

**Equestrian
Qualifications GB
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The awarding body for equestrian activity



EQL Level 1 Award in Coaching Equestrian Riding

Learning Resources

**Developed in Partnership with the
National Source Group for Equestrian,
The Coaching Development Action Team**



EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS COACHING



SECTION ONE

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INTRODUCTION

What is coaching?

In the 1600's the verb "to coach" meant "To transport a valuable cargo from one place to another". 400 years later we have the same interpretation; we are helping a valuable equestrian athlete to improve their performance from their current level to their desired level.

Coaches set exercises, practices and tasks to teach skills correctly, encourage practice of proper techniques, resulting in quicker skill learning and improved performance.

Coaches help make sport a safe, enjoyable and rewarding experience for participants by taking a participant-centred philosophy. This means that everything a coach does, he/she does with his/her participants in mind. Session plans are designed to maximise learning and enjoyment. Exercises are created to help participants learn. Feedback is given to help them improve. Questions are asked in order to help participants to develop their own problem-solving skills. Everything a coach does should be with the aim to help their participants become independent, self-teaching sports people.

The opposite coaching philosophy to this is a coach-centred one. This is where everything is done to suit the coach, no matter what the effect upon participants. A coach-centred coach doesn't involve their participants in decision making or ask their opinion. A coach-centred coach believes that they are the expert and that participants have nothing to contribute to their own learning process. The UKCC Endorsed Coaching qualifications follow a participant-centred approach.

How to use these Learning Resources

These learning resources have been organised to help you learn about the Coaching Process of Planning, Doing and Reviewing. These resources have been designed to help you, not only learn the theory behind coaching, but also use them to guide you through your practical coaching practice.

The Coaching Process involves a coach:

Planning, Doing and Reviewing their activities on a continual basis

- Planning:** Planning and Organising
 Identifying participant's needs
 Planning activities and exercises to meet needs and progress development
 Checking facilities and equipment are safe to use
- Doing:** Guiding, Challenging and Directing
 Introducing session goals
 Conducting a warm up to prepare horses and participants mentally and physically and reduce the risk of injury
 Provide demonstrations to show key points or correct action
 Allow opportunities to practice skills
 Observe and analyse practice to point out and correct ineffective/incorrect practice
 Conduct a cool-down to prepare horse and participants for the end of the coaching session and to minimise the risk of injury.
- Reviewing:** Monitoring and Evaluating
 Evaluating the session against targets and goals
 Identify areas for improvement
 Design adaptations to plans based on participant performance, needs and goals

Coaching is about developing and improving people and their behaviour in a sporting context. Coaches develop people in various ways:

Technically – by developing good technique and learning new skills

Physically – by improving physical condition

Socially – by learning to co-operate with others

Psychologically – by learning to control emotions and develop self-confidence

Personally – by learning life skills, developing values and attitudes

The Equestrian Coaching 'Tools'

One thing that makes equestrian coaching more exciting and challenging than many other sports is that the 'tools' that we use are not inanimate objects. Our horses and ponies have minds of their own and they don't always think in the same way as their riders, drivers or handlers! Horses and ponies react to the actions of the rider, driver, handler and vaulter, plus the actions of any other equines around them and the environment. It is important to keep this always in mind when you are thinking about, and practising, your coaching skills.

The Role of a Level 1 Coach is:

- To assist more qualified coaches, delivering aspects of coaching sessions under direct supervision.
- Prepare for activities taking into account participants' needs and motives
- Establish a safe working environment
- Establish working relationships
- Prepare participants for activities
- Deliver prepared activities
- Support participants' behaviour
- Conclude activities
- Review activities
- Contribute to evaluation of participants
- Continuously develop personal practice

Underpinning knowledge and understanding that you will need to develop for Level 1 Coaching:

- Safe and ethical coaching practice
- Types of communication and methods of communication
- The techniques and skills of your chosen equestrian activity
- The rules of your chosen equestrian activity
- Methods to develop participants' performance and enjoyment
- Adapting coaching practice to meet participants' needs, abilities and stage of development
- Methods to evaluate coaching activities and reflect on personal coaching practice

Successful Coaches develop their skills in several areas:

Technical Skills

Knowledge base of the sport
How to perform a particular action
Knowledge of how to perform manoeuvres and how to adapt exercises to individual's needs
Knowing what skills will provide the appropriate level of challenge for your participants to develop their performance
Being able to analyse your participants for correct technical performance so that you can correct and ensure practice of correct techniques.

In Appendix 1, at the back of these Learning Resources, is a recommended reading list for you to develop your technical skills.

Tactical Skills

Rules of your particular equestrian activity
Performing techniques within specific situations
Analytical and decision-making skills which will help participants when competing and think creatively when unusual things happen to them during their riding
These will reflect your coaching philosophy (e.g. winning above all else or team v individual)

Managerial Skills

To maintain an organised, systematic approach to coaching, you will need to develop effective planning, time management and administration skills
Leadership and Organisation.
Coaches need to be well-organised as they become role models for their participants.
Participants will be happier if their coaching sessions are well-structured and they understand fully what is expected of them and how the session fits into and complements the whole coaching programme.
Well-organised sessions are likely to be safer sessions.
Before participants come to you, their opinion of you will be influenced by how organised you appear on first contact. Therefore it is vital to have forms to collect relevant information etc.

Interpersonal Skills

Coaching involves dealing with people far more than it involves spreading knowledge and devising state of the art practices. As an assistant coach, you could be expected to communicate with participants, parents, officials, administrators, sponsors, even the media!
A good coach demonstrates leadership
Good coaches are excellent communicators
Good communication skills involve listening, not just talking, and having an open mind to be receptive to new ideas which can come from any direction; participant, parent, colleague etc.
You will need good interpersonal skills to motivate, teach, console and persuade participants.

As a coach, your aim should be to help your participants find their own motivation, rather than try to create motivation for them. A coach's skill is in creating an environment that encourages this. Knowing what motivates people is about finding out why people are participating in riding. Participants will be more likely to continue with the coaching if it fulfils their needs. Generally, people are motivated by:

- o Having fun
- o Getting together with people
- o Competing and improving themselves
- o Challenging themselves
- o Exercising and feeling healthier

- o Being recognised by others for achievement

Teaching Skills

Being able to help participants understand new information and learn new skills.

Need to be able to draw upon a selection of different teaching methods to suit the type of learner you are coaching and the activities you are teaching.

Knowing how people learn, refine and maintain skills is also an important part of teaching skills.

These 5 fundamental coaching skills above will blend together to develop your unique style of coaching, depending upon the importance you apply to developing each skill.

THE 'HOW' OF COACHING

There are two parts to becoming a successful equestrian coach:

- What to coach
- How to coach

What you will learn to coach will be the technical requirements of your particular equestrian activity. You will develop these alongside your equestrian knowledge and horse and pony care knowledge. In this pack is a list of the technical criteria you will be expected to be knowledgeable about for the UKCC Endorsed Equestrian Coach. Resources to help you develop your technical knowledge will be provided by your Member Body. A recommended reading list is included at the end of these Learning Resources.

How you coach concerns the way that you coach the technical requirements. This involves the following skills:

- Relationship building
- Observation/Listening
- Analysis
- Communication
- Questioning
- Demonstration
- Feedback
- Boosting motivation

Why do you want to become a UKCC Coach?

Before we begin to look at how you can influence participants' motivation, let's take a look at your reasons for wanting to become a UKCC Endorsed Equestrian Coach.

Coaching as a philosophy is to help another improve their performance, both in the way they behave and also to improve their thought processes and planning abilities so that they are able to continue the improvement in performance between coaching sessions.

Coaching is a form of leadership where the coach influences and guides others and helps them to assume responsibility for their own learning and development.

Coaches need to be open-minded and take responsibility for the consequences of their actions and decisions (integrity).

Exercise 1

Write down the names of 3 sports coaches whom you admire (can be from outside of equestrianism)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is it that you admire about them?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The coaches you identified above may have similar styles or ways of coaching, or they may be completely different to each other. There are many different ways of being an effective coach – you may be extroverted and bring a lot of energy to your coaching or you may be quieter but more firm in your approach. The key is to find your own style which suits you. No matter how you deliver your coaching, it's your enthusiasm which will be infectious and motivating for your participants.

As a coach, you do not have to be an expert rider/driver/vaulter yourself, in order to be effective in improving someone else's performance. In fact, some people believe that those who are most technically able in a sport don't always make the best coaches because they don't even think of asking the creative naïve questions a beginner can ask.

England Cricket Coach, Duncan Fletcher said "I still believe that there are people out there who think, 'how can he help when he hasn't played Test Cricket?' But it could well be that when you haven't done it, you learn and understand the game more than those who took it for granted and were natural players."¹

However, having a level of knowledge of your equestrian activity's techniques and rules will help you to gain rapport and respect from your participants and enable you to establish your credibility as their coach. Also having knowledge of the technical aspects of riding will enable you as a coach to ask the most effective questions in order to raise your participant's awareness in the best way.

According to Bobby Robson, Jose Mourinho (formally Manager of Chelsea Football Club) was a school teacher who had never established himself as a professional footballer. However, Sir Bobby said, "The moment you can prove you understand the sport, you know the tactical equations, you know how to encourage, you will win your participants over".²

^{1&2} (Extracts taken from The Sunday Times "Doing the Business Series – Management Masterclass from the World of Sport" 2005).

Finally, it's important to stress that good coaches coach people first, sport second, so as well as developing your technical knowledge, you need to develop your people skills – the skills of communication, psychology, motivation, listening, understanding others etc.

Knowing why you want to coach will help you to appreciate all the different roles and responsibilities a coach needs to address. It will also help you in your self-reflection as it's

important to examine your own attitudes, beliefs and motives and how they affect your coaching practice.

People come to coaching from many different backgrounds. They may be parents who want to get involved with their children's sport, former participants in their sport, teachers or people who want to work closer with horses or fund their own competing.

What's your drive to become a coach? Do you want to help others develop new skills or are you ambitious for success? It's important to remember that the people you coach may not necessarily share your motives. Just because one of your participants is good enough to compete, he or she may not necessarily want to.

It's very important to be aware of your own motives for coaching because the best coaches act in the interests of their participants, not for their own interests.

Exercise 2

Write down your reasons for wanting to become an equestrian coach:

I want to become an equestrian coach because

Getting the Most from your Learning Experience

You are studying for the UKCC Level 1 Equestrian Coaching Qualification. You should have a mentor coach assigned to assist you in your learning and development as a coach. Your mentor should be helping you in the following ways:

- Allowing you to observe their coaching sessions
- Encouraging you to assist in the partial delivery of their coaching sessions
- Taking you through their coaching session planners to help you to learn how to design your own coaching session plans
- Talking to you about their own observations of participants' performance
- Encouraging you to identify areas of participant performance that you would give feedback on
- Identifying with you the areas in which you need to develop your coaching skills
- Helping you to practice your communication skills of observing, listening, questioning, instructing and giving feedback

If you have not been assigned a mentor coach by your employer or are operating independently, then please contact your Member Body who will try to put you in touch with a more experienced coach in your local area.

Running Coaching Sessions

Generally, coaching sessions should be structured along the following lines:

- Introduction, explanation of session goal and warm-up
- Main area of the coaching session, containing:
 - o Progressive practice of skills or techniques
 - o Some form of full activity
 - o Cool-down, recap on session, evaluation of progress toward session goal and a look ahead to the next session.

As an assistant coach you are likely to be asked to take a section of a coaching session, and then to assist or observe the remainder of the session. Perhaps you will begin your coaching experience by taking participants through the warm-up phase. Your involvement will depend upon your level of experience in your equestrian activity, your confidence and your mentor coach's plans for the participants involved.

Establishing working relationships

This begins by getting to know your participants as individuals and can begin before the coaching session begins, when you find out about their backgrounds, why they are attending and what they hope to get from their coaching sessions. This is also known as rapport building. It's something we do with anyone that we have just met – we look for things in common to give us something to talk about and begin to build a relationship which is based upon mutual understanding.

At the start of the coaching session it is important to introduce yourself and outline what you will be doing during the session and why. Even if you are only taking a short element of the session, for example warming up a group in preparation for your mentor coach to take the main body of the session, it's important to keep your participants informed of what your plans are.

Make sure you stand where everyone can see and hear you. Project your voice to the person farthest away from you. If necessary, ask your participants to gather around you. Make sure you establish safe practices by instructing your participants to observe safe distances between their horses!

Ask your participants' names and make sure that you use their names during the time you spend coaching and communicating with them.

Explain how you would like them to interact with you, for example informing them how to get your attention or when to ask questions during a demonstration.

Make sure that you listen to questions and answer them as fully as you are able, or refer them to your mentor coach.

Even if you are only taking a short element of the coaching session, never underestimate the impact your attitude will have on the participants. So make sure you behave in a way that will motivate your participants.

Prepare Participants for Activities

Your position as a coach naturally gives you an air of authority and influence. Participants will look to you as a role model. You should always aim to use your influence positively and ensure that your coaching is safe, responsible and in line with your equestrian activity's standards of good practice.

Prepare your participants before getting into the detail of the session by clearly setting out what will be covered in the session. Explain the relevance of warm up exercises and the different exercises that will be covered during the session to the session outcomes.

For example: If you were teaching a group of children some Pony Club games, which involved mounting and dismounting, one of the warm up exercises may involve stretching and running alongside ponies in order to warm up leg muscles.

If your participants understand why they are being asked to perform certain activities they will be much more willing to participate fully and therefore gain the maximum from the activity.

Deliver prepared activities

A key role of a coach is to facilitate your participants' learning. Here are some interesting facts about how people learn so that you can start to build this knowledge into your delivery during coaching sessions:

How People Learn

People learn best when:

- they are given time to practice
- it's made relevant to them
- they are involved in their own learning
- they are in a non-threatening and supportive climate
- they are having fun
- they can go at their own pace and in their own way
- their skills, knowledge and experience are respected
- they are encouraged to reflect upon their own behaviour
- they have success which improves their self-belief

People remember more of what they've learned at the beginning and end of a session than they do in the middle of the session. So use this knowledge to help you improve learning by breaking the coaching session up into smaller sections so that you have more opportunities to have starts and ends of sessions

Summarise frequently what your participants have been learning so that they have more opportunities to remember it

Concluding Activities

It is a good discipline to end coaching sessions with a summary of the session, rather than let the session end purely because the time has run out!

In the same way that you would bring your participants around you in order to begin the coaching session, a good way to finish the session is to bring everyone around you again, making sure that they can see and hear you and recap briefly what you've covered during the session and giving participants a final opportunity to ask any questions to help their learning process.

It is also encouraging to finish the session giving each individual positive feedback about their efforts and achievements during the session so that you leave them feeling motivated about what they have done during the session and looking forward to your next session with you.

ESTABLISHING A SAFE COACHING ENVIRONMENT

Setting up equipment safely and effectively

The equipment you need to carry out your coaching session should be specified in the coaching plan.

You must ensure that you know how to assemble the equipment correctly and that you follow any health and safety guidelines regarding lifting etc.

The following checklist should help you when setting up equipment:

Know which tack is appropriate for the coaching session to be given:

Examples: Lead Rein Lessons, Lunge Rein Lessons, Flat work

Consider: Boots, Saddles, Martingales, etc
(refer to discipline specific requirements)

Become familiar with what equipment is needed for the type of session:

Correct and safe storage of equipment

How to carry equipment (correct lifting techniques)

Ground and weather conditions and their effect on the session and use of equipment

How to set up equipment regarding distances, safety, and equestrian activity rules etc

Before the coaching session commences, it is important to carry out safety checks to ensure that the coaching environment meets relevant Health and Safety standards, reporting any problems to the appropriate person. This is a minimum list of things that need to be including in your safety checks.

Safety standard hard hats, body protectors, etc.

Participants' footwear

Checking tack prior to mounting:

Correctly fitted

Any maintenance needed (e.g. stitching, worn leather etc)

Check girth before and after mounting

Coaching Environment:

Enclosures safe without protrusions or gates that won't close etc.

No removable obstacles for horse or participant to fall over

First Aid Awareness

As an Assistant Coach you should never be left in a work situation where you should have to deal with an emergency on your own. However, it is useful to have a basic awareness of the procedures that are recommended in the event of an emergency. This information has been taken from the "First Aid Manual and Emergency First Aid Booklet" produced by Dorling Kindersley and authorised by the UK's leading First Aid providers, St John Ambulance, St Andrew's Ambulance Association and the British Red Cross.

Action in an emergency:

1. Assess the Situation. Are there any risks to you or the casualty?

Put your safety first. Remove the danger from the casualty. If you have a loose horse/pony get someone to catch it or keep it away from the casualty. If this is not possible, remove the casualty from danger. Be very cautious about moving a casualty unnecessarily. They may have a spinal injury which could be made worse by moving them. If it is unsafe, call for emergency help and wait for it to arrive.

2. Check casualty. Is the casualty visibly conscious?
3. Check response. Does the casualty respond to your voice or touch?
4. If necessary, summon help from the emergency services (this will most likely be you if you are not a trained first aider at work).

Make sure that you know where the phone is and how to get an outside line (for example some phones you must dial a number in order to make an outside call)

What to tell the emergency services:

- Your name and location
- A brief description of what happened
- The casualty's current condition (i.e. conscious/unconscious, breathing, bleeding etc). The first aider will tell you the important information to pass onto the emergency services.

The next set of actions should be carried out by a qualified first aider at work

1. Open casualty's airway and if necessary clear the airway and check for breathing. If breathing, place casualty in the recovery position.
2. If the casualty is not breathing then begin the resuscitation sequence
3. Assess for circulation
4. Commence CPR and continue until emergency help takes over or the casualty moves or takes a breath

Exercise 3

Answer the following questions and check them through with your mentor coach:

1. What do you consider to be the most important equipment and clothing for the safety of a participant in your equestrian activity?
2. When presented with a participant to coach, what checks might you want to make with the horse's/pony's tack for safety?
3. You have been asked to take a coaching course at a venue you have not used before. What checks would you make on the arena and venue before starting the course?
4. What do you look for when checking equipment for safety?
5. What might you need to be more aware of when coaching outdoors?
6. What might you need to be more aware of when coaching indoors?
7. What precautions can you take to minimise injuries to participants and horses/ponies?
8. What actions would you follow if a participant falls off or is injured during a coaching session?
9. What would you want to know about a participant before commencing any coaching with them?
10. What information would you want to know about a horse/pony prior to starting any coaching?

How to identify potential risks and emergency procedures

In order to run safe and enjoyable coaching sessions, it is essential to be aware of the categories of risk that exist in the exercises decided upon by the supervisory coach. You should familiarise yourself with your equestrian activity's risk assessment forms and be comfortable with carrying out a basic risk assessment using the appropriate checklist and report any concerns that you may have to a more experienced coach.

Ask your mentor coach to take you through their risk assessment procedure.

An Example Risk Assessment Form is included at Appendix 2.

Safe and Ethical Coaching Practice

Part of your role when coaching is to make sure your participants are aware of safe practice for your equestrian activity, for example, the correct place to stand when preparing to mount the vaulting horse. These should be listed in your recommended reading lists. (Appendix 1).

As well as teaching new skills, one of your roles is to ensure that your participants adhere to safe guidelines, for example always passing left-to-left in an arena or giving priority on the track to a horse going at a faster gait.

One of the key responsibilities of a Coach is to improve performance through a progressive programme of safe, challenging guided practice and/or competition and to create an environment which encourages and motivates participants. A safe environment is one which will encourage participation and motivation.

Examples of Good Practice

Being aware of safety standards for your equestrian activity
Demonstrating techniques correctly and safely

Examples of Poor Practice

Not conforming to safety standards for your equestrian activity
Failing to insist on participants performing exercises in a safe and correct manner

In any profession, there are accepted and established codes of behaviour and practice to safeguard everyone's well-being. Sports Coach UK has produced a "Code of Conduct for Sports Coaches", of which a summary for you to read follows. The BEF "Coaches Code of Conduct" is included in this pack for you to read and study carefully.

OVERVIEW OF SPORTS COACH UK'S "CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SPORTS COACHES"

- Rights:** Coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport.
- Relationships:** Coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect.
- Responsibilities:** Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times.
- Professional Standards:** To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.

As part of a coaching role, coaches should contribute to imparting how to live and what to value in life, particularly when coaching children. Your coaching ethics serve as a moral guide for you; they are not simply a list of rules. Ethical codes of conduct should adhere to the spirit of the game. They should cover desired behaviour, not only what shouldn't be done. Codes of conduct can't tell everyone how to behave in every circumstance, but should help people to answer the question "what should I do?"

Sport can be seen as a shaper, as well as a mirror, of social values. It is a catalyst for moral growth, personal development and social justice. Learning within sport can inform and teach behavioural norms and values. However, there are also counter-examples that sport teaches, for example allowing violence, aggression, sexism, racism, homophobia, bullying, drug usage etc. This is often when the coach's attitude is that the ends are seen to be justifying the means, particularly where there are large prizes at stake and the emphasis has been placed on the prize over the process. This can blind us to the ethical questions of right and wrong.

One of the first steps to becoming an ethical coach is self-awareness. We all have prejudices, exceptional coaches admit that they have prejudices and are honest about them. In order to improve their skills of inclusion, they work at identifying specific actions that they do that reflect those prejudices and seek support from others who are able to help them overcome them. Prejudices may include things such as always asking the same person in the group to carry out any demonstrations.

Exercise 4

Here are some questions that you can ask yourself to find out more about your approach to coaching:

- Do I give participants a real range of choices that are agreeable to them?
- Are my comments and actions considerate of other's beliefs and experiences?
- Do the participants I work with fear me? Why?
- Do they respect me? Why?
- How well do I know them as people?
- What's my first reaction when a participant makes a mistake?
- Do I include participants in the decision-making process? Should I?
- Do I take time to learn other's perspectives?
- Does my physical presence confer dominance?
- How much power do I have over the participants I work with?

As we have already mentioned, in your position as coach, you will have considerable influence over other's behaviour. A good place to start with this is to have a "Participant Charter" that, where possible, everyone signs which sets out the guidelines for ethical participation. Where participants are unable to complete such a form, then a "Participant Charter" could be agreed verbally. The following Charter is a suggestion that you can adapt for use at your training establishment.

Participant Charter

Welcome to (name of training establishment), our aim is to help all participants to develop their potential through structured and progressive coaching. To ensure everyone involved enjoys their experience and understands the expectations for your conduct and safety, there are some ground rules which we all must follow. Please can you read and show your acceptance of the conduct below by signing at the bottom of this sheet:

1. I will respect myself and those around me through appropriate actions, language and behaviour.
2. I will respect and give due consideration to the horses/ponies.
3. In group sessions I will observe safe distances and follow the rules for passing other horses.
4. I will come to sessions appropriately and safely equipped.
5. I will arrive on time to ensure the training sessions can start on time.
6. I will actively contribute to the development of my own skills and commit to the goals agreed with my coach.
7. I will observe the health and safety regulations of the establishment.

I agree to work to these rules for the duration of my stay and acknowledge that breaking these rules may result in my being asked to withdraw from participating here.

Signed: _____

Name (Printed): _____

Date: _____

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

In order to deliver activities within a coaching session, you need an appreciation of the following underpinning knowledge and understanding:

Type of Communication and Methods of Communication

Communication between people is a two-way process. Unfortunately, when we communicate with other people, there are many other influences around us which can sometimes lead to miscommunication. These influences may include:

- Participant not being able to hear clearly
- Participant being pre-occupied with his/her thoughts and therefore not listening
- Participant misinterpreting what the coach has said because of the coach's use of technical terms
- Coach's voice quality is not comfortable and interesting to listen to.

In order to minimise the possibility of misunderstanding (which could lead to mistakes and accidents occurring), it is your responsibility to ensure that your participants, firstly can hear you and, secondly, understand what you are saying and thirdly are interested in what you are saying

As a coach, it's important that you develop effective ways of communicating to your participants. This will involve using your voice clearly, planning what you are going to say beforehand, keeping the words you use simple, jargon free and to the point and being precise and specific when giving instructions and feedback to participants.

There are two parts to communicating; Listening and Speaking. Both are important, but often we are not taught how to listen. There is a saying within coaching that people were designed with two ears and one mouth and when coaching they should use each in that proportion – listen twice as much as you speak.

Developing Your Listening Skills

According to Eric Parsloe and Monika Wray in their book "Coaching and Mentoring", there are 3 Levels of Listening:

Level 1 – Peripheral or Internal Listening

This level of listening refers to when your attention is mainly focused on yourself, for example if you were at a party or a gathering and you overheard your name mentioned in another conversation. When you listen at Level 1 you gain a general awareness of the gist of a conversation, but your main focus is on how you are feeling about what you are hearing and how you will respond. Your thoughts during this level of listening will be things like "What does this mean to me?"

Level 2 – Apparent Listening

This level of listening refers to when you look outwardly as if you are listening, but your thoughts are elsewhere. This may be because you have been distracted by something that someone has said and your mind has wandered. Or more likely because you are not expecting to be interested and therefore have switched off, but are putting on a polite "face". Many people practice this type of listening – they pretend to listen but they are actually waiting for the speaker to pause for breath, so that they can interrupt by either finishing the speaker's sentence or to give their own opinion.

Level 3 – Active or Focused or Effective Listening

This level of listening is essential when coaching. Level 3 listening, you hear what's being said, check you have understood and absorbed the message and responded accordingly. When you are practicing Level 3 listening, you block out your own thoughts and completely focus upon the speaker.

Exercise 5

Which Listening Level to you most often practise? (circle the Level you most often adopt)

With your best friend or partner:

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3?

With family:

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3?

With your work colleagues or college friends:

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3?

When learning something new:

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3?

What has to happen for you to want to practice Level 3 listening?

The good news is that listening is a skill that can be learned and improved, so if you scored yourself in one of the lower levels, don't despair. In the Coaching Levels 2 and 3 we discuss in more detail how to improve your listening skills. For now, it's enough for you to be aware that listening is an important skill for a coach to develop.

It's also important that you ask questions of your participants and listen to their replies. This will enable you to:

- Check their understanding
- Confirm their motivation for the task involved
- Review your communication
- Assess your effectiveness as a coach

Types of Coaching Questions

There are a variety of useful types of questions that you will use in coaching. These questions are used by coaches all over the world. Different types of questions accomplish different results and help your clients to build answers in different ways. As you practise using these questioning techniques and become aware of the features of each, you will instinctively know which one to use to suit the situation.

Open Questions

Open questions draw information out of the participant. Open questions ask for a more descriptive answer than a "Yes" or "No". An example of an open question is "What do you need to check before mounting your horse/pony?" or "Can you describe to me how you would prepare to mount your vaulting horse?"

Open questions tend to start with words like "Who", "What", "How", "When", "Where", "Tell me..." and "Can you describe..."

Closed Questions

Closed questions require a simple one-word answer; usually "Yes" or "No". For example, "Have you checked your girth?" or "Did you enjoy that?" The effect of asking closed questions is that the conversation feels stilted. In order to maintain the conversation, you need to ask more questions.

Closed questions can be useful when you want to confirm details, agree actions and keep control of the conversation. For example "How many strides of canter did that horse/pony take between C and B?" invites your participants to give you their judgement but does not invite a discussion to take place.

Closed questions tend to start with words like "Do", "Have", "Has", "Is" and "Are". For example "Are you ready?" or "Do you feel that?"

Changing Closed Questions to Open Questions

Take a look at the following examples and then try changing the unanswered closed questions to open questions:

Closed Questions

Open Questions

Examples:

"Do you understand?"

"What do you do next?"

"Is that ok?"

"How do you feel about that?"

"Do you know when to use a half-halt?"

"When do you use a half-halt?"

Exercise 6

Change the following Closed Questions into Open Questions

Closed Questions

Open Questions

"Have you learned something?"

"What ?"

"Do you know the aid for canter?"

"How ?"

"Was that the right time to kick?"

"When ?"

Why Questions

Asking a participant the question "Why?" can often prompt a defensive response. Asking "Why did you do that?" can imply criticism or disapproval. It often prompts your participant to justify or excuse or blame. In order to get more information, it would be better to ask "What did you aim to achieve by your action?" rather than ask "Why did you do that?"

PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS

Stages of Learning

For whatever skill is being learnt, there are 3 identifiable stages of learning through which participants will pass on the way to becoming proficient at that skill. To ensure this learning process is effective, coaches should adapt their coaching according to the stage participants are in:

Stage 1 – Cognitive Stage

Beginners will devote a considerable amount of effort towards thinking about the movement and building a mental model of how the action is performed. Their movements are often awkward, jerky and unsuccessful and they will not be able to correct their own mistakes. Improvements can be rapid with the coach's feedback.

Tips for coaching participants through Stage 1

- Provide accurate and clear demonstrations so that you can give participants a mental picture of the movement in action. As an assistant coach you may possibly be asked to demonstrate new skills for participants. If this is the case in your coaching environment, it is in your interests to make sure that you are up-to-date with your knowledge of how to perform the most common skills to be demonstrated (for example mounting correctly).
- Where appropriate, break the skill down. Allow participants to learn it in logical parts before performing the whole (for example mounting correctly – how to approach the horse/pony, how to position yourself in relation to the horse/pony etc).
- Continually praise correct actions.
- Give intermittent feedback, but don't overload your participants.
- Emphasise the process they are learning, not the outcome (for example, mounting correctly. They may not be successful at mounting at the first attempt, but you want them to learn the process of mounting correctly rather than finding a way to get on in any way).
- Ask questions as part of the learning process to check their understanding.

Stage 2 – Associative Stage

During this stage, participants concentrate on practising the skill. Having mastered the skill, improvements in performance become more consistent, but gradual. They start to feel how the movement should feel and are able to cope with more complex feedback in order to correct mistakes. This stage can last weeks, or even months and some participants will never progress beyond this stage.

Tips for coaching participants through Stage 2

- Break complex skills into sub-routines
- Practise at real time speed (for example mounting for vaulting or pony club games, at Stage 1, participants would mount a stationary horse, at Stage 2, participants would mount a moving horse)
- Encourage participants to analyse their own performance, using questions to help them do this (for example, "how did that time compare to the time before?")

- Don't give your feedback too soon. Let them process their own internal feedback first.

Stage 3 – Autonomous Stage

At this stage skills are performed without any conscious control or thought dedicated to the mechanics of the movement. Participants can give their attention to the outcome of the movement and to the incorporation of strategies in the game. Participants at this level can detect and correct their own errors and will use their own analytical powers to do this as opposed to relying on a coach

Tips for coaching participants through Stage 3

- Don't assume that learning has stopped, so continue to use questions to help your participants uncover their new learning.
- Focus on finer points of detail.
- Practise to maintain techniques.
- Draw attention to strategies/tactics, (for example mounting, the focus is no longer on getting on board, but what is the next step after, for example, getting into the correct position for vaulting, or getting to the obstacle in the most effective way for pony club games).
- Help participants to set new goals.
- Encourage mental rehearsal, self-motivation and self-reflection.

Methods to develop participants' performance and enjoyment

As a Level 1 coach, your coaching work should be carried out under the supervision of a more experienced mentor coach. You will be involved with assisting the teaching of technical skills, rather than tactical skills which would be used in competition. There are 4 main steps to teaching new technical skills:

1. Introduce the skill
2. Demonstrate and explain the skill
3. Have the participants practice the skill
4. Correct errors (this is something you will observe a more experienced coach perform. However whilst observing the coaching session, anything you notice you can share with your mentor coach for their subsequent feedback to participants)

1. Introduce the skill

You must introduce any activity with enthusiasm through both your words and your actions. Your participants will pick up any lack of enthusiasm in your body language and words. Be brief and speak clearly, ensuring that you use language that your participants will understand (check your participants' understanding of technical terms; don't assume they know what you mean).

A good introduction involves; getting participants' attention, arranging them so that they can see and hear you and naming the technique and explaining why and how it is used.

Getting your participants' attention:

Observe more experienced coaches. Notice whether they have developed a regular routine for starting each coaching session. Decide what your routine will be. We suggest the following routine:

- Pick a space in the teaching arena where you will usually stand for giving instructions
- Give a signal to your participants that you want their attention (for example getting them to line up in front of you along the three-quarter line of the arena).
- Face your participants, make eye contact with each of them and use their names to gain and maintain individual attention.
- Ensure participants can see or hear you:
- Find your space in the teaching arena which, as much as possible, is free of visual distractions, out of direct sunlight and away from noise.
- Ask your participants to stand still, lining up their horses (if coaching a group) with safe distances so that they can concentrate on what you are saying.

Explaining the Technique:

Naming the technique is important so that you can refer to it quickly in the future. It is important to keep consistency with the terminology that you use, particularly for beginners or people with learning impairments. For example if you are explaining the technique of halting, make sure that you refer to it always as "Halt", rather than calling it different things, such as "Whoa" or "Stand".

Sometimes the reason for learning the technique is not obvious, especially to participants with little experience. However, the better they understand why they are learning the skill, and how it fits into the sport as a whole, the easier it is for them to develop a mental plan for learning it. Understanding why also increases motivation for learning.

2. Demonstrate and Explain the Skill

Participants learn by following a model. Therefore, whenever possible include a demonstration of a new skill. Either you can demonstrate the skill yourself, or pick one of your participants who can perform the technique proficiently to demonstrate the skill for you.

How to demonstrate a skill:

- Tell everyone how the demonstration will be given and what to look for (point out 1 or 2 important thing which they should look out for)
- Make sure you have everyone's attention during the demonstration
- Demonstrate the whole technique
- Demonstrate several times, showing the whole technique from different angles
- If the technique is complex, demonstrate the major parts separately
- If the technique is performed rapidly, demonstrate it at a slower speed so everyone can see the sequence of movements clearly. For example, if you are demonstrating how to shorten stirrups to beginners, don't assume that they are aware that there is a buckle underneath the stirrup flap on the saddle!

Explaining during the demonstration:

- Prepare participants for what they will see
- During the demonstration, explain how the skill is done*
- Keep your explanations simple and brief
- Make sure the explanation agrees with what is being demonstrated
- At the end of the demonstration, reinforce what they just saw
- Relate the demonstration to any previously learned techniques

* People with learning disabilities may need tasks broken down into simple directions as they may have difficulty remembering or sequencing a task. For example, directions to adjust a stirrup before mounting may be broken down into simple instructions as follows:

1. Find the stirrup
2. Pull the stirrup down
3. Find the buckle
4. Pull the buckle down
5. Undo the buckle
6. Move the buckle up/down
7. Do up the buckle
8. Pull the buckle up to the stirrup bar
9. Put everything tidy

Check for understanding:

After you have completed the demonstration, it's important to check that participants understand what they will be practicing. To check their understanding, the following tips will help you:

- Invite or ask questions
- If you are coaching a large group, remember to repeat any participants' questions so that the rest of the group can hear the question and to keep their attention
- Keep your answers to questions short and relevant; don't be tempted to go into the details of the technique at this point.

When checking understanding, don't simply ask "do you understand?" In order to help your participants begin to develop their own learning strategies, a more useful question after you have demonstrated or explained a particular exercise is to run through it once more, but instead of running through it from start to finish, stop mid-way through and ask them to tell you what they would do next.

If you do this, you will be able to check that they really have understood the process of the exercise and this will help them to develop tactical skills. Tactical skills are when people can adapt techniques according to any situation they find themselves in, rather than only being able to use the technique in the particular situation it was learnt in.

3. Practice of New Skills

Encourage participants to practice as soon after a demonstration as possible. When planning the introduction of new skills, you will need to decide whether your participants will benefit from practising the skill as a whole technique, or would it be better learnt by being broken into smaller parts?

Whole v Part Practice:

During the whole method of training, the whole technique is practised intact. The part method is actually the whole-part-whole method. You teach the whole method, practise it in parts and then recombine the parts back into the whole through practise.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two methods?

Teaching the whole of a technique reduces time, however more complex techniques are better learnt in parts which can be put together once the parts have been mastered.

When you decide to break a technique down into parts, think about the natural breaks in the sequence of movements. For example, teaching beginners to mount their horses/ponies for the first time, you would mention:

- How to approach their mount
- What checks to make (girth, stirrups etc)
- What angle to stand in relation to their horse/pony
- How to hold the reins
- How to place their foot in the stirrup
- How to create momentum to leave the ground
- How to sit down in the saddle (gently or to collapse?)
- What checks they make once in the saddle (girth, stirrups etc)

Exercise 7

What other techniques in your discipline could you break down into parts? Discuss this with your mentor coach

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

It's worth remembering that you can add parts together to progress through a technique – all parts don't have to be taught separately from each other. It will depend upon your participants' level of understanding generally and of the technique in particular. (For example approaching the horse/pony and making pre-mounting checks could be taught as one process).

You can also get your participants to perform the technique as a whole but only focus on one aspect of it, for example sitting down gently in the saddle. This tends to work best once your participants have grasped and practiced the basic technique.

Remember that when learning a new technique, participants are likely to make mistakes and possibly tire easily. Therefore make sure that you keep the practice of new techniques short but frequent. Rotate practicing new techniques with revisiting and practicing existing skills and with rest periods.

Avoid practice becoming boring, by using lots of variety in the way that you teach techniques.

PLAN, DO, REVIEW COACHING SESSIONS

As we have already said, an important part of a coach's role is to plan coaching sessions. However, as a Level 1 Coach, you are not expected to create coaching programmes and plans from scratch. Rather you should be supported by a mentor coach, who is more experienced than yourself. Your mentor coach should provide you with existing coaching programmes and plans that you can use.

It is likely that your involvement in planning coaching sessions will include implementing part of coaching plans with participants. This will be invaluable experience for you in working with well-designed plans for your learning. As you progress through the UKCC Endorsed Coaching Levels, you will gradually be expected to develop your own coaching programmes and plans.

A coaching plan should include consideration of the following areas:

Things to consider when planning sessions:

Coach to Participant Ratio:

- A suggested ratio is 1:6. Your mentor coach and/or Member Body will advise you if this is different in your equestrian activity.

Age range of participants:

- Whether there will be parental influences to consider or differing abilities within the age group or differing confidence levels etc

Desired outcomes for the session:

- These should be a mixture of the coach's outcomes plus the participants' outcomes

Participants' abilities and experience

- To incorporate participants' needs (for example disabled or nervous)
- To match with suitable horses/ponies

Horses to be used:

- size, temperament, suitability and match with participants' sizes, abilities etc

Environment to be used:

- The facilities available, equipment needed and availability, risk assessments

Your activity's policies:

- Such as leading, mounting rules

Choice of work:

- To achieve outcomes, suitability for participants' abilities, weather conditions and facilities

Coaching Session - Planning Form

Level 1 Session Plan

Coach's Name: _____

Date:	Venue:
Time:	Duration:
Participants Names:	
Number of Participants:	
Session Number:	Number of sessions in this series:
Equipment/Resources (include helpers if required)	
Session Goals Objective and Aims	
Time	Activity
	Warm-Up/Introduction
	Main Content
	Cool-Down/Summary
Injuries	
Evaluation/Action from this session	

Mentor Coach Signature and date: _____

Gathering information about participants to plan coaching sessions

One of the key elements of information needed when planning coaching sessions is details of the participants of the session.

Therefore, it is vital to collect background information from participants before they arrive for their coaching session.

Gathering this information will enable your mentor coach to plan an effective and enjoyable coaching session for participants. The following is a suggested checklist which you can complete on the telephone when taking a booking from a new coaching client.

This will enable your mentor coach to decide which horse, which coach and which session would best match the client's needs.

Questions to ask when new clients are booking for the first time:

Date:

Name:

Address:

Tel No:

Email:

Where did you hear about us?:

DOB:

Height:

Weight:

Any medical issues (e.g. asthma):

Doctor's Name and Tel No:

Any disabilities:

(Will they require any specialised equipment or particular assistance?)

Why do you want to start taking sessions?

What are your riding/driving/vaulting goals; now, within the next 6 months, and beyond (if appropriate to ask now)?

What experience with horses have you had to date?

Have you worked in group sessions before? Yes/No

Where have you had equestrian coaching before?

How often do you ride/drive/vault?

How would you rate your competency? (To gauge confidence levels)

Beginner/Novice/Experienced/Very Experienced

(Ask them for specifics of what they have done e.g. canter or height of jumps – this often identifies those people who think they are experienced, but who aren't!)

What other exercise do you do and how frequently?

Have you had any significant horse-related incidents/accidents in the past?

Signed (participant)

Not all of the questions may be relevant every time you interview a new coaching client, but they will enable your mentor coach to build up a good impression of the level of participants they will have to create a coaching programme for and the type of exercises that will be more suitable and enjoyable for them.

Contributing to Evaluating Participants

In order to evaluate your participants' progress during your coaching sessions, you will need to develop your observational skills. During the coaching session, observe how participants are progressing, whether they are focused on practicing or chatting etc. The following checklist should help to guide your observations. A good practice would be to complete this checklist whilst you are observing your mentor coach run a session and then compare your observation with your mentor's at the end of the session.

The aim of observation is to help your participants develop their performance by identifying the cause of errors and helping them to correct them. When you are observing a group during a coaching session, notice what is going on generally, rather than getting fixated on one subject or participant. If you are not sure what is causing the error then continue observing until you become sure about the cause.

Generic example for participant observation during coaching session:

Participant's Name(s):		
Date of Session:		
Type of Session:	Individual/Lead rein/Lunge/Group Flatwork/Jumping Vaulting Driving	
No. of Session (e.g. 1 of 10):		
Aim of Session:	By the end of this session, the participant will have worked on/be able to:	
Coach's Name:		
Horse's Name:		
Has horse/participant combination worked together before?	Yes/No	
Health and Safety Observations:		
Competency	Assessed	Not Assessed Comments
Mount (with assistance)		
Mount (unaided)		
Steering		
Walk (on lead rein)		
Walk (off lead rein)		
Trot (with stirrups)		
Trot (without stirrups)		

Canter (with stirrups)
Canter (without stirrups)

Lateral movements (state)

Jumping

Assessment of Participant's:

- Communication:
- Comprehension:
- Special Needs:
- Concentration:
- Position:
- Aid applications:
- Co-ordination:
- Flexibility/Balance:
- Fitness:
- Confidence

Post Session Evaluation:

Suggestions for next session (following on from observations made during this session):

Suggested exercises or stretches for participant between sessions:

Suggested mental preparation/rehearsal:

Participant's comments:

Next session booked for:

GIVING FEEDBACK

A major benefit of having a coach on the ground is that a coach has a view of participants that they cannot gain for themselves. Therefore, a coach needs to be willing and able to use feedback to help participants improve their performance.

The process of helping participants correct their errors begins with observation and evaluation of performance to determine the cause of the error.

One of the most common coaching mistakes is to provide inaccurate feedback and advice on how to correct errors. Coaches should be wary of rushing into error correction; wrong feedback or poor advice is worse than none at all. Coaches should continue observing and analysing until they are certain of the cause of errors.

As an Assistant Coach, take as many opportunities as you can to observe other coaches' sessions and participants. Use the observation checklists in this resource to help you. Listen to the feedback more experienced coaches give to their participants. Make notes of the common causes of errors for your particular equestrian activity.

Spend time with your mentor coach discussing participants' errors and causes and role play how you would give feedback on these errors.

Here are some guidelines for how to provide feedback:

What Went Well (WWW)

Giving feedback is not only about correcting errors. A coach should also give feedback on successes and improvements. Feedback should not only concentrate on outcomes, but also on the process of a practice or skill.

Even Better If (EBI)

Effective feedback is not complete without mentioning the improvements that could be made to improve performance.

Golden Rules of Giving Feedback

- Feedback the error you observed, what caused it and then explain how to correct it.
- Give specific feedback rather than general so that participants can link it to their actual performance. For example "Well done" is less useful than "Well sat when your horse spooked at the doorway."
- Likewise, "Your position is awful" is not useful feedback. Give participants specific feedback as to what caused their error and how they can improve it next time. For example, "Your elbows are sticking out because your shoulders and arms are very stiff and tight. Try relaxing your shoulders and arms and let your elbows rest at your side." Is much more useful for the participant to try something different to improve their performance.
- Don't leave feedback until the end of the session. The sooner you give feedback, the more likely practice will become correct.
- Less experienced participants and children rely heavily on coaches to tell them when they are doing something right or wrong. They appreciate more frequent feedback to help them develop their ability to make their own decisions

- Correct only one error at a time (if more than one is observed). Correct the error that you believe will create the biggest improvement first.
- Use both explanations and demonstrations of how to change performance to improve.
- More experienced participants value occasional feedback because they are more able to analyse their own performance and correct themselves.

Observing more experienced coaches for How and What to Coach

As an Assistant Coach you are studying to increase your proficiency at coaching. Sports Coach UK's research shows that coaches like to learn by modelling or copying more experienced coaches. Therefore, when you are observing coaching sessions, it will be of great value to you to observe the session in two ways:

1. Observing the participants, their needs, motivations, progress etc
2. Observing the Coach for the way that they conduct the session (this is also known as 'How to Coach'), the level and amount of technical knowledge that they share with this particular participant(s) and the number and type of exercises or activities they build into their session to teach the particular skill (this is also known as 'What to Coach')

Here is a checklist to help you observe the “How to Coach” elements of a coaching session:

	Observed		
	Yes	No	Comments
Introduction:			
Did the coach introduce him/herself?			
Did the coach build rapport by asking the participants introductory questions?			
Did the coach set out the outcomes for the session?			
What warm up exercises were used?			
Practice:			
How did the coach explain practices?			
Did the coach use a demonstration?			
What assumptions did the coach make regarding experience or knowledge?			
Did the coach ask questions?			
What sort of questions did the coach ask? (e.g. open or closed)			
How did the coach check participants' understanding?			
How did the coach give feedback or correction to participants?			
How did the coach adapt practices to participants' needs during the session?			
Conclusion:			
What cool down exercises were used?			
How did the coach summarise the session?			
What plans for future sessions were discussed?			
Did the coach ask for participant feedback at the end of the session?			

Reviewing activities

Reviewing is an important part of coaching. If you don't review what has happened and what you did, then you won't learn from mistakes and also won't analyse what works and therefore incorporate it in future sessions. There are two parts of reviewing activities; reviewing your participants' progress and reviewing your coaching activities:

Reviewing your Participants' Progress

At the beginning of the coaching session you had some outcomes to achieve – these will most likely have been set by your mentor coach. The first place to start your review is to assess your progress against achieving your original outcome.

Depending upon how close the actual outcome of the session is to the desired outcome, this will impact where your review process goes from here. For example if you met your outcome and the participants' feedback was that they enjoyed the session and learnt something then your action for the next session would be very different than if you didn't meet your session outcome and/or your participants feedback to you that they didn't understand the exercises or didn't enjoy them.

So, whilst we cannot give you definite steps that you will always take when reviewing your participants' progress, things to consider include:

- Did we achieve the outcome for the session?
- If yes, did participants learn something new to help them to improve their performance? If so, what did they learn?
- If no, did participants learn something new to help them to improve their performance? If so, what did they learn?
- How did the number and/or types of exercises contribute (either to learning or achieving/not achieving outcome)?
- How will I use this information in planning and delivering future sessions with this participant/group?

Reviewing your coaching activities

The most effective practitioners will always analyse their own performance and seek feedback from respected peers and mentors. The main outcome as a coach you should be aiming to achieve is to facilitate your participants' learning so that their performance improves. Therefore you should review your coaching activities against your performance towards achieving this outcome.

You should review your coaching activities after each coaching session that you run so that you can incorporate changes and feedback from others into your future sessions.

Also, if you are reviewing your activities regularly it will enable you to monitor your participants' progress and achievements over time and analyse whether the goals you set were realistic and achievable in the time frame you set them in.

In reviewing your own coaching practice, the following areas and questions will be useful:

	Yes	No	Comments
Establishing Working Relationships			
Did I make eye contact, introduce myself and ask participants' names?			
Preparing Participants for Activities			
Did I get everyone around me in a place where they could hear and see me clearly?			
Did I get their attention?			
Deliver Prepared Activities			
Did I give instructions for all new skills?			
Did I check understanding of existing skills?			
Did I provide accurate demonstrations?			
Did I point out the most important part of demonstrations?			
Did I demonstrate skills in a variety of ways and from a variety of angles?			
Did I keep it simple and explain terminology?			
Did I check understanding?			
Support Participants' Learning			
Did I give feedback on specific activities and offer correction where necessary?			
Did I reinforce rules and regulations of my equestrian activity during practices?			
Did I use a variety of activities in the session?			
Conclude Activities			
Did I remind participants what we covered during the session?			
Did I ask for questions to help learning?			
Did I give feedback to individuals?			
Did I encourage participants?			
Did I ask helpers for their feedback?			
Did I thank any volunteers for their assistance?			

Developing Your Own Personal Practice as a Coach

One of the best ways for you to learn about coaching is to observe other, more experienced coaches. Watch a more experienced coach in action and think about their performance in terms of the points above, plus also the following areas:

- What is the age range, size and ability of the group?
- What style does the coach take?
- Does the coach give instructions or guide his/her participants to learn?
- How do the participants respond to the coach? Are they actively involved? Are they having fun? Are they performing?
- Does the coach adapt his/her style when coaching different groups?

MEETING THE NEEDS OF DIFFERENT PARTICIPANTS

As a coach, your role will be to assist more qualified coaches, delivering some parts of coaching sessions under supervision. Therefore you need to understand the different needs of groups of clients whom you may interact with. Some of these groups include:

- Children
- Novices
- Experienced
- Disabled
- Pleasure riders
- Competitive riders

It's very important that when you are coaching you think about your participants as individuals with differing needs and not applying a generic label to them such as "novice", "disabled" or "children" for example.

Everyone has many influences in their lives and these will differ between individuals. For example, one person may use their riding/driving/vaulting session to relax them, whilst another may not be able to enjoy their session and concentrate if they have had a stressful day beforehand. It's worth taking the time to think about what else might be going on in your participants' lives and whether it might have an impact on their performance, attention or confidence. This is especially important if you notice a change in one of your participant's usual behaviour during sessions.

Most riders/drivers/vaulters won't be full-time professionals, but will be keen amateurs who have chosen your sport for various reasons. It's very important that as coaches we remember that our participants may not necessarily be as passionate or committed to our sport as we are! Coaching programmes and plans need to bear this in mind and allow for effective learning but also to maintain the participants' interest and motivation to continue with the sessions.

Motivation

When someone participates in any activity, their success is largely influenced by their level of motivation. The ability to motivate, rather than the technical and tactical knowledge, is what more often than not separates excellent coaches from others.

It's important to understand the many varied reasons why people choose to participate in our sport, and also the diverse goals that individuals wish to achieve from their participation in it.

It's also important to understand how you as a coach can contribute to sustaining the long-term engagement of participants in their sporting activity.

Some coaches view motivation as an internal personality characteristic that some people have more than others. If you take this view there is a danger that you will "give up" on some participants, judging them to be lacking in this characteristic.

Other coaches believe that motivation is something that can be created externally, perhaps through reward. However, it's important to recognise that rewards won't motivate everyone in the same way.

It is also important to recognise the outside influences that participants have, away from their contact with you, which can impact on their ability to maintain their optimal motivation in the long-term.

The best way to find out about any influences they might be dealing with and what is happening to them outside of the training session is to get to know your participants individually.

Motivation is not a fixed property, but alters across time and situations based on one's interpretation of their experiences.

What can affect motivation?

- The level of activity – whether too challenging or too easy.
- If participant receives no recognition for their efforts or performances
- If participant lacks any clear goals to focus their efforts on.
- The participant's relationship with their coach

Exercise 8

Think of a time when you were not motivated to do something:

What affected your motivation at the time?

Think of a different example when you were also very motivated to do something:

What affected your motivation at that time?

How did the two situations differ from each other?

Learning Styles

People like to learn in different ways. Some people like to try new exercises out immediately. Others prefer to take time to think about a new exercise before trying it. Others want to know what the exercise's practical use is. And, another group of learners want to analyse the exercise before giving it a go. These preferences are known as Learning Styles. These 4 learning styles are known as:

- Activist
- Reflector
- Theorist
- Pragmatist

Activists – “Let’s have a go and see what happens”

The statement above sums up an Activists Learning Style. Activists like trying new things. They don’t want to spend time having it explained or analysed. If you give an Activist a new piece of equipment they have never seen before they will want to start experimenting with how to use it. Activists rarely read instruction manuals with any new equipment.

When coaching Activists, the quicker and shorter your explanation, the happier they will be. However, you will need to stress health and safety issues with Activists as they are prone to ‘diving in’ and having a go

Competent Activists are useful demonstrators for any exercises as they don’t worry about making mistakes.

Reflectors – “I want to think about that and come back to you later”

Reflectors are good listeners, cautious and careful. They tend to shy away from participating and will want to have an exercise fully explained and given time to think about how they will carry it out, before being put under pressure to perform the exercise. Reflectors will not volunteer to demonstrate a new skill. But they will enjoy watching a demonstration.

Theorists – “How did you come to that conclusion?”

Theorists tend to be perfectionists. Their temptation is to keep on doing something until they get it right.

They like to analyse and they like logic. They frequently ask “Does it make sense?” “How does this fit with that?” Be prepared to break down your explanations and demonstrations into detail; which aid is applied and exactly when. You may need to explain convincingly why it is important to follow a certain way of applying aids or riding a course and so be clear in your own mind about the logic of these.

Pragmatists – “So what use is that then?”

Pragmatists are keen on trying out new ideas, theories and techniques to see if they work in practice. They may be impatient with the coaching process itself “What’s the point of all this then?”

If you are teaching a skill which you are breaking down into parts, make sure you explain how it fits into the whole. Pragmatists can be quick to dismiss something if they don’t understand its benefits or relation to something else.

We all display a mixture of learning styles, but most of us have a preference for one or two over the others. When planning coaching sessions, it’s helpful to bear in mind the 4 Learning Styles and incorporate exercises that satisfy all Styles.

Here are some general points for coaching different types of participant:

Children

Sports coaches play an important role in the development of children’s basic motor skills and their long-term attitudes to, and enthusiasm for, sport and physical activity.

It has been estimated that it can take more than 10 years to create a top sporting performer and it is widely acknowledged that top level performers therefore begin the process to achieving sporting excellence during their childhood. Therefore, for the future of top level performers, children need to value and enjoy the experience of physical activity and coaches have a crucial role to play in these essential early stages of development.

Balyi's Long-term Athlete Development (LTAD) model promotes sport as a valuable activity which should be enjoyable and contribute to a healthy lifestyle. LTAD has 3 main goals in relation to sporting activity:

- Lifelong participation
- Improved performance
- Physical literacy

LTAD recommends that coaching develops athletes through the 5 following stages:

1. Fundamentals (ages 6-8 years)
2. Learning to Practise/Train (ages 9-11 years)
3. Training to Train (ages 12-14 years)
4. Training to Compete (ages 15-17 years)
5. Training to Win (ages 18+ years)

LTAD Principles

- Successful coaching sessions for children involve laughter, enjoyment, excitement and fun. With lots of different and imaginative exercises and activities to maintain their interest and keep everyone actively involved. Where possible, use teamwork activities.
- Involve parents and carers. They will be bringing their children to coaching sessions and so if they aren't enthusiastic, neither will their children be!
- Focus on general skills, rather than specific equestrian skills
- Improving basic motor skills such as running, jumping, balancing, catching, throwing (hand-eye co-ordination) will help children develop control of their bodies which will help their riding, driving and vaulting. These skills are best learned between the ages of 5 and 12.
- Children learn a great deal by copying others – their friends, teachers, parents/carers and coaches. Therefore, make sure that you demonstrate skills correctly and safely – children will copy you. Children will also copy the way that you speak to people (children will copy your sarcasm or your motivation – you choose which kind of participant you want to create!)
- Give positive reinforcement at all times, praising effort as well as achievement.
- Use short, clear and simple instructions and provide simple rules.
- Work on developing children's attention spans.
- Don't judge children by their age alone, growth spurts occur at different ages and will affect their strength and co-ordination. Children of the same age can be as much as four years apart in physical development.
- Children breathe more quickly than adults, which is tiring. Therefore they need to be monitored to avoid exhaustion.
- With smaller bodies and quicker breathing, children lose water more quickly than adults. Therefore make sure that they drink plenty of water (not fizzy drinks – they dehydrate further).
- Smaller bodies are more sensitive to heat and cold, so bear this in mind when you are assisting with coaching sessions and take into account weather conditions etc.

Coaching Tips for Particular Age Groups

Under 6's

- Keep it fun and make everything about playing
- Keep it simple – teach step by step
- Praise every small advance; because they have no experience to use for comparison, they rely on adults to tell them how well they are doing.

Age 6-9

- At this age, children still find it hard to separate ability and effort and have a tendency to attach the results they get to how hard they try. Be careful not to reinforce this by telling children that they will do better if they try harder.
- Be patient – introduce new tasks one at a time and step by step
- Encourage – they will still rely heavily on your feedback
- Reduce fear of failure by encouraging them to try new activities, whatever the outcome

Age 10-13

- Children start relying on their own judgement, as well as listening to others around them, although they still have a tendency to think that trying harder will overcome a lack of ability.
- Lack of ability can be hard to accept at this age and may result in children dropping out of the sport. Help children you coach at this age to set themselves realistic standards and goals so that they don't start to drive themselves for perfection.

Protecting Children

Sports Coach UK has created a "Code of Conduct for Sports Coaches" which sets out four key principles relating to good coaching practice. These key principles relate to the relationship between coaches and participants. They may also apply to relationships with other people, including parents, guardians, friends, peers and teachers.

The key principles apply in any coaching situation, whatever the specific role of coaches, but are particularly important when coaching children. However, they do not apply exclusively to coaches, but to all those working with children in a sporting environment.

The 4 Key Principles are:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Rights: | Coaches must respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport. |
| Relationships: | Coaches must develop a relationship with athletes (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect. |
| Responsibilities: | Coaches must demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times. |

Professional Standards: To maximise benefits and minimise the risks to athletes, coaches must attain a high level of competence through qualifications and a commitment to ongoing training that ensures safe and correct practice.

Let's look at a coach's responsibilities in more detail in the area of protecting children.

You have a duty to protect your participants, especially children, from all forms of abuse. There are 4 main forms of abuse:

- Neglect – leaving practices unsupervised, providing inadequate protection
- Emotional Abuse – bullying, threatening, teasing and taunting. Excessive pushing to perform
- Sexual Abuse – sexual intercourse, masturbation, being shown pornographic material
- Physical Abuse – hitting, shaking, being given alcohol or drugs (including performance enhancing), excessive training regimes

It is important that as a coach, you take action to prevent any potential accusations of improper behaviour and promote good practice.

Coaches Should:

- Avoid situations where there is just one adult and one child or where excessive amounts of time are spent alone with children away from others.
- Keep doors open when working in an enclosed environment
- Arrange to meet children with parents present
- Avoid taking children alone on car journeys, however short
- Encourage parents and other adults to observe coaching sessions and support competitions
- Where physical support of the child is required, follow your Member Body's governing body

Coaches Should Never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Let allegations a child make go unchallenged or unrecorded
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves

(Taken from scUK's "The Successful Coach, Guidelines for Good Practice")

Novices

Novice participants of any age have similar needs to children. They will need their coach to make more decisions for them and to give them feedback to help them to develop their own self-assessment skills. A long-term aim should be for you to be encouraging your participants to be involved and responsible for their own learning.

However, don't assume that novices won't have goals and aspirations in their equestrian activities.

Experienced

Experienced participants will not expect their coach to make all the decisions for them. For example, they will value being part of shared decision making, goal setting and planning. Experienced participants will enjoy being encouraged to share their knowledge and experience. A coach of more experienced riders provides leadership through positive guidance, allowing and helping participants to explore their own learning through questions and observations.

Disabled Participants

There is potential for harm to certain disabled participants in the equestrian context and all equestrian coaches should be made aware of this. In certain cases there may also be a potential for the coach themselves to be harmed, e.g. is assisting a disabled person in mounting or dismounting.

As an Assistant Coach, your supervising coach, should advise you about the participant's disabilities, and should always support you.

You do not necessarily need extensive training to work with disabled people in equestrian activities. What you do need is equestrian technical knowledge and skills, combined with the confidence and understanding to make any necessary adjustments to the ways in which you already work in your own equestrian activity.

In the first instance you should talk to your supervising coach, as they should be able to tell you about your disabled participants. You will need to have some knowledge about the participant's disability or condition, the symptoms and the relevance of the disability or condition to your equestrian activity. For example the participant may need specialist mounting procedures and/or tack plus the affects that the activity will have on the disabled participant and their condition must be taken into consideration. In some instances equestrian activities may not be considered beneficial to the welfare of the participant. For example RDA advises that a person with brittle bone disease should not ride, drive or vault, and there are other conditions for which riding, driving and vaulting would not be a beneficial activity. RDA strongly recommends that disabled participants seek medical advice about the effect of equestrian activities on their condition prior to taking part.

You also need to get to know the individuals you are working with. All good coaches coach people in the context of their chosen activity and if you take this approach then by getting to know your individual participants you will be able to adapt your equestrian knowledge to their needs to deliver effective coaching sessions for them.

A very important focus when coaching disabled people is to focus on what they can do, rather than concentrate on the medical label for their condition. You will find this out by asking them and/or their carers.

Some general advice for coaching and communicating with disabled participants in the equestrian environment:

Communication

- Speak to a disabled participant as you would to any other person, unless there is specific reason not. Don't shout at them
- Address the disabled participant directly and not through their assistant, unless there is a specific reason not to.
- If a participant is a wheelchair user do not presume that they have a learning disability or cannot communicate normally.
- Always allow plenty of time for a person to respond to your communication.
- Ask or find out how the disabled participant would like you to help them, don't assume how you think you should help them.
- Allow the disabled participant to adjust to their own pace and duration of any activity, unless you feel they are over doing it.
- If a participant has autism they will have problems communicating and making eye contact.
- A disabled participant may seem depressed or quiet but this could be a symptom of their condition.
- If you need to physically assist a disabled participant, help them in securing their money or adjusting clothing always ask the participant if it is all right to do so before acting.
- If a participant needs help in the toilet or changing ask their carer to assist them or engage a third person to help as well.
- If a participant has an interpreter always allow time for them to communicate with the disabled participant.

Hearing Impairment

- Stand still and face the participant where your face can be clearly seen and where there is sufficient light. Do not stand with a bright light behind you.
- Talk to the participant, not the interpreter.
- Speak clearly and at a slow to normal pace, but don't shout or over emphasise your words. Don't chew or cover your mouth with your hand.
- You can use a small hand-held dry-wipe marker board for written instructions, use communication flash cards or an agreed sign language to communicate in the arena.
- Use gestures and demonstrations.
- To get the participants attention signal or touch them on the shoulder (or hand if they are mounted). But be careful not to startle the rider or the horse or even both.
- Keep everyone involved by explaining any comments, questions or jokes made by group members.
- Check that participants understand and are not just copying you or others.

Speech Impairment

- Be patient – don't rush the participant or finish their sentences.
- Check that you have understood correctly by summarising or repeating back what you think that you heard.
- Ask the participant to repeat anything you don't understand or write it down.
- Enquire if they normally have an interpreter or any other form of communication e.g. an electronic speech synthesiser

Visual Impairment

- When meeting a person with visual impairment make yourself known to them on their arrival. Guide them carefully by letting them hold your arm just above the elbow and walking slightly behind you. When guiding give clear instructions and information about your surroundings e.g. steps, doorways, and obstacles. Carefully negotiate any obstacle giving plenty of room as you pass.

- Help participants familiarise themselves with the coaching environment by walking around the arena with them on foot and describing the layout the location of key items (e.g. equipment, exits, potential hazards etc).
- Ensure the arena is free of obstacles and clutter.
- Allow the participant to feel and appreciate the outline of the horse and the equipment before starting the coaching session.
- Wear bright/light coloured clothing so that the person can locate you.
- Use a horse that is a colour in contrast to the background of the environment. For example a grey horse in an arena that has a black surface and brown walls. Gain the participants attention by using their name.
- Use clear, accurate verbal instructions and check for understanding.
- Use your voice to give the participant a sense of location, direction and distance. Stand still as far as possible as this will allow the participant to gauge where they are in relation to you and your position in the arena. Do not remain silent for long periods.

Make sure you tell participants when you have finished and are moving away from them. When you are leaving them make sure they know where they are and that they are happy for you to go. It may helpful to take them to the exit or confirm their position in relation to their transport arrangements.

If you are conducting a theory session or meeting in a room introduce the visually impaired person to everyone present and describe the layout of the room. Address everyone by their name when speaking to them. Supply any written information in a suitable format such as CD, large print or Braille.

With all three impairments listed above, ensure that you use a balance of exercises and demonstrations that use all of the senses so that a participant can experience the maximum benefit from the session whilst minimising their dependence on the sense which is impaired.

Physical Impairment

- Some wheelchair users consider their wheelchair to be part of their personal space so avoid touching or resting upon the wheelchair – treat it as part of the person sitting in it.
- It is easier to talk to someone sitting in a wheel chair if you are also sitting – your eyes will be level with each other. If you do not have a chair just bob down to reach you required level.
- Ask the participant if it is all right to push their wheelchair if you need to do so, and tell them where you are taking them.
- Only use agreed safe manual handling techniques and/or procedures to assist a participant on to their horse or carriage. Discuss with the participants how they will transfer to the horse or carriage before undertaking the transfer. Also consider your health, safety and welfare not to mention your back before undertaking transfers.

Learning Disability

- People with a learning disability may find it difficult to learn some skills at the same speed or to the same level as others; they may have difficulty communicating, have short-term memory or poor attention. However, do not make assumptions; either about an individual's ability or motivation to achieve something.
- Gain the participants attention by using their name.
- Treat people by their age, not by their apparent level of ability.
- Use basic plain language in simple sentences, straightforward literal language. Avoid technical terms (unless they have been learnt) and long words.
- Use facial expressions and simple hand gestures to assist your language e.g. point to objects, beckon,
- Use demonstrations.
- Be positive, friendly and firm but not negative or aggressive.

- Always put your phrases into the positive. Do not use negative phrases. Participants may only respond to the last few words in a sentence or only to the key words. Thus "Don't turn and jump the fence" may be received as "jump fence" or "Don't hit the horse with the whip" may be received as "hit horse...whip".
- Break up your instructions into simple short phrases and deliver them one at a time into easily learned steps.
- Determine if your participants understand the basic concepts of left/right; yes/no; numbers and letters.
- Do not use comparatives e.g. bigger, smaller, longer, wider more than....
- Check understanding in an appropriate way, participants may be able to tell you what they should do next, point or sign to show you they have understood (of course you have explained or demonstrated at least once before).
- Give time for skills to develop and repeat them often gradually you will develop your skills to impart knowledge and understanding.
- Be aware that participants with learning disabilities may be less aware of safety precautions and accepted rules of behaviour

(Information supplied by: Sports Coach UK and Riding for the Disabled Association)

Pleasure riders

If you are taking up coaching to fund your own competitive equestrian activities, it's important to be aware that not everyone may share your need to set and achieve stretching outcomes. Some participants may be happy to develop their competence, but overall their outcome is to have fun, get to know new people and increase their social circle. As their competence and confidence improves they may well decide that they would like to take their participation to another level.

Competitive riders

Competitive riders on the other hand will be more motivated by setting outcomes that involve their working towards measurable outcomes, such as jumping a certain height or entering a particular competition, for example.

Concentration Times

It is estimated that children can only concentrate for approximately 2 minutes in excess of their chronological age in minutes. For example a child of 10 years old should only be expected to concentrate on one task for a maximum of 12 minutes. Even adults cannot concentrate for longer than 20-25 minutes. The concentration of disabled participants may vary from very poor to very good, according to their individual disability or condition.

APPENDIX 1 Recommended Reading - Equestrian

Pony Club

"The Manual of Horsemanship" ISBN 1872119565
"The Instructor's Handbook" ISBN 0954153189

British Equestrian Vaulting

"Equestrian Vaulting" by Jutta Wiemers ISBN 0 85131 595 X
"Stretch and Strength" by Jutta and Hanna Weimers
"Training for Vaulting Coaches" by Isabelle Bibler and Emma Drinker
"Vaulting My Sport" (Video)
"That Winning Feeling" by Jane Savoie

British Eventing

"British Eventing Rule Book"

British Dressage

"Advanced Techniques of Dressage"

Endurance GB

"Riding from the Inside Out" by Lisa Champion
"Equine Exercise Physiology" by David Marlin
"Going the Distance" by Marcy Pavord
"The Little BHS Book of Endurance"

Scottish Equestrian Association

"Complete Horse Riding Manual" by William Micklem
"Success from Within" by Brendan Hackett
"Training Show Jumpers" by Anthony Paalman

The British Horseball Association

Polocrosse

"Polocrosse Let's Go!" by Jean Still ISBN 1 875381 26 0
"Polocrosse – A Practical Guide" by Mandy Choice ISBN 1 86389 006 8

The British Horse Society

BHS Videos and DVDs – Stages 1, 2, 3 and PTT

Kenilworth Press Publications:

The BHS Training Manual Series – Stages 1, 2, 3 and PTT
Learn to ride with the BHS
Teaching Children to Ride
Themed Lesson Plans for Riding Instructors, ISBN 1872119891
Everyday Jumping for Riders and Instructors
Progressive Schooling Exercises
The BHS Instructors' Manual for Teaching Riding, ISBN 1872119565
Coaching Skills for Riding Teachers, ISBN 978-1-905693-08-5

Allens Publications:

Course Companion for BHS AI
Course Companion for BHS II
"Teaching Riding" by Josephine Knowles

"Coaching the Rider" and "Teaching Jumping" by Jane Houghton-Brown

The Association of British Riding Schools

"The Principles of Teaching Riding, "The Official Teaching Manual of the ABRS" by Julian Marczak and Karen Bush
"Drills and Formation Riding" by Shirley Renowden
"An Instructor's Pocket Guide to Safe and Interesting Hacking" by Tony Silverman

Riding for The Disabled Association

"RDA Instructors' Resource" (Section A.31 lists reading material)
"RDA Instructor Development Workbook and Activity Guide"

British Show Jumping Association

"101 Jumping Exercises for Horse and Rider" by Linda L Allen ISBN 1 58017 159 1
"The BSJA Coaching Manual" by Lars Sederholm

Recommended Reading – Coaching

Brookes, T. (2004) *How the Body Works in Sport*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-55-5

Cabral, P. Carpenter, F. and Crisfield, P. (2003) *The Successful Coach: Guidelines for Coaching Practice*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 0-947850-16-3

Cabral, P. and Crisfield, P. (Eds) (2003) *Motivation and Mental Toughness*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-24-5

Campbell, S. and Crisfield, P. (2002) *Making Sport Fun*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 0-947850-56-2

Carpenter, F. and Ledger, P. (Eds) (2001) *Physiology and Performance*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 0-947850-24-4

Crisfield, P. (2003) *Analysing Your Coaching*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-14-8

Foxon, F. (2001) *Improving Practices and Skill*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-13-X

Galvin, B. and Ledger, P. *A Guide to Planning Coaching Programmes*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-00-8

Hagger, M. (2003) *Coaching Young Performers*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-15-6

Kerr, A. and Stafford, I. (2003) *How to Coach Disabled People in Sport*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-54-7

McQuade, S. (2003) *How to Coach Sports Effectively*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-52-0

NCF (2003) *Coaching Young Performers*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/sports coach UK. ISBN 1-902523-6

NCF (2003) *Sports Injury – Prevention and First Aid Management*. Leeds: Coachwise Business Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-850601-68-2

NCF (2005) *The Successful Coach – Guidelines for Coaching Practice*. Leeds: Coachwise Business Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 0-947850-16-3

Robertson, K. (2002) *Observation, Analysis and Video*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-16-4

Sneyd, S. (Ed) (2003) *How to Coach Sports Safely*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-50-4

Sprunt, K. (2003) *An Introduction to Sports Mechanics*. Leeds: Coachwise Solutions/The National Coaching Foundation. ISBN 1-902523-64-4

**APPENDIX 2
Example Risk Assessment Form**

Coaching Candidate name: _____ Assessor signature and date: _____

Description of coaching session: _____

Date of assessment: _____ Date assessment due for review: _____

Hazard (the danger)	Current Risk (high, medium, low)	Who is at risk?	Current steps taken to reduce risk (e.g. care, helpers, signs)	Further steps required to reduce risk where not currently adequately controlled

APPENDIX 3

Example - Coaching Session Plans for Equestrian Activities

Level 1 Session Plan

Coach's Name: _____

Date:	Venue: Indoor school
Time:	Duration: 10 minutes
Participants Names:	
Number of Participants: 4	
Session Number:	Number of sessions in this series:
Equipment/Resources (include helpers if required)	Required 4 ponies correctly tacked up with headcollars under bridles and lead ropes attached. 4x Level One coaches.
Session Goals Objective and Aims	By the end of the session the riders will be able to alter their stirrups correctly
Time	Activity
	<p>Warm-Up/Introduction</p> <p>Ponies lead into school and lined up. Aim of lesson discussed. Discussion of how to check stirrups correctly before mounting and reasons why this is important. Riders undertake leg and arm circling exercises and check stirrup length. Individual Level One coaches assist riders with this and other tack checks. Riders mount.</p>
	<p>Main Content</p> <p>Discussion as to how to alter stirrups correctly. One rider lead to front of group and used to demonstrate correct and incorrect method. Riders attempt to alter stirrups. Level One coaches assist. Ride sent out going large with Level One coaches leading/assisting as necessary. Basic exercises in walk and trot including changing the rein and transitions. Ride turn in and attempt to put up and then put down stirrups a hole. Ride go large and undertake a basic trot exercise to the rear of the ride. Ride turn in.</p>
	<p>Cool-Down/Summary</p> <p>Discussion as to why it is important to alter stirrups correctly. Ask questions of individuals and involve all riders. Level One coaches assist in correct dismount procedure and assist riders with putting up stirrups and loosening girth. Injuries.</p>
Injuries	
Evaluation/Action from this session	