, driver and the assessor for a drive on the roads, off road and in an enclosed area which will last for approximately 45 minutes. Road driving pace is expected. The Equine/pony may be the property of the candidate or be hired or borrowed for the occasion.

Harness:

Harness must be in sound condition and fit correctly.

Vehicle:

Vehicle 2 or 4 wheeler. It must be well maintained and suitable for the type and size of the animal and the passengers.

Venue:

The venue must have a safe and secure area. There must also be reasonably quiet access to suitable public roads but with some real 'hazards' as required for the performance criteria. A substantial part of the test must be completed using the public highway but must also be used to driving on tracks, fields, etc.

To be successful, the candidate will be successful in all of the Elements in one test situation.

ELEMENT 1 : Assist the Driver of a Equine drawn Carriage

Be able to assist the driver of a Equine drawn vehicle

Knowledge and Understanding:

1. Be able to assist the driver of a Equine drawn vehicle.
- 1.1 Assist the driver with preparing the vehicle, harnessing up and putting to.
- 1.2 Maintain control of the Equine after putting to, whilst the driver carries out safety checks and mounts vehicle.
- 1.3 Stand the Equine up preparatory to moving off, according to the driver's instructions.
- 1.4 Go ahead of the turnout to open gate(s) to check for safe exit; report any problems to the driver and take action as instructed.
- 1.5 Assist the driver in the three following places:
 - (i). Whilst driving on the public highway.
 - (ii). Whilst driving on off-road tracks.
 - (iii). Whilst driving in a controlled area.
- 1.6 Mount and dismount the vehicle correctly whilst it is stationary and moving, at both a walk and a working trot, as instructed.
- 1.7 Dismount the vehicle and go to the Equines head promptly when instructed.
- 1.8 Maintain control of the Equine whilst halted by the driver.
- 1.9 Be alert to traffic approaching from behind, and advise the driver.
- 1.10 Be alert to other users of the driving zone, and take actions to assist with maintaining control of the Equine as instructed by the driver.



- 1.11 Be alert to the reactions of the driving Equine to objects, people or other animals encountered on the drive, and take actions to assist with maintaining control of the Equine as instructed by the driver.
- 1.12 Assist effectively from the ground, according to instructions, whilst the driver negotiates three of the following situations:
 - (i). Approaching and passing a stationary hazard.
 - (ii). Encountering other animals.
 - (iii). Encountering pedestrians.
 - (iv). Being passed by another vehicle.
 - (v). Driving between obstacles.
 - (vi). Approaching a junction.
- 1.13 Assist the driver with signalling intentions to others, according to instructions.
- 1.14 Carry out checks and adjustments to harness and vehicle as instructed by the driver during the drive.
- 1.15 Care for the Equine during the drive as instructed by the driver.
- 1.16 Maintain control of the Equine whilst the driver dismounts.

ELEMENT 2 : Health and Safety

Health and Safety of self and others.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- 2. Health and Safety of self and others.
 - 2.1 Maintain health and safety of self and others and the welfare of the Equine whilst working.

ELEMENT 3 : Legislation and Code of Practice

Legislative Requirements and Code of Practice.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- 3.1 Follow the requirements of the Highway Code, and the Road Traffic Acts as they relate to Equine drawn vehicles; the Code of Practice for Equine Drawn Vehicles on the Public Highway and the BDS Safe Driving Code.



ELEMENT 4 : Safe Driving Code

Know and understand how to assist the Driver of a Equine Drawn Vehicle.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- 4.1 Explain why it is important to be able to assist the driver of an Equine Drawn Vehicle.
- 4.2 Explain why the following items are put on the vehicle before putting to:
 - (i). Cushions.
 - (ii). Harness Spares.
 - (iii). Driving whip.
 - (iv). Driving apron.
 - (v). Gloves and hat.
 - (vi). Coats and wet weather gear as appropriate.
- 4.3 Explain how to assist the driver correctly in the following situations:
 - (i). Whilst driving on the public highway.
 - (ii). Whilst driving on off-road tracks.
 - (iii). Whilst driving in a controlled area.
- 4.4 Explain why it is important to maintain control of the Equine whilst the driver carries out harness, Equine and vehicle checks and mounts vehicle.
- 4.5 Describe standing up procedures before moving off, and explain why it is important to stand the Equine up correctly before moving off.
- 4.6 Give a range of hazards which might prevent a safe exit from the putting to area, and describe the appropriate actions to be taken.
- 4.7 Describe the hazards which might occur when you mount the vehicle:
 - (i). Whilst stationary.
 - (ii). At the walk.
 - (iii). At the trot.And explain how to minimise risk.
- 4.8 Explain the importance of communicating effectively with the driver, and carrying out instructions correctly.
- 4.9 Explain why it is important to be alert to traffic approaching from behind, and why it is important to advise the driver promptly.
- 4.10 Describe possible adverse reactions of the driving Equine to each of the following, and give actions to be taken in each case:
 - (i). Approaching and passing a stationary hazard.
 - (ii). Encountering other Equines.
 - (iii). Encountering other animals.
 - (iv). Being passed by another vehicle.
 - (v). Driving between obstacles.
 - (vi). Approaching and driving through a narrow space.



- (vii). Encountering things which the Equine is known to dislike.
- (viii). Encountering a road traffic accident.
- 4.11 Explain why it is important to be able to carry out checks and adjustments to the harness and vehicle whilst on a drive.
- 4.12 Explain why it is important to be able to care for a Equine on a drive.
- 4.13 Explain why it is important to maintain control of the Equine whilst the driver mounts and dismounts the vehicle.
- 4.14 Explain the correct methods of handling and controlling the harness Equine and the dangers of using incorrect methods of control.
- 4.15 Describe safe and effective methods of assisting from the ground, according to instructions, in each of the following situations:
 - (i). Passing parked motor vehicle.
 - (ii). Being driven between obstacles.
 - (iii). Approaching a junction.
 - (iv). Driving up and down hill.
 - (v). Driving in company with other Equines.
- 4.16 Explain how to communicate effectively with other users of the driving zone to promote safety of self, driver, others and Equine.

ELEMENT 5 : Health and Safety

Health and Safety.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- 5.1 Explain how to maintain health and safety of self and others and welfare of the Equine whilst driving.

ELEMENT 6 : Highway Code

Highway Code, Road Traffic Act and Code of Practice.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- 6.1 Outline the requirements of the Highway Code, and the Road Traffic Acts as they relate to Horse drawn vehicles, and the Code of Practice for Horse Drawn Vehicles on the Public Highway.



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British Driving Society,
Hoste House, Whiting Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 1NR

email@britishdrivingsociety.co.uk • tel: 01284 630591

www.britishdrivingsociety.co.uk