



2022

Unit of Competence for Carriage Driving
The Road Driving Pairs Syllabus

Unit of Competence for Carriage Driving:

The Road Driving Pairs Assessment Syllabus

Notes to Candidates, Assessors and Training Establishments

Candidates who wish to progress through the BDS Levels of Competence must precede the Road Driving test with the BDS Preliminary Competence. The Road Driving Test is a prerequisite to BDS Intermediate Competence.

Candidates who have a proven driving record, can be accredited for Unit 2, Practical Driving, in the Preliminary Competence. However, these candidates will need to have their driving ability assessed in an enclosed area prior to proceeding onto the roads in Element 2 of the Test - Drive on the Public Highway. See page 4 for details.

This test can be used as a stand alone unit and can be taken in isolation from any other BDS test. Candidates using this Test as a stand alone unit must also complete the additional requirements found at the end of this syllabus. See page 4. For candidates using this test as a stand alone unit or for candidates with accreditation from Unit 2 of the Preliminary Competence.

A certificate of human first aid is highly recommended.



Department for Transport

The British Driving Society are the official advisory body for Carriage Driving to the Department for Transport

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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 45 minutes. Candidates needing the 'Additional Requirements' will need approximately 10 minutes more.

Assessor Guidance

The successful candidate will be capable of harnessing up safely and efficiently, will drive a pair safely, using the English coaching style of driving on the public highway. They will be capable of adjusting pace to suit road conditions, 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 show effective use of an assistant/groom and be in control of the turnout at all times.

Candidates

Candidates who wish to proceed to Intermediate level **MUST** have completed the Preliminary Competence prior to taking the Road Driving Test. Candidates **MUST** be members of the BDS. Candidates with proven driving experience who have had Unit 2 of the Preliminary Competence accredited, must inform the test centre/ location organiser prior to the Road Driving Test taking place so that additional arrangements can be made. Candidates can sit this test as an isolated test. They must also inform the test organiser so that additional arrangements can be made.

Age of Candidates

16 years and above

Equines

Equines 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 and the assessor for a drive on the roads which will last for approximately 45 minutes. Road driving pace is expected. The Equines 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

The 4 wheel vehicle must be well maintained and suitable for the type and size of the animals and the passengers.

Venue

This must have a safe and secure area for Elements 1 and 3. There must also be reasonably quiet access to suitable public roads but with some real 'hazards' as required for the performance criteria. (Some of the hazards - roundabouts, crossings, traffic lights, etc - may not be available in such an environment. Questioning or simulation will then be sufficient). A substantial part of Element 2 of the test must be completed using the public highway - not a simulation using tracks or estate roads.

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

ELEMENT 1 : Prepare for Road use

Requirements:

Animal:

Equine, 5 years or over with a minimum of one years driving experience. It must be quiet in traffic and suitable for the requirements of the assessment.

Harness:

A sound set of pairs harness suitable for the Equine and carriage used.

Vehicle:

A 4 wheeled vehicle.

Location:

Controlled, secure environment suitable for putting to eg. Stable yard.

Time:

Approximately 25 minutes.



Performance Criteria:

- A. Control of Equines is maintained at all times.
- B. Harness is selected and fitted to the Equines.
- C. Equines are put to using laid down procedure.
- D. Health and safety of Equines, self and others is maintained at all times.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- 1. Safety precautions to be taken when handling equines.
- 2. Importance of safety checks.
- 3. Dangers of inappropriate procedures when adjusting harness.
- 4. Suitability of shoeing for road use.
- 5. All sections of the Road Traffic Act appertaining to Horse Drawn vehicles (Note these are different in different parts of the country).
- 6. Safety clothing and their use.
- 7. Carrying of adequate spares and their potential use.
- 8. Importance of correctly fitting vehicle to Equines ie. length and height of pole.
- 9. Explain how to adjust the following items correctly - pole straps or pole chains, coupling reins and traces.
- 10. Importance of correct length of traces, pole straps and correctly fitting breeching - demonstrate how you know all of these are correct.
- 11. Explain the dangers of failing to ensure the pole pin, crab head and swingletrees are fixed correctly before putting to.
- 12. Give reasons for using swingletrees with breast collar harness.
- 13. Describe the dangers of incorrect putting to a Pair of Equines including:
 - i. Failing to allocate and define correct roles to each person.
 - ii. Failing to cross the coupling reins when putting to.
 - iii. Removing a bridle whilst either Equine is still attached to the vehicle.
- 14. Discuss the three places Horse Drawn vehicles aren't allowed.



ELEMENT 2 : Drive on the Public Highway

Drive on the public highway using the English Coaching style of driving.

Requirements:

Conditions:

Genuine traffic on the public highway, varying road surfaces, gradients.

Obstacles and Hazards:

As encountered naturally on the drive out. The drive must include a substantial part of genuine public highway with road junctions, turns to the left and right, moving and stationary/parked vehicles.

Simulation or questioning can be used to cover any of the following that are not covered naturally in the drive - pedestrians, cyclists, traffic lights, road signs, pedestrian crossings, roundabouts, different weather conditions, noise levels, environmental hazards.

Time:

Approximately 45 minutes.

Performance Criteria:

- A. The vehicle is mounted using safe procedure.
- B. The whip is taken up.
- C. Equines and vehicle are driven smoothly and appropriately to road conditions.
- D. A correct position is maintained in the road to ensure a safe and effective performance.
- E. Naturally occurring obstacles and road hazards are negotiated safely.
- F. Road safety procedures are adhered to at all times.
- G. Full and correct use of your groom/ assistant is made at all times.
- H. Health and safety of Equines, self and others is maintained at all times.
- I. The BDS guidelines and safety rules are adhered to at all times.

Knowledge and Understanding:

1. Equines reaction when working alone and in company.
2. Effects of weather on road conditions.
3. Application of the Highway Code and Road Traffic Act.
4. Use of the whip and voice.
5. Types of hand signals.



6. Procedure in the event of a road traffic accident.
7. The importance of adopting the English coaching style of driving, especially when driving on the highway.
8. Explain how to identify and assess roads suitable for driving a pair of equines for exercise.
9. Explain/show how to use the following correctly:
 - i. Handbrake
 - ii. Footbrake
 - iii. Pole straps/chains
 - iv. Breeching
10. Explain how to cope with potential risks presented to driving Equines and Horse Drawn vehicles by:
 - i. Uneven surfaces
 - ii. Potholes and ruts
 - iii. Varying gradients
 - iv. Poor visibility.
11. Describe the role of the groom in assisting the driver of a Horse Drawn vehicle when driving on the Public Highway.
12. Compare the differences between carrying out the following activities with a single or with a pair Horse Drawn turnout:
 - i. Starting from the halt.
 - ii. Slowing down and halting on the flat.
 - iii. Driving downhill
 - iv. Turning corners
13. Explain how to drive a pair of equines and use pair harness correctly and effectively to:
 - i. Slow down a Horse Drawn vehicle on the flat.
 - ii. Drive downhill safely.
 - iii. Halt a Horse Drawn vehicle.
 - iv. Turn a corner correctly.
14. Explain why it is important to ensure both Equines work evenly together whilst moving off, driving and stopping.
15. Explain when and why it may be necessary to bring one or both Equines out of draught whilst driving.
16. Describe how a pair of Equines should stand correctly at the halt and explain the role of the Groom in assisting the driver to maintain the halt.
17. Describe the potential dangers of each of the following when driving a pair of Equines:
 - i. Trotting downhill
 - ii. Allowing one Equine to come out of draught when trotting uphill.
 - iii. Failing to ensure both Equines work evenly.
 - iv. Jack-knifing the vehicle.



- v. Failing to prevent the Equines rubbing their bridles against anything
 - vi. Incorrectly adjusted traces.
 - vii. Incorrectly adjusted pole straps.
18. Discuss the difference between a driving bit used on a single turnout to one that is used on a pair and why.

ELEMENT 3 : Attend to Equines and vehicle after driving

Requirements:

As for Element 1

Time:

Approximately 25 minutes

Performance Criteria:

- A. Vehicle is parked and secured at a suitable location.
- B. Equines are taken out of the vehicle using safe practice.
- C. Equines are unharnessed using laid down procedure.
- D. Harness is returned to the appropriate place.
- E. Check Equines's whole body for rubs, sores etc.
- F. Pick out feet and check shoes and explain why you are doing this.
- G. Provide feed, water and opportunities for rest and recreation for the pair of harness equines.
- H. Control of equines is maintained throughout.
- I. Health and safety of Equines, self and others is maintained at all times.

Knowledge and Understanding:

- 1. Safe procedure when unharnessing.
- 2. Recommended cooling down procedure.
- 3. Method of securing the vehicle after use.
- 4. Discuss the importance of checking the harness and making sure it is clean.
- 5. Discuss the importance of the Equines being groomed before and after use.
- 6. Describe the dangers of allowing an equine to drink large quantities of cold water after strenuous work.
- 7. When and how to use assistance.
- 8. How to make safety checks to the vehicle (Ref Department of Trade Code of Practice)



9. Describe common signs of possible harness sores, and explain what actions to take to prevent and treat harness sores.
10. Explain the importance of recreation for the driven equines following use.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS :

For candidates who are using this assessment as a stand alone unit

Requirements:

As for Element 1

Location:

Secure driving area eg: field, driving arena.

Time:

Approximately 10 minutes.

Following completion of Element 1, these candidates (only) will be required to drive in an enclosed area to demonstrate their driving competence and rein handling.

Should the Assessor feel that the candidate is not up to the required standard in competence, style or safety they will not be allowed to proceed to Element 2 - Drive on the Public Highway of the Road Driving Test.

Candidates with accreditation who are not seen as demonstrating the required level of competence will not be allowed to compete this test. They must complete the Preliminary Competence Unit 2 successfully before they can retake all of the Road Driving Test.



Develop your driving skills with the comprehensive BDS training programme



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

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

www.britishdrivingsociety.co.uk