



Official Rule Book of the Miniature Horse Club Of Great Britian



Front page credit

SMO Fuego De Suerte

Back page credit

Alliance Incendio's Whispered Destiny

So Chic Gosh Gatsby,

&

Sonoita Mysterious Mardi Gras



Cover design credit Claudia Foulkes Equine Photography & Design.

Summary of Amendments

The official rule book of the Miniature Horse Club of Great Britain has been revised and updated for 2026 to reflect guidance from DEFRA and The Showing Council, *Equine Welfare and General Best Practice Guidance And Unified Rules Pack 2026*

Rules have been amended to reflect best practice in the management, welfare and showing of horses and include:

- ✚ Show preparation and trimming of whiskers
- ✚ Correct handling in the show ring
- ✚ Welfare and care of horses whilst on the show ground



American Miniature Horse Club GB

Defra Approved Passport Issuing Office 826078

Proudly holding the Breeding Book of American Miniature Horse and Partbreds thereof

Approved by



since 2002

MHCGB Proud to be members of the Showing Council:



The Showing Council has facilitated the generic unification of this Rule

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BREED STANDARD OF PERFECTION

BREED OBJECTIVE: To produce a conformationally perfect horse in miniature.

GENERAL IMPRESSION: The Miniature Horse is a beautiful, small well balanced horse that if all reference to size were eliminated, would have the same conformational proportions of other full sized light breeds. The mares demonstrate refinement and feminine qualities. The mature stallions show boldness and masculinity. The general impression is to be a balanced individual regardless of size with symmetry, strength, agility and alertness. Movement is strong, natural and athletic. In motion the horse will exude athleticism as demonstrated by suppleness of the shoulders and engaged hocks. In judging when characteristics are equal, preference must be given to the smaller horse.

TEMPERAMENT: Temperament is reflected in its personality. The Miniature Horse is intelligent, curious, gentle, sensible, willing to cooperate and easy to train.

SIZE: Measuring at base of the last hair of the mane, the mature animal must not exceed 34 inches. Horses two years old or younger conform to the height for age requirements as stated in the show rules.

COLOUR: Any coat colour, pattern, white markings and eye colour are equally acceptable.

HEAD: The head is beautiful, triangular in shape and comparatively small in proportion to the length of neck and body. The forehead is broad with large, prominent eyes. The eyes are set well apart and are placed approximately 1/3 the distance from the poll to muzzle. The distance between the muzzle and eyes is comparatively short. A profile may be straight or slightly dished below the eyes, blending into large nostrils on a small, refined muzzle.

BITE: When viewed from the side, the meeting point of the centre incisor teeth should be equal and even. A slight deviation no more than half the width of the tooth's surface is permissible without fault. The accuracy of the bite may vary according to age. As the premolars and molars move into location, the alignment of the jaw could vary during this process.

EARS: The ears are set on top of the head and carried alertly. They are medium in size, well shaped with pointed tips curving slightly inward.

NECK: The neck is set on the top of a well-angulated shoulder, departing well above the point of the shoulder and blending into the withers, giving the impression of the neck sitting on top of the withers rather than in front of them. The slender neck is slightly arched forming a gentle curve from the poll to the back. Its length is in proportion to

body with the top line being considerably longer than the bottom line. The throatlatch is clean and well defined, allowing flexion at the poll and normal respiration.

SHOULDERS: The shoulders are muscular, long, sloping, well angulated (45-50 degrees), allowing for a free swinging stride and alert head/neck carriage.

BODY: The body is compact with a short back, close coupling, broad loins, deep flank and well sprung ribs. The back has a long, level, well muscled croup and is smoothly rounding at the hip. The tail is well set. The underline of the body should be long but not tucked up at the flank. At maturity, the top of the hip must not be higher than the withers. The chest is medium width with defined muscular development.

LEGS: The legs appear longer than the body is deep. They possess flat bone, and an appearance of over-all substance with refinement. Legs are structurally straight and parallel when viewed from the front and back with hooves pointing directly ahead. The pasterns have sufficient length and angulations to provide a light, springy step. The front legs possess a well muscled forearm, relatively long in proportion to a short cannon. Front pasterns slope 45 to 48 degrees and blend smoothly with no change of angle from the hooves to the ground. The rear leg structure must demonstrate good angulations and proper flexion of the hocks for athletic movement; have the stifle placed well forward and low in the flank area with thighs and gaskins well muscled. The gaskin is relatively long in relation to the cannon. The rear cannons are perpendicular to the ground when points of hocks and buttocks are in the same vertical lines. Back pasterns slope 40 to 50 degrees and blend smoothly with no change of angle from the hooves to the ground. The hooves are trimmed to a practical length and have sufficient toe length and angle with spread of the heels for the size and proportions of the animal.

MOVEMENT: The walk is a natural free flowing, four beat gait with length of stride proportional to the height and length of leg. The trot is a natural forward, free flowing two beat diagonal gait where the knee and hock are synchronized in their elevated, flexed and extension movement. When viewed at a walk and trot from the front, the horse will replicate the structural correctness of its stance. The Miniature Horses' conformation allows them to trot willingly and freely at liberty or pulling a pleasure cart.

JUVENILE CONSIDERATIONS: The body of the junior horse demonstrates stretch and frame to be filled in with muscling appropriate for its age. A mature adult look is not desirable.



SHOW

RULES.

It is the MHCGB members responsibility to know, understand and adhere to the Rule Book. In becoming a member/exhibiting horses at an affiliated MHCGB show you are agreeing to abide by the Rule Book.

1. Horses must be entered in the correct class, observing the correct age. Category A Miniature Horses must not exceed 34" in height at maturity*, Category B Horses exceed 34" and not exceed 38" at maturity*. Category C exceeding 38" not to exceed 42". All horses are measured from the last hairs of the mane at the base of the neck. (*see measuring rules)
2. **2026 amendment.** All horses may be measured and details recorded as per the MHCGB Height rules. **Horses may be measured at National shows (unless carrying an MHCGB completed measurement card). Horses may be measured at area shows.**
3. Handlers must be suitably turned out. Hats (optional), gloves, boots and jackets are required in Halter Classes. Training shoes are optional for performance classes. It is advised that 12years and under handlers wear an approved British Standard hardhat. American attire is appropriate for American classes.
4. The judges' decision is final.
5. Exhibitors are required to withdraw from a class if the judge has an interest in his or her exhibit. For the purposes of this rule, a judge has an interest in an exhibit if he/she has bred, owned, trained or has a financial interest in it. A horse must be withdrawn if the judge has previously exhibited or handled the exhibit.
6. Any method used to discipline a horse should be proportionate and applied at the correct time.
7. The following actions are not acceptable and will result in disqualification for the remainder of the show.

7.1 The competitor venting their anger and frustration by hitting or rough handling of the horse

7.2 **2026 amendment: Shanking** - the practice of sharp, forceful yanking of the lead rein (which may have a chain attached), to make a horse more animated in halter competitions.

This practice is considered to be an abusive training method as it applies sudden, aggressive pressure to the horse's sensitive head.

Exceptions: Shanking is only permitted in emergency situations where a horse is dangerously unruly and immediate drastic measures are necessary to regain control and prevent harm to the horse or people nearby. The horse must then immediately leave the ring or the warm up area on safety grounds.

7.3 Disciplining the horse for its behaviour in the show ring after it has left the ring.

We look to promote a calmer, more consistent communication and positive reinforcement methods to build trust and partnership .

8. No whips/crops/canes to be carried, with the exception of driven classes and long rein classes
9. **2026 amendment:** No child under sixteen years old is permitted to exhibit a Colt/Stallion in the ring or be in charge of a colt/stallion outside the ring.
10. Any horse acting in an unruly/unsafe manner may be disqualified from a class by the judge or steward for safety reasons.
11. **2026 amendment:** Continually drawn stallions may be penalised after an initial warning.
12. Forbidden substances -No substance can be administered to a horse before entering or on a showground which may mask an underlying health problem, enhance performance or bring about sedation, whether that horse is intended to compete or not.
13. The names of exhibits will not be made known to the judge until after the class.
14. **2026 amendment:** Exhibitors will be issued with a back number for each horse that must be displayed **at all times** – bridle disks are recommended for those with multiple horses. Failure to display your correct number in the ring will result in your horse being unplaced due to judges being unable to give numbers to stewards to place a class.
15. Conduct by an exhibitor, producer/ trainer or owner deemed unsportsmanlike, abusive or detrimental will not be tolerated by the MHCGGB, including but not limited to, threatening, abusive or intimidating conduct (physical, verbal or written) toward any show official or fellow exhibitor. Any person guilty of such conduct should be reported immediately to the show manager. The management committee will hear evidence from other parties and may suspend the offender for the duration of the show. Any person accused of unseemly behaviour may appeal his/her case to the Directors of MHCGGB who will conduct a hearing within twenty 28 days of the incident and will render a

decision in writing to the concerned parties within fourteen days of the hearing. If it is upheld by the Directors such a person may be banned from further participation in Club events and a decision may be published in an official publication of the Club.

16. Exhibitors are requested not to converse with the judge unless initiated by the judge.
17. It is the owner/handler/exhibitor's responsibility to be on time for classes. Late arrivals will not be admitted to the ring once the gate has closed or the class has commenced.
18. No one may show before a judge who has remunerated that judge for livery within a two year period. Stud fees and broodmare fees are excluded.
19. No one may show before a judge from whom he has leased a horse unless the lease is terminated two years prior to the competition.
20. No one shall approach a judge during the show in any fashion (e-mail, text, phone, etc.) with regard to a decision unless he/she first obtains permission from the show official.
21. It is considered unsportsmanlike to request a judge's opinion of an exhibiting horse in the weeks prior to the show. Any exhibitor found in violation of this rule will be asked to not show this horse for the remainder of the current year, any prizes will be forfeited and any entry fees will not be refunded. **Judges will be asked not to accept social media friend requests from exhibitors leading up to a show nor should exhibitors send friend requests.**
22. Exhibitors, owners and handlers who are fully paid up members of MHCGB will be offered discounted entry fees.

MHCGB Directors reserve the right to refuse membership without providing reasons.

23. Objections must be made in writing with a £50 cash fee to the show Management Team no later than half an hour after the alleged incident. The fee shall be returned to the protester in the event the protest is sustained.
 - i) If the protest is not sustained the fee shall be forfeited.
 - ii) Any protests shall be adjudicated by a protest committee of three show officials not involved with the incident/dispute.
 - iii) The Show Protest committee shall meet promptly and adjudicate the issue, make effective its decision upon the parties in interest and report its determination to all parties.
 - iv) A Show Protest Committee may disqualify a competitor and or his/her entries for the duration of the show.
 - v) The Show Protest Committees' decision is FINAL.
24. Any member/exhibitor issuing a dishonoured cheque or failing to pay any obligation owed to the MHCGB or an MHCGB approved show shall be withdrawn all member privileges and shall be barred from further MHCGB events until the debt is discharged in full. All debts owing to the MHCGB, along with a bank charge of £20, shall be paid

within 15 days. Any suspensions/denial of privileges shall terminate upon full payment of the obligation due.

25. The MHCGB Show Management Team may not exhibit horses at a competition where they are acting as such.
26. The MHCGB Show Management Team reserves the right to refuse any entry to an MHCGB show without providing reasons.
27. The MHCGB Show Management Team reserves the right to ask any individual/s to leave a showground holding an MHCGB approved show without providing reasons.

MHCGB Code of Conduct.

The Miniature Horse Club of Great Britain would like to remind members and competitors of the following:-

1. Disgraceful Conduct

- (a) Any Member of MHCGB, or any person at any time, who conducts themselves in a manner which may be deemed to bring the name of MHCGB into disrepute, shall be guilty of a breach of the MHCGB's Rules.
- (b) MHCGB will not condone any form of abusive behaviour whatsoever; this includes intimidation, bullying, harassment and any form of communication that is deemed to be aggressive, damaging or inappropriate.
- (c) Any Member or Horse that is banned for any period of time as a result of disciplinary action taken by a member body of The Showing Council may not compete in MHCGB Affiliated classes at the discretion of the MHCGB Board. Any action taken by the MHCGB against a Member or Horse may be shared with the other member bodies of The Showing Council.

2. Participants should conduct themselves at all times in an appropriate fashion and should display good manners and respect towards other participants, show officials and to the judge(s).

3. An exhibitor always loses with grace, always considers fair play, honesty, and shows all other exhibitor's courtesy.

4. An exhibitor will never use personal behaviour for receiving advantages from a judge.

5. No person is permitted to enter the ring and challenge a judge's decision. Any such action will result in person/s being asked to leave the venue and forfeit any prize or entry monies.

6. Use of Social Media **THINK BEFORE YOU POST!**

- Be Aware of Liability,
- Be Accurate,
- Respect Others,
- Respect Your Audience

Facebook, X, Instagram, Tik Tok and other social networking sites are popular with both members and non-members for communicating and sharing information and pictures. MHCGB encourages the use of such platforms in a positive, inclusive and respectful manner.

7. Please be aware MHCGB may from time to time carry out internet searches to identify posting regarding MHCGB or its members.
- a. Inappropriate and offensive comments, whether named or implied, of any nature will not be tolerated under any circumstances - this includes inappropriate or disrespectful remarks about MHCGB, Directors, Judges, and MHCGB members this will include comments about placings or horses.
 - b. Any person associated with MHCGB, judge, competitor or otherwise, found to be making any such remarks in a MHCGB owned or associated group will be removed from the group without warning
 - c. Any member found to be making such remarks will be subject to the MHCGB disciplinary procedure which could result in membership or association being revoked. The MHCGB is a family orientated organisation and as such, full respect should be shown at all times.

Please remember.....Do not use personal insults, obscenity, also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered sensitive. Users are free to discuss topics and disagree with one another, but be respectful of others' opinions.

8. No-one should be subject to intimidation or made to feel alarmed or distressed or put in fear of reprisal.
- a. Harassment is a criminal offence. To that end the MHCGB adopts a zero tolerance towards all type of harassment activity.
 - b. Harassment may be defined as causing alarm, distress and anxiety and fear of physical violence or other threat, offensive statements, verbal abuse and threats. Conduct may include speech, obstruction and so on.
 - c. As such conduct may involve a criminal offence the police may be involved and it may be that the MHCGB will defer any action pending the outcome of such investigation and/or prosecution.

It goes without saying that the Club expects courtesy and co-operation to be shown towards all staff and organisers at any MHCGB event. Whilst the pressures and tensions which arise at

competitive level are understood, any aggression or abuse towards those who are simply undertaking their jobs for the benefit and interest of the exhibitor/competitor and the audience cannot be tolerated.

9. Anyone who is reported to a MHCGB Director or show official, and is found to have shown any form of harassment; aggression, animal cruelty, verbal abuse, threats, at an MHCGB event, will be required to leave the venue, forfeit any prizes won, and entry fees standing, and be issued with a written warning regarding such conduct.

CONDUCT & COMPLAINTS DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE.

1. A complaint may be forwarded to the MHCGB Office, in writing (no electronic communication, e.g. email, text, etc), by recorded delivery, within 10 (ten) days of the alleged incident.
2. Admin will send a written confirmation of receipt of complaint by return. Additionally, written notification will be sent of how the complaint is going to be dealt with [within 15 days of receipt of complaint] (this may be included with the confirmation of receipt); and, will also send written confirmation of the outcome of the complaint.
3. Any complaint so submitted shall be investigated by The Disciplinary Committee. If the complaint can be settled to the satisfaction of all parties concerned that will be the end of the matter.
4. If the complaint cannot be settled satisfactorily then it will be referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee will deal with any complaint by way of written submissions only and no party shall be entitled to attend in person or be represented.

- i) The Disciplinary Committee shall determine whether there has been a breach of the rules of this Society and, if, in its opinion, there has been such

- a breach, it will decide to: admonish such person and caution him/her as to his/her behaviour;
- ii) fine such person up to a maximum of £1,000;
 - iii) direct that such person shall be suspended from all rights and privileges of membership of MHCGB for such period as it shall determine;
5. Disciplined members shall not enter any MHCGB affiliated show or event, or otherwise take part in any MHCGB affiliated show/event for such period as it shall determine;
- i) nor direct that any horse belonging to such person at the time of the offence shall be disqualified from the class from which it was taking part;
 - ii) direct that any horse belonging to such person at the time of the offence, or at any time during any suspension, shall (whether or not still belonging to that person) be suspended from entering, showing or otherwise taking part in any MHCGB affiliated show or event for such period as may be determined; even if the owner ceases to be a member of MHCGB, or the horse ceases to be a registered (from the perspective of competition, not passport registration)
- 5.1 In the case of a complaint against a Judge, the Disciplinary Committee may decide:
- a) to admonish such person and caution him/her as to his/her future conduct;
 - b) demote the said Judge to a lower panel;
 - c) suspend the said Judge for a period of time to be determined.
6. Any person who fails to pay a fine imposed pursuant to these regulations, within 28 days of notification, of such fine shall:
- i) if a member, be suspended automatically from all or any rights and privileges of membership; b)
 - ii) if not a member, any horse belonging to such person at the time the fine is imposed, or at any time thereafter, during the period of non-payment of the fine (whether or not still belonging to such person) be suspended from being entered or shown or taking part in any MHCGB affiliated show/event until such time as the fine has been paid.
7. Any person upon whom a penalty is imposed may, by notice in writing (sent recorded delivery), appeal to the Secretary of the Society within 10 (ten) days of the decision, together with a deposit of £300 which shall be forfeit unless the Appeal is successful.
8. The Appeals Committee shall consist of a minimum of three persons and a maximum of four persons appointed by any 2 of the following: the MHCGB President, MHCGB Vice President, MHCGB Secretary. The Appeals Committee shall proceed by way of written submissions only and no party shall be entitled to attend in person or be represented. The Appeals Committee may increase, decrease, or leave the same, the penalties imposed by the Disciplinary Committee and the findings of and penalties imposed by the Appeals Committee shall be final and binding on all parties in every case.
9. Any decision of the Disciplinary Committee or Appeals Committee may be published in any newspaper or periodical; and/or on the MHCGB website/Facebook pages.

Note: Malicious complaints made solely with the intent to discredit another will not be tolerated. If made and discovered, the complainant will then be subject to disciplinary investigation themselves and may face expulsion – if a member then no refund of membership will be paid.

DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY Save from death or personal injury caused by the negligence of the Organisers or anyone for whom they are in law responsible, neither the Organisers of any Show to which these Rules apply, nor MHCGB, nor any agent, employee or representative of MHCGB accepts any liability for any accident, loss, damage injury or illness to Horses, Owners, Riders, Producers, Trainers, Spectators, Land or any other person or property whatsoever, whether caused by negligence, breach of contract or in any other way whatsoever. Members are strongly advised to ensure that they have a minimum of third party insurance cover.

MEASURING RULES.

Category A.

No Miniature Horse shall exceed 34 inches in height.

- Weanlings must not exceed 30 inches.
- Yearlings must not exceed 32 inches.
- Two-year-olds must not exceed 33 inches.

Category B.

Exceeding 34 inches but not 38 inches in height.

- Weanlings must not exceed 34 inches.
- Yearlings must not exceed 36 inches.
- Two-year-olds must not exceed 37 inches.

Category C.

Exceeding 38” but not exceeding 42”

- Weanlings shall not exceed 38”
- Yearlings must not exceed 39”

- Two year olds must not exceed 40”.

The show age of the horse is determined from January 1 preceding its birthday.

1. Horses are presented for measuring with their passport, microchips may be scanned to verify identity.
2. The Horse's height must be verified on a hard, level surface, preferably concrete or paved, in a public place, by a show official and witnessed by a recording official of the show.
3. No person with horses being shown competing in the show may be a measuring official at the show.
4. The measuring device used to measure the first horse must be used to measure all the horses, (Category C shall have a different measuring device due to the limitations of the A & B device). A standard measurement stick is a straight, stiff, unbendable stick (metal) that is equipped with a bullseye, plumb bob or a spirit level to make sure that the standard is perpendicular to the ground and that the cross piece or arm is parallel with the ground surface.
5. Show Management shall announce the time and place for height verification.
6. To receive an exhibitor's number, the horse must be measured and have height recorded on the entry sheet by the person measuring horses or by his designee.
7. The height verification of the Miniature Horse shall be determined by measuring the vertical distance from the base of the last hairs of the mane to the ground with the front two (2) legs vertical and in line with or parallel to the measuring device, and the back of the hocks in a vertical line with the horse's buttocks.
8. The last hairs of the mane refers to the last coarse (longer) hair of the horse's mane. Any softer body hair, left longer so as to be considered as an extension of the mane, should be differentiated from mane hair and should not be included as part of the mane when measuring.
9. The horse's head and neck shall be in a natural position, facing forward, with the nostrils lower than the eyes.
10. The animal must stand squarely on all four feet. No height allowance will be made for excessive foot.
11. After the horse is set up for measuring by the handler, the handler may not touch the horse, i.e. stretching the head up forward, moving the feet; touching the back or pressing down on any part of the back until the measurer removes the measuring stick.

12. If an animal does not meet the desired height, the handler has the right to request a second measurement. Upon repositioning the animal and the measuring stick a second measurement will be made. If the second measurement is still not acceptable a third measurement is allowed. Note: Only one reading is permitted with each measurement. The third measurement is final and will be recorded as the official height. If after the first or second measurement, it is obvious the animal needs to be trimmed, the handler should be advised that the third measurement is final and that any alteration to the animal's feet should be made prior to that measurement.
13. A horse that has to be remeasured must be sound.
14. The Official Show Measurer will not attempt to measure the horse until the handler has set the horse and is positioned near the horse, in a kneeling or standing position, not touching the horse with any part of his/her body, and advises the measurer the horse is ready to be measured. The Official Measurer will then attempt to measure the horse. During the measuring process, if the handler touches the horse, the attempt to measure will be stopped, and the handler will be advised the horse cannot be touched during the measuring process.
15. The Show Management Team reserve the right to video the measuring of horses.

Protest concerning height:

The measurement of a horse may be protested at any time prior to the end of the show so long as the horse is present on the show ground.

1. The protest must be made in writing accompanied by a £100 deposit.
2. The horse shall be re measured by a show official other than the show official that measured all animals at the show, and in the presence of the original measurer and at least two (2) other show officials.
3. If there is no discrepancy in measurements from the first measurement to the measurement after protest, the original measurement stands as official.

4. All measurements must take place in direct view of the owner/handler of protested animal, and the individual who filed the protest.
5. Any animal submitted for an official measurement must show no evidence of lameness. If lameness is determined this shall result in disqualification of the animal for the balance of the show, and the owner of the animal forfeits fees and winnings for the entire show for the protested animal.

Clarification: *The rule above is clarifying that if a horse measures out of the show, it is not considered in the show; therefore it can not be protested.*



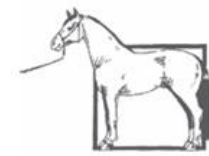
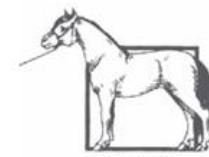
PRESENTATION FOR SHOWING.

1. The permissible methods for showing are:
 - Freshly clipped
 - Clipped with new coat established
 - Foals exceeding 8 weeks may be shown with their dam.
 - Weanlings exceeding 5 months may be shown clipped/partly clipped.
2. Manes and tails are natural & unplaited (with the exception of performance classes or costume classes). Pulling or shortening of the mane is permissible). A bridle path may

be clipped into the mane to enhance the outline of the horse. Tails are to be trimmed clear of the ground.

3. No alteration of the natural colour of the horse is allowed, (including but not limited to alteration of body markings, natural colour including legs mane and tail by any means), however, subtle use of makeup to enhance a natural colour is allowed. Mane and tail extensions are not permitted.
4. Horses must not be shown stretched, which means horses stand square and all four feet are flat on the ground with at least one front and one rear cannon bone remain perpendicular to the ground - stretched horses **will** be penalised after the initial warning by the judge in each class. It is permissible to hand set the horse.

(See Diagram)



General preparation and presentation is at the discretion of the owner. The MHCGB wishes to promote the horse as being shown at its best visual and health advantage to portray the breed as one of beauty, intelligence and gentleness.

5. Razoring of faces is NOT allowed. Clipping only is permitted. (Please ensure any oils used should contain added sun protection).

Showing Council welfare guideline 2026: Sensory hairs should not be trimmed, clipped, shaved or removed other than for veterinary purposes where a vet's letter should be provided in good time to the relevant member body/show organiser.

- Sensory hairs provide natural protection and are important for equine wellbeing and comfort.
- The hard hairs located on the horse's muzzle (nose and mouth) and around the eyes are also
- known as 'whiskers'.
- Sensitive hairs are also found inside the horse's ear. These hairs are a barrier to foreign
- objects entering the ear canal. Trimming of ear hair should be minimised.



MHCGB Showing Style.

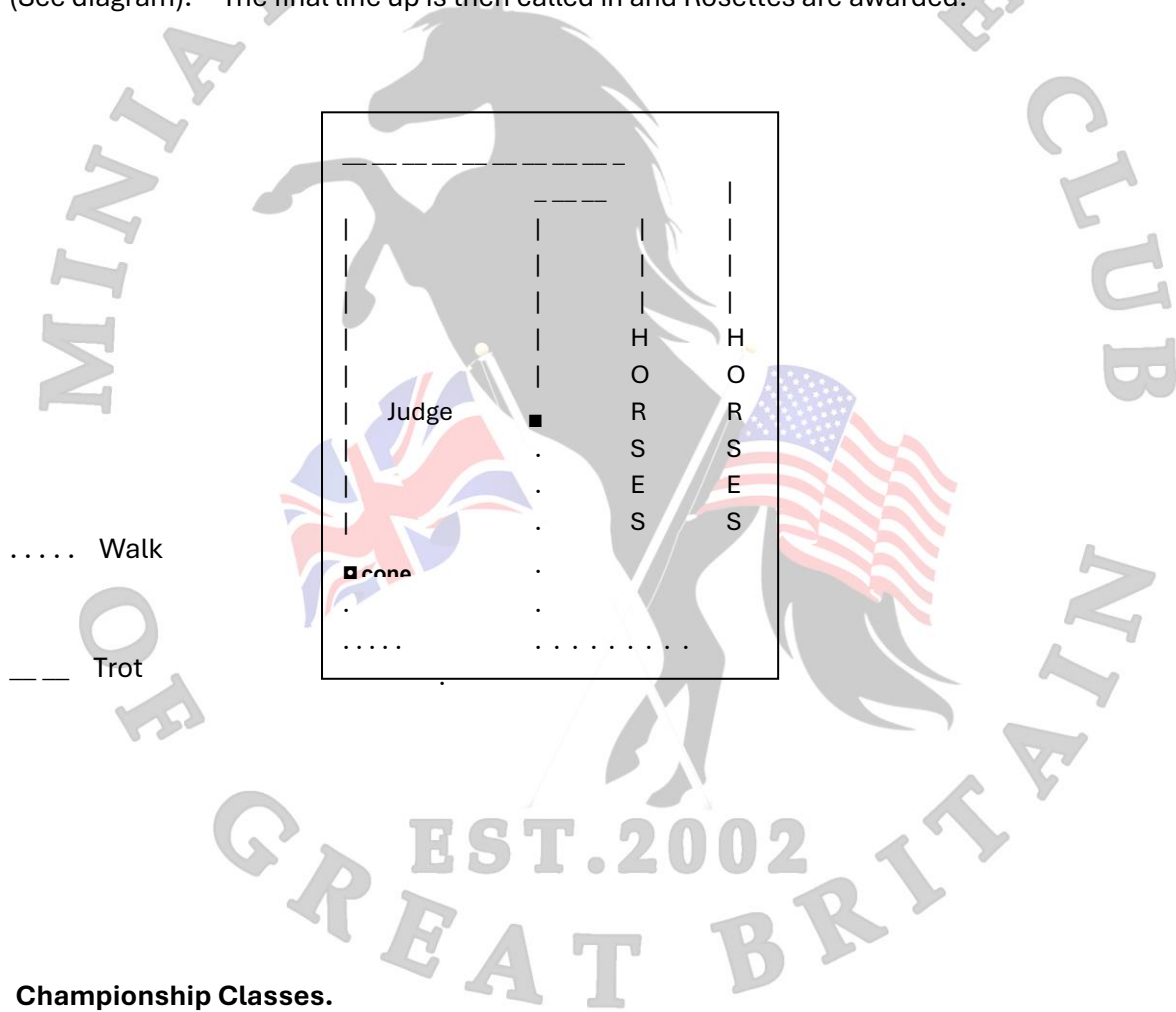
Preliminary Judging Halter Classes

Horses are to enter the ring, individually in catalogue order, at a walk clockwise on a loose lead to a designated point marked by a cone approximately 20 feet from the gate and then proceed at a trot past the judge/s. Judging will begin at the cone.

Line up horses head to tail along the ringside, teeth and testicles are checked for correctness. The judge then re takes his/her position in the centre of the ring.

From line-up, competitors walk to judge and trot past, back to the end of line, to assess straightness of movement. Horses are then posed nose to tail approx. 15 feet from the edge of the ring and with sufficient distance between to allow judges to assess horses from all sides.

At the National Shows the judge may only require a walk towards and a trot past to complete the individual show. Horses are assessed individually in the nose to tail line up. (See diagram). The final line up is then called in and Rosettes are awarded.



Championship Classes.

The first and second places from the applicable classes are called to the championship.

First placed horses form the front line, second placed horses stand behind the winner of their class.

Horses are asked to walk/trot out at the discretion of the judge.

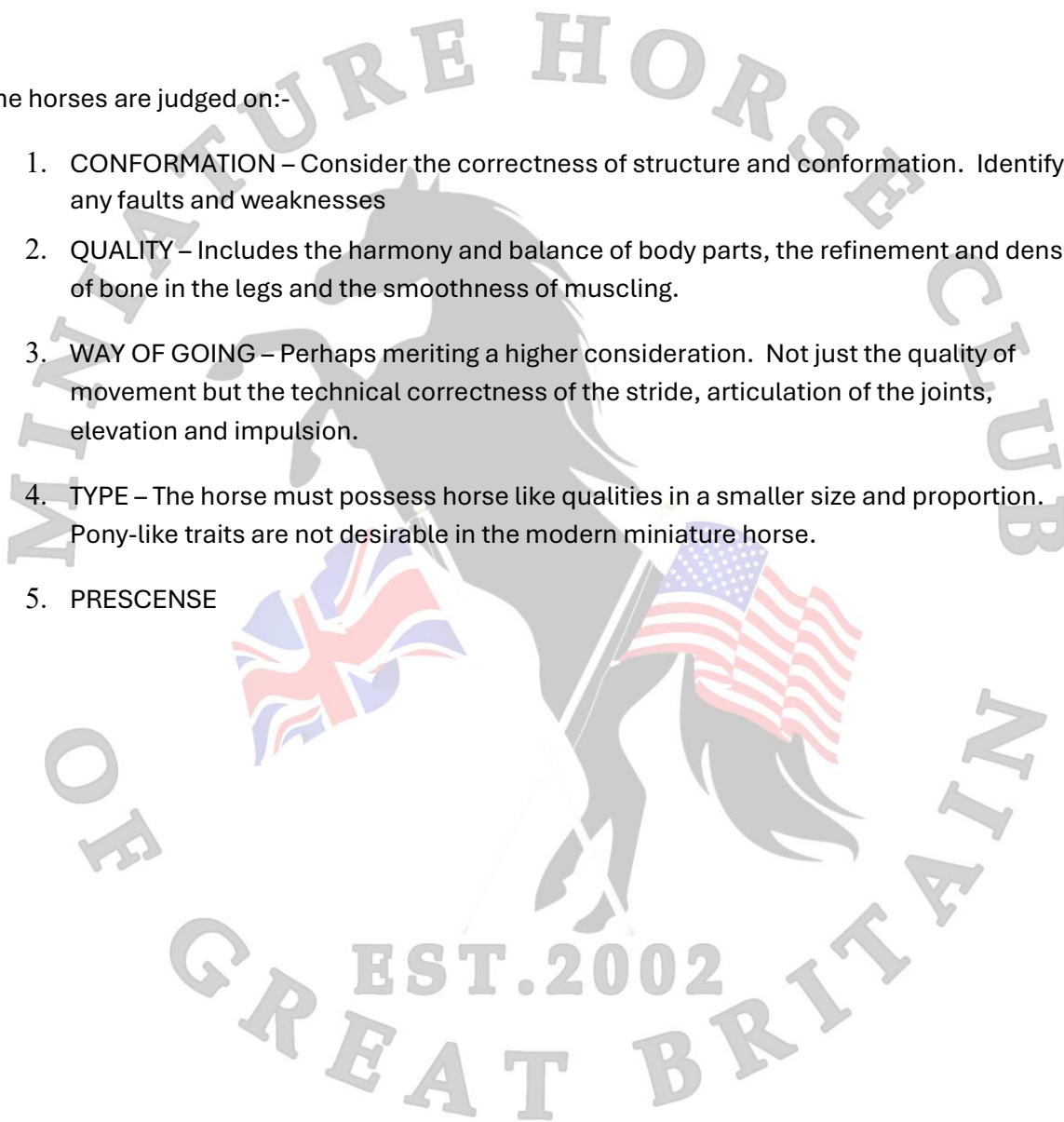
The horses are posed for the judge to reassess.

Champion and Reserve champion are selected.

Judges are asked to discourage exhibitors from sitting, squatting, kneeling in front of horses (with the exception of showing weanlings). If after a warning is given, exhibitors may be penalised

The horses are judged on:-

1. CONFORMATION – Consider the correctness of structure and conformation. Identify any faults and weaknesses
2. QUALITY – Includes the harmony and balance of body parts, the refinement and density of bone in the legs and the smoothness of muscling.
3. WAY OF GOING – Perhaps meriting a higher consideration. Not just the quality of movement but the technical correctness of the stride, articulation of the joints, elevation and impulsion.
4. TYPE – The horse must possess horse like qualities in a smaller size and proportion. Pony-like traits are not desirable in the modern miniature horse.
5. PRESCENSE



MHCGB CLASSES; RULES & GUIDANCE.

Halter Classes

- **Refined** type classes may be split into Category A, B & C height sections
- **Middleweight** type classes may be split into Category A, B & C height sections
- **Draft** type classes may be split into Category A, B & C height sections

Show Horse In Miniature section is split into Show Hack, Riding Horse, Show Hunter, Show Cob, TB/Arabian type and is judged on the horse most resembling that specified type in miniature. These classes may be split into Category A, B & C height sections

Guidance:

Hack type



An animal of beauty, refinement and elegance with extravagant daisy cutting action. The typical show hack will be thoroughbred, some have a percentage of Arabian bloodlines.

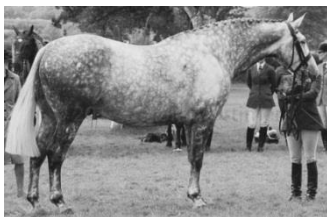
Riding horse type

An animal that does not require the refinement of the hack nor the substance of the hunter. This horse fits between the hack and the hunter type. Elegant, well moving with good length of rein.

(Photo Tiger Attack owned and bred by Billy Moran)



Hunter type



A horse of quality and substance that fills the eye, powerfully built, well proportioned in body and limb.

Cob type

A quality head, well set on shoulder, short back, deep girth, short cannons and plenty of bone. Workman like. Note.. no need to hog the mane.



Arabian type



Probably the easiest to recognise of all. The Arabian has a dished head, flat croup, well set on neck, quality limbs and extravagant floating, straight action.

Falabella classes are open to Registered FBS purebred horses not exceeding 38" at maturity (measured at the last hairs of the mane).

Partbred Falabella classes are open to horses with either parent registered with a FBS Society and not exceeding 38".

AMHCGB classes are open to Miniature Horses not exceeding 42" and will be offered in height/studbook sections.

- Studbook A - Pure American issued with a MHCGB/AMHCGB Passport (both parents are AMHA, AMHR or ASPC) or an overstamped EU passport issued by an appropriate EU studbook
- Studbook B - Part American issued with a MHCGB/AMHCGB Passport (one parent is AMHA, AMHR or ASPC)
- Studbook C - Any horse which holds a MHCGB/AMHCGB Basic Identity Passport
- (NB Horses overstamped for the Showing Register ONLY are not eligible for AMHCGB classes).

AMHA sanctioned classes are run strictly under AMHA rules. All exhibitors are therefore asked to acquaint themselves with the current AMHA rule book (www.amha.org). The section is open to horses registered with the AMHA. Please send copy front and back of registration papers with entry.

AMHA unaffiliated classes open to horses 34” and under with AMHA papers.

AMHR unaffiliated classes - Division A open to horses 34” and under with AMHR papers.

Division B open to horses over 34” with AMHR papers

ASPC unaffiliated classes - open to horses with ASPC papers.

AMHA/ASPC & AMHR Partbred classes are open to horses registered or eligible to be registered in Studbook B of The AMHCGB studbook ie with only one parent registered with AMHA/ASPC or AMHR studbooks please put sire and/or dam registration numbers on entry form.

Born & Bred In The UK classes are open to horses not exc 38” who have been Born and Bred in the UK carrying a UK registered prefix.

British Bred classes are open to horses with neither parent registered with AMHA or FBS or of unknown breeding not exceeding 34” at maturity.

British Shetland open to both SPSBS registered and non-registered British Shetlands. Miniature classes not to exceed 34”, Standards not to exceed 42” (measured to the withers). The pony’s ears may be trimmed flat but there must be no trimming inside the ear. Trimming of whiskers on the jaw line is acceptable. Manes and tails must not be pulled but tails may be rough trimmed to clear the ground if dragging. Leg feathers must not be trimmed. No false hair, artificial colouring or make-up should be used. Working ponies of four years old or over only may be clipped in the interest of welfare. Under no circumstances should foals be clipped. Ponies should always be shown in a clean condition.

Gelding class is open to gelded horses not exceeding 38”.

Veteran class is open to horses not exceeding 38” and aged 15yrs +. Age and condition will be taken into consideration. Class may be split into age categories if number permit.

Ultra Mini class is open to any horse not to exceed 30” at maturity.

Restricted classes are open to handlers and or horses that have never been placed Supreme, Reserve or Res Res at our National Spring Show or National Championship Show or at MHOYS, BMHS breed show, HOYS, RIHS or Any Other Miniature Show.

Colour classes are judged on 80% colour, 20% conformation. Horses not to exceed 42” and may be split into the three height sections.

Horses are walked into the arena and then asked to turn and walk in the opposite direction. Horses are then lined nose to tail in rows, allowing space for the judge to pass between each horse to assess. The horses are trotted at the discretion of the judge.

The following classes are available:-

- Spotted ie; appaloosa, pinto, skewbald
- Broken Colour ie; pinto, piebald, skewbald
- Solid Colour ie; bay, chestnut, grey, black, brown.
- Any Other Colour ie; silvers, dilutes, palominos, buckskin, grulla, roan etc.

Amateur Owner

It is expected that Exhibitors will compete in the true spirit of these Rules. MHCGB reserve the right, in their absolute discretion, to reclassify an Exhibitor's Amateur status/entry should they deem it necessary.

Amateur Definition - An amateur is a person who does not derive income from working with horses/ponies during the current or previous season. You are NOT an Amateur if :-

- You obtain income from working with horses or ponies either as a self employed person or as an employee
- You engage in breeding, livery, buying, selling or dealing in a commercial capacity.
- Receive remuneration for employment in the connection with horses in racing, showing, livery or riding school, **teaching or coaching, as means of deriving a source of income, (instruction at Pony Club and Riding Club excepted). This Rule does not include the suppliers of ancillary services in equestrianism, such as farriers, vets, therapists or administrative office roles. (2026)**
- Show a horse owned or sponsored by a company or commercial firm.
- The horse/pony is stabled in a professional show producer's yard during the current season.

You may keep your horse or pony at part livery or DIY Livery as long as the owner of the yard does not fall under the definition of Professional Show Producer and you may receive lessons / training in either a clinic or one to one basis.

On the day when an exhibit is competing in an Amateur class, Professionals are not allowed to work in/show prep the relevant animal.

The definition by MHCGB of a Professional Show Producer/Trainer is a person who derives income from keeping and training horses and ponies for the show ring even if this is not their sole or main source of income. Current Season - The season starts 1st January of each year

Ownership: All owners should be registered in the passport as per the latest DEFRA regulations. **Professional Show Producer/Trainer/:** A person who undertakes the preparation/ training/ keeping at livery, production of equines or competes as a jobbing Handler.

2026 amendment- Professional Show Groom: A person who is employed full, part-time or is self-employed and receives remuneration, monetary or otherwise, for the preparation/training/keeping or production of equines.

2026 amendment: No commercial branding can be visible in the ring, during an Amateur class (including Amateur Home Produced); this applies to equines, handlers and any attendees; this also includes outside the ring, or online i.e., on social media. Care must be taken to not market sponsorship in any way shape or form which could be then attributed towards an Amateur; any such actions will result in the loss of Amateur status.

Amateur Owned Trained and Exhibited Open to horses who are owned, trained and exhibited by an amateur owner as defined above. Any family member may also show the horse.

The MHCGB Breeder of the Year is open to Miniature Horse breeders who are members of MHCGB who register their horses in the AMHCGB Breeding Book. Points will be accumulated from the two National Shows. (Spring & National Grand Championship show). Awarded at the National Grand Championship Show.

Progeny / Breeding classes horses enter the ring and are lined up nose to tail in groups. The judge, at his discretion, may ask to see horses' movement.

- **Produce Of Dam** are judged with emphasis on the reproductive likeness, uniformity, quality of breed characteristics and confirmation. The minimum of two offspring and a maximum of 4 per entry. Any sex of offspring may be shown. One number is issued per group of horses.
- **Get Of Sire** class is be judged with emphasis on the reproductive likeness, uniformity, quality of breed characteristics and confirmation. The minimum of two progeny and a maximum of 4 per entry. Any sex may be shown. One number is issued per group of horses.
- **Two, Three Horses By The Same Owner** any two/three horses owned by the same owner. Judged on quality of conformation and breed type.
- **Horses By The Same Breeder** judged on quality of conformation, breed type and similarity.
- **Pairs** class is judged on likeness of both horses.

Handler classes are judged on the way the handler presents and works with the horse and include:

- **Newcomer** Open to any exhibitor in their first year of miniature horse showing. Rosettes to all exhibitors; basic help will be offered
- **Young Handler** Open to exhibitors not exceeding 12yrs
- **Intermediate Handler** Open To exhibitors 12yrs to 18yrs
- **Golden Handler** Open to Exhibitors 50yrs plus

Costume classes include Fancy dress and Concours d'Elegance. These can contain both Junior, halter and driven entrants, and classes may be split accordingly.

Concours d'elegance includes;

- **Traditional Edwardian / Victorian** style classes in which arms must be covered and a high-necked jacket worn.
- **Open** style classes in which any style of elegant costume can be worn.

All costumes must be fit for purpose and not cause a trip hazard.

Driving

All Exhibitors competing in the Driving classes must have Third Party Liability Insurance, a copy of which must be included with entries.

1. Horses are to be serviceably sound and must be three years old or older.
2. Drivers should strive to present an appropriate turnout that conforms to the class entered.
Suggested attire:-
 - Gentlemen - hat, jacket, tie, trousers, gloves.
 - Ladies - tailored suit, skirt and blouse or evening dress (where appropriate) hat and gloves.
3. Whips must be carried at all times; failure will result in disqualification.
4. No child under sixteen years may drive a stallion.
5. In the absence of an adequate warm-up arena, it is required that a warm-up period of at least five minutes be provided before the first driving class of each grouping of driving classes in the schedule, each day of the show.
6. A judge **MUST** excuse from competition any unsafe vehicle, equipment, or horse for that class.
7. Headers: A header is an appropriately attired (show attire or unlettered jacket with suitable footwear) capable person 18 years of age or over. This attendant shall take **NO** action that will affect the performance of any Miniature Horse. Only one header is allowed per horse. The header must not have a whip and shall remain at least two paces distant from the head of the horse when the judge is inspecting the horse, and at all other times unless assistance in controlling the horse is needed. Adult (18 years of age or older) headers are required for all youth drivers and optional for all other drivers.
8. No horse shall be left unattended while put to a vehicle. Disqualification for the balance of the show may result at the show manager's discretion.

9. No entry may leave the ring after judging has begun without permission from the judge. If an accident or equipment failure occurs which needs medical attention or repair, those involved shall remain in position and all other entries shall move to the centre of the arena.
10. During a class, adjustments /repairs to equipment may be made upon permission from the judge. A groom may assist with the adjustment without penalty. After judging has begun, no attendant may enter the arena without the permission of the judge. Only one time out per class/per horse once horse has entered the ring. Maximum time not to exceed three minutes.
11. Official time outs must be declared by the judge or judges. More than one time out per exhibitor shall result in disqualification.
12. Boots shall not be used on any horse except obstacle/jumping classes.

Novice Driven

The class is open to horse/handler combinations which have not taken Driven Champion or Reserve Driven Champion at ANY horse show. (with the exception of Concours D' Elegance Driven)

British Show Driving

All classes are judged similarly, with the cleanliness of the complete turnout top priority. The way of going, including fit and suitability of the harness and vehicle are also always included in the judging process. All turnouts should have a spares kit, this should consist of, spare rein and trace, a halter, hoof pick, knife, hole punch, a length of string. and a mobile phone.

- **Exercise** classes show how the turnout in a 2 or 4 wheel vehicle, that is suitable to exercise the horse or pony.
- **Pleasure** classes allow the horse or pony to be in a 2 or 4 wheel vehicle, that is suitable for carrying passengers across varied terrain, this class the judge can ask for a specific movement i.e. reversing into a space.
- **Private Driving** classes shows the horse or pony is in a vintage vehicle, and the turnout will be far more elegant than that of a pleasure turnout.
- **Breed Specific** classes the judge will be looking for the best stamp of the breed, showing its natural characteristics whilst in harness.
- **Multiple Hitch** classes horses should be well matched in movement and work well together.

American Driving

Single Pleasure Driving

The depiction, balance line and descriptive paragraph are to be used to define the "ideal" pleasure horse and are in no way intended to eliminate horses not capable of the ideal. Balance should be 70% to rear The IDEAL Single Pleasure Horse shall be shown with contact on the reins at all times. The horse should be animated and exhibit presence, while

in the bridle, demonstrating a “bold” stride with freedom of movement. The neck carriage should be “up” with the poll being the highest point and flexion to fit horse’s conformation.

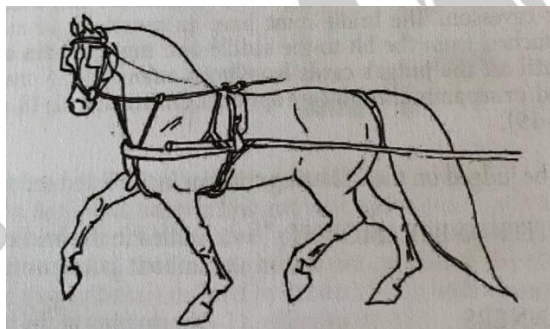
To be judged on the following criteria, in the listed order:

- PERFORMANCE PARAMOUNT Presence and elevation with forward impulsion, steady in each gait with definite gait changes.
- QUALITY A bold picture, demonstrating freedom of movement, while in the bridle, in a collected manner displaying the horse’s athletic ability with forward impulsion at a collected trot. At the working trot, the horse exhibits more power, speed and motion. It is performed with a lengthening of stride but no decrease of collection or loss of form.
- MANNERS Horse should appear willing to work with a quiet mouth.
- ATTITUDE Settled in the bridle with, smooth gait transitions.
- CONFORMATION Form to function.
- APPEARANCE Of both equipment and driver’s attire.

Class requirements: Horse must be shown both directions in the arena at the Walk, Collected Trot and Working Trot. Horse will enter counter clockwise at the Collected Trot. Horse will be required to stand quietly and back readily.

Gait requirements: The horse should give an appearance of being a pleasure to drive. Though animated, the horse should be natural and balanced in all gaits.

1. Walk: A four beat gait demonstrating collection.
2. Collected Trot: A two beat diagonal gait. Overall balance as shown above. Horse must demonstrate freedom of movement, while remaining in the bridle. It is executed in a collected manner and should display the horse’s athletic ability with forward impulsion.
3. Working Trot: At the Working Trot the horse exhibits more power, speed and motion. It is performed with a lengthened stride.



Country Pleasure Driving

The IDEAL Country Pleasure Horse shall be shown with contact on the reins at all times. Stride should be “flowing”, exhibiting knee action and/or reach with hock action while not showing excessive motion (as described in gaits). The horse should be in the bridle with

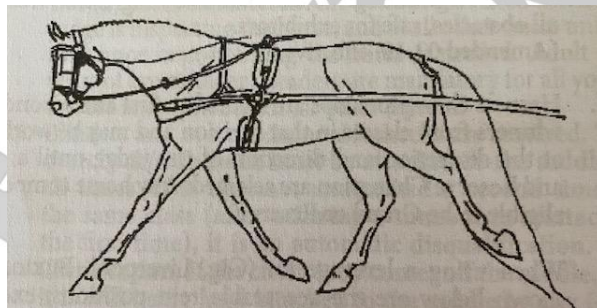
neck carriage comfortable with poll being the highest point and flexion to fit horse's conformation.

- **ATTITUDE PARAMOUNT** Settled in the bridle, with smooth gait transitions.
- **MANNERS** Horse should appear willing to work with a quiet mouth.
- **PERFORMANCE** Steady in each gait with definite gait changes.
- **QUALITY** A "pleasant" picture demonstrating freedom of movement, in the bridle, with impulsion while relaxed and easy going at the pleasure trot. Excessively high action (defined as breaking at the knee level or above) must be penalized. At the working trot the horse exhibits a lengthening of stride resulting in an increase of speed without loss of collection or form.
- **CONFORMATION** Form to function.
- **APPEARANCE** Of both equipment and drivers attire.

Class requirements: Horses must be shown both directions in the arena at the Walk, Pleasure Trot, and the Working Trot.

Horses will enter counter clockwise at the Pleasure Trot. They will be required to stand quietly and back readily. Gait requirements: It is imperative that the horse give the appearance of being a pleasure to drive. A quiet responsive mouth is paramount. All gaits to be performed with willingness, balance and smoothness as per each gait description.

1. **Walk:** A four beat, flat-footed and ground covering gait.
2. **Pleasure Trot:** A two beat diagonal gait. Overall balance as shown above. Horse must demonstrate freedom of movement, be relaxed and easy going, demonstration impulsion. Excessively high action (defined as breaking at the knee level or above) must be penalized.
3. **Working Trot:** Lengthening of stride from the Pleasure Trot resulting in an increase of speed without loss of form. Horse must demonstrate freedom of movement.



HORSES MAY ENTER EITHER COUNTRY PLEASURE OR SINGLE PLEASURE

Carriage Driving

Is similar to the driving classes seen at AMHA shows except that overchecks and martingales are prohibited, whip must always be carried in your hand and breeching is required for turnouts without brakes. You have working trot and trot on, walk and rein back. This division will also include draft turnouts.

Getting started, you can use your pleasure cart with the vinyl boot removed. While the current proposal would like to see wood wheels, you can use your wire wheels. It is recommended that you make your basket match the rest of your vehicle.

Attire: - The driver must wear a hat, lap robe (apron) and gloves (recommended brown)

Carriage Driving Pleasure

To be judged 70% on manners, movement and style; 30% on conformation. To be judged both ways of the ring at a walk, working trot and trot on. To stand quietly and attentively while in the lineup and to rein back. Entries chosen for a workout may be worked on both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure of eight and / or perform other appropriate tests.

Carriage Driving Turnout

To be judged 70% on the condition, fit and appropriateness of the harness and vehicle, neatness and appropriateness of attire and overall impression; 30% on performance, manners and way of going. To be shown both ways of the ring at a walk working trot and trot on. To stand quietly and attentively while in the lineup and rein back. Entries chosen for a workout may be worked both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure of eight and / or perform other appropriate tests.

Carriage Driving Working

A pleasure driving class in which the entries are judged primarily on the suitability of the horse to provide a pleasant drive. To be judged 80% on performance, manners and way of going and 20% on condition and for of harness, vehicle and neatness of attire. To be shown both ways of the ring at a walk, working trout, and trot on. To stand quietly and attentively while in the lineup and to rein back. Entries chosen for a workout may be worked on both ways of the arena at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure of eight and/or perform other appropriate tests.

Carriage Driving Reinsmanship

A pleasure driving class in which entries are judged primarily on the ability and skill of the driver. To be shown both ways of the ring at a walk, working trot and trot on. To stand quietly and attentively while in the lineup and rein back. Entries chosen for a workout may be worked both ways of the area at any gait requested by the judge and may be asked to execute a figure of eight and/or perform other appropriate tests. The driver should be seated comfortably on the box so to be relaxed and effective. Either the one or two-handed method of driving is acceptable. Comment both methods, the elbows and arms should be close to the body with an allowing but steady hand enabling a consistent 'feel' with the animals mouth. Drivers should not be penalised or rewarded for using one general style

over another. In order to evaluate the driver's versatility, the judge may request a test involving driving with one hand. To be judged 75% on the handling of reins and whip, control, posture and overall appearance of the driver. 25% on the condition of the harness and vehicle and neatness of attire.

Technical Driving

Cones Driving

- All animals must be 4 years and over.
- Horses complete a timed coned course incurring time penalties of 2 seconds when lowering balls from the cones.
- A judge may dismiss from the ring any unsafe horse, vehicle or equipment.

Driven Dressage

- All animals must be 4 years and over.
- Horses should be in a suitable cart for their style of driving. You may have a caller.

Driven dressage will only take place at some of our larger venues, however this will require a minimum of 3 pre-entries at each show it is offered, or it will be removed from the schedule for that show - this will be notified in advance to any competitor who has pre-entered.

Mini Driving Trial

- All animals must be 4 years and over.
- You will be asked to do a short dressage test followed by a combined cone and obstacle section.
- Hard hats must be worn by ALL competitors.
- Grooms must be in ring, wearing gloves and hard hat.
- Horses may wear boots or bandages.
- Any harness or cart allowed provided safe and appropriate to the horse.

Versatility (AMHA)

The horse will perform three disciplines in one class. Harness Driving, Halter, Hunter Jumper.

All three disciplines to be judged equally and combined for final placing. Any horse disqualified from one division is disqualified from the class.

- Horses must be three years of age or older (AMHA rule).
- One Assistant or Header will be allowed in the arena only for the heading and unharnessing of the horse. Exhibitor and assistant must be properly attired.

Class Procedure:

- Horses will enter the arena at a pleasure trot or a collected trot then perform a working trot and walk in both directions of the arena.

- Headers will be asked to enter the arena.
- Horses will be asked to rein back.
- The judge will signal the driver and header, as a team, to remove cart and harness from horse and do any grooming or halter changes. Two minute time limit.
- Each horse and handler will go to the rail in order of completion.
- Any horse not removed from cart or harness will be disqualified.
- Headers will be asked to exit the arena with cart and harness, in an orderly manner.

HORSES ARE TO REMAIN IN THE SAME ORDER.

- Horses will be judged at halter. No teeth will be checked. Horses will line up head to tail for inspection. Horses will not be asked to move.
- Horses will jump a course of three jumps to demonstrate horses' style, manner and way of going

Performance Classes

MHCGB performance classes, which include Halter Obstacle, Jumper, Hunter Jumper, Dressage (In-hand, Long Reined, Driven), Puissance and Liberty are open to any equine eligible to be entered on the MHCGB Show Register or hold a passport issued by the Miniature Horse Club of Great Britain.

To take part in performance classes, animals must be

- 2yrs+ for halter obstacle, liberty and in-hand dressage
- 3yrs+ for jumping, any long reined classes and all driving classes.

(The show age of the horse is determined from January 1st preceding its birthday)

General Rules

Dress code: polo shirt or show shirt, with smart trousers or jeans. All exhibitors must wear gloves and suitable footwear.

All junior exhibitors (16 years and under) are to wear an approved British Standard hardhat.

Any exhibitor displaying inappropriate or rough handling of any horse in any discipline will be eliminated at the judge's discretion.

The judge's decision is final.

There will be no requirement for the horses to be let off their lead in either Novice or Open sections.

Equipment required

American performance halter or normal head collar, a lead rein between 8ft and 12ft long, a normal bitted bridle or a bit-less bridle, roller and long reins. A dressage whip is permitted in the dressage section should you wish to carry one.

Discipline Specific Details

Halter Obstacle

The obstacles will be set and differ in difficulty between the Novice and Open classes.

All horses should be worked in an American performance halter / head collar with NO BIT (NOT a show halter) and on a lead between 8 and 12 feet long. The handler is not allowed to carry a whip of any sort.

The judge will mark the horse and handler on the following at each obstacle:

- 1) Calmness of Horse
- 2) Completion of Obstacle

A maximum of 10 points per obstacle can be gained.

There will also be a mark out of 20 given for Competence of Handler throughout the course.

Maximum time per obstacle is 60 seconds, horses are then asked to advance to the next obstacle. You should only move onto the next obstacle after either completion of the previous obstacle or with the judge's permission. Abandoning an incomplete obstacle without the judge's approval will result in a zero score for that obstacle.

Long Reined Obstacle

All horses should be in a bridle (bit-less bridles are permitted, head collars ARE NOT a bit-less bridle), roller and long reins. Cruppers are allowed, Overchecks / Sidechecks are not permitted. The handler may carry a dressage whip

The judge will mark the horse and handler on the following at each obstacle:

- 1) Calmness of Horse
- 2) Completion of Obstacle

A maximum of 10 points per obstacle can be gained.

There will also be a mark out of 20 given for Competence of Handler throughout the course.

Maximum time per obstacle is 60 seconds, horses are then asked to advance to the next obstacle – You should only move onto the next obstacle after either completion of the previous obstacle or with the judge's permission. Abandoning an incomplete obstacle without the judge's approval will result in a zero score for that obstacle.

Jumper

Courses will have between 6 and 8 jumps.

A course is considered set once a horse has started the course.

Novice classes will be set no higher than 18 inches in the first round.

Open classes will be between 18 and 28 inches in the first round.

Jumps will increase between 1 and 6 inches per round.

After reaching maximum height (44 inches), clear competitors keep jumping until tie is broken – this may be over a shorter course.

Horse can compete in either a bitted bridle or an American performance halter / head collar. The handler is not allowed to carry a whip of any sort.

Refusals, circling or path crossing will incur a 3-point penalty per occurrence and knock downs will incur a 4point penalty per fault.

An “In” & “Out” is two jumps (if they refuse the second fence, they cannot jump the first one again).

Elimination:

3 Refusals. Off course. Baiting. Chain over nose or in mouth. Failure to pass between start and finish cones. Loss of control. Carrying a whip.

Hunter Jumper

Courses will have between 6 and 8 jumps.

A course is considered set once a horse has started the course.

Novice classes will be set no higher than 18 inches.

Open classes will be between 18 and 28 inches.

An “In” & “Out” is one jump (if they refuse the second fence, they must jump the first one again).

Course is only covered once by each animal; they are then required to do a trot past for the judge to consider movement and soundness. The horse’s performance is then scored out of 100:

- **90 - 100** - an excellent performer and good mover that jumps the entire course with cadence, balance and style
- **80 - 89** - a good performer that jumps all fences reasonably well or an excellent performer that commits one or two minor faults
- **70 - 79** - average fair mover that makes no serious faults but lacks the style, cadence & good balance of the scopier horses or good performer that makes a few minor faults
- **60 - 69** - poor movers that make minor mistakes or fair to average movers that have one or two poor fences but no major faults or disobediences
- **50 - 59** - a horse that commits one major fault such as a hind knockdown, refusal, break of gait, cross-canter or drops a leg
- **30 - 49** - a horse that commits two or more major faults, including front knockdowns, refusals, or jumps in a manner that otherwise endangers the horse and/or handler
- **10 - 29** - a horse that avoids elimination but jumps in such an unsafe and dangerous manner so achieves a minimal score

Elimination:

3 refusals. Off course. Crossing own path. Baiting. Chain over nose or in mouth. Unsound horse. Failure to pass between start and finish cones. Loss of control. Carrying a whip.

Dressage

The set tests for the current year are available under the Performance Section of the club website.

The Novice test will be split into an in-hand class and a long-reined class - both will do the same test; these will be judged and placed as individual classes.

Competitors will only be allowed to enter EITHER the Novice In-hand OR the Novice Long-reined dressage at each show. However, as you progress or maybe forget kit(!), you will be able to swap between them during the season - so just because you choose in-hand at one show does not mean you cannot do long-reined at the next, or vice-versa.

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Novice competitors can have a caller; Open competitors will be expected to learn the test.

All horses should be in a bridle (bit-less bridles are permitted, head collars ARE NOT a bit-less bridle). In-hand novice competitors require a single lead; all long reined competitors must be in a roller and long reins. Cruppers are allowed; Overchecks / Sidechecks are not. The handler may carry a dressage whip.

In-hand / Long reined test judging will take place as per a ridden competition.

Puissance

A single jump which will increase in height with every round.

Elimination - refusal or knockdown.

If you go clear, you go through to the next round.

Handler must not go over the jump.

If on the final round there are only two competitors - one knocks down and one refuses, the knock down will place higher than the refusal.

Liberty

Horses are to be judged on style, grace, animation, gaits, presence, music and suitability, ease of catching. Judging begins when the halter is removed.

Time of liberty is 1 ½ minutes, time to catch, 1 ½ minutes. (If not caught until after the 1½ minutes the horse is disqualified).

One exhibitor (wearing the number) and one handler are allowed in the ring. Horses are to be caught by the exhibitor only.

Touching of the horse during 1 ½ minutes at liberty will count for disqualification.

The following assessment can be made.

- Style and Grace 30 points
- Animation and Presence 30 points
- Gaits 30 points
- Music and Suitability 10 points
- Catch 10 points

MHCGB PERFORMANCE CHAMPIONSHIPS.

Eligibility;

- 1) Take part in all three disciplines at MHCGB National Spring and Championship show
 - A) Dressage
 - B) In-hand Halter Obstacles
 - C) In-hand Jumping
- 2) Open to MHCGB members only and take part in these three disciplines on Performance Day at the National Grand Championship Show.
- 3) The equine must be 3 years old or over to take part due to the jumping aspect.
- 4) Open to any equine eligible to be over stamped to the Show Register of MHCGB or hold a passport from AMHCGB.
- 5) Same horse / handler combination for the whole season. You can compete multiple animals if you wish.
- 6) If four or more Junior (16yrs or under) competitors compete an additional Junior Performance Championship will be offered.

THE ULTIMATE MHCGB PERFORMANCE HORSE AND HANDLER SUPREME AWARD.

All three events must be completed at a show for that show's placings to count.

- 1st place 10 points
- 2nd 8 points,
- 3rd 6 points,
- 4th 4 points,
- 5th 2 points
- 6th 1 point.

(Points are awarded on a horse / handler combination)

You may compete in either Novice or Open section for the season. You only need to move into the Open section if you have been crowned Novice Performance Champion at a past MHCGB National Championship Show, or if you choose to move into the Open section. Once you have moved into Open you should no longer compete in the Novice classes.

Equipment required

American performance halter or normal head collar, a lead rein between 8ft and 12ft long, a normal bitted bridle or bit-less bridle, roller and long reins. A dressage whip is permitted in the dressage section should you wish to carry one.

ALL AMHA Performance classes will run under AMHA rules.

Please ensure you read the relevant section of the AMHA rule book.



MHCGB CODE OF PRACTICE & GUIDANCE

For the Welfare of Horses and Ponies at MHCGB Events

As a club MHCGB are adopting The Showing Council Guidelines for The Welfare of Horses and Ponies at Events.

The standards developed under British Equestrian's (BEF) Charter for the Horse have helped the

approach to this guidance. As a member of BEF, The Showing Council has committed to endorse

the highest standards of equine welfare, wellbeing and ethics included in this Charter.

The Charter for the Horse has been developed with BEF stakeholder groups to be adopted across

the equestrian industry. Under the six headings of empathy, care, respect, consideration, ethics

and learning, the Charter outlines actions we must observe to guarantee the individual mental,

physical and behavioural needs of our horses are met.

At the heart of the Charter are the internationally recognised 'three Fs' of freedom, friends and forage, and the Five Domains Model (Mellor et al 2020) which refer to nutrition, physical environment, health, behavioural interactions and mental state as the crucial factors for an animal's positive experience.

The Five Domains Model emphasises both the negative and positive aspects of welfare, moving beyond preventing suffering to positively promoting wellbeing and helping horses attain a good life. It is widely used in research, policy-making and veterinary practice and across all animal keeping sectors and may also be known as good husbandry.

1. Responsibility for the horse lies with the owner (even if they are not present) as well as the individual who is in charge of the horse (or keeper) on the day of a show. All those responsible for horses have a duty of care in all circumstances to meet their horse's welfare needs as undertaken in the Charter for the Horse and as set out in law.
2. These people must follow the advice of stewards and officials. Under the Animal Welfare Act (2006) every horse owner or those responsible has a "duty of care" to ensure the animals' well-being. This suffering and ill treatment are no longer the only grounds for prosecution under animal welfare law. It is now an offence to fail to take adequate steps to ensure a horse's welfare, even if the animal is not yet at the point of suffering.
3. The spread of equine disease is a perpetual risk when attending shows. Horse owners should act responsibly and not attend a show if there is a disease outbreak on their yard, even if the horse due to attend a show appears well, because some diseases have an incubation period of up to 21 days.
4. Horses being transported to a show must be accompanied by their passport which must state the current owners.

Transport

5. General animal welfare provisions apply on ALL journeys. The horse must be fit to travel, provided with feed, water and rest stops as needed. The vehicle and loading/unloading facilities must be safe and designed to avoid injury and those handling the horse must be competent and not cause the animal unnecessary fear or distress.
6. Exhibitors should familiarise themselves with the Welfare Acts, to ensure they have the necessary vehicle and transporter authorisation.
7. A Certificate of Competence for transporting horses is a compulsory qualification for individuals transporting horses for economic purposes/activity on journeys over 65km (40

miles) in the UK. This will demonstrate an individual (either the driver or attendant) has been

assessed and has the knowledge and skills to ensure the welfare of the horses during transit.

The qualification covers various aspects of animal welfare, transport regulations, and practical

handling. Economic activity is not defined in the regulations but would include anyone transporting horses for hire or reward or in the course of business or trade and can include those paid to transport horses to an event.

8. A general duty of care exists under UK domestic law, primarily the Animal Welfare Act 2006,

which mandates that all owners and keepers must prevent their horses from suffering and meet their welfare needs. This means any person transporting horses must ensure they are prepared for and habituated to undertake the journey (both mentally and physically) and that

the journey is planned to be as short as possible, and that the transport conditions, including

space, ventilation, access to food, water, and rest, are appropriate so as to ensure the horse's

wellbeing.

9. In extremes of temperatures, consideration must be given to the best time of day to travel and to minimising travel outside of these times.

10. Travelling can be stressful and tiring for horses and can compromise their wellbeing, potentially weakening their immune systems. This should be taken into consideration at all times, particularly during the busy show season, avoiding frequent long journeys.

11. Transported horses must be accompanied by their up to date equine identification document (passport) in accordance with Equine Identification Regulations for England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and across these borders.

12. Any vehicle used to transport horses must be safe and designed for the purpose.

13. It is recommended that horsebox or trailer recovery insurance is in place.

Health

14. Exhibitors should be aware of their horses' usual temperature and vital signs in order that they can identify when they deviate from the norm, potentially indicating that they are

incubating disease. Further information is available on the British Equestrian website in the Health & Biosecurity section.

Vaccinations.

15. Exhibitors must check the specific vaccination requirements for each event and comply with vaccination requirements of affiliated societies.

16. No horse should be ill-treated in any way on the show ground.

17. The horse should be offered water regularly throughout the day but not immediately prior to a class. Water should be offered more frequently during hot weather. Some horses prefer to drink water only from their own yard. It is therefore a good idea to bring water in a container to prevent the horse from becoming dehydrated.

18. The horse should not be offered ice cold water to drink.

19. Allowing the horse to graze in hand and /or providing hay/haylage will help keep the horse occupied, relaxed, prevent it from becoming bored and help maintain a healthy gut.

20. Please be aware those who are stabling over at our events all stables will be checked by our Welfare Officer at close of show – any horses found to be without water will be reported and water will be offered. MHCG work on the 5 Freedoms:

- Freedom from Hunger and Thirst.
- Freedom from Discomfort.
- Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease.
- Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour.
- Freedom from Fear and Distress.

The welfare of all Miniature Horses competing is of paramount importance any person found to be ill-treating their Horses will be removed from the venue and membership suspended until an enquiry has taken place.

21. For safety reasons a horse or pony should only be tied to a horsebox / trailer if it can be quickly and safely released in the event of an emergency or the animal becoming distressed.

22. The weather conditions will affect the welfare requirements of the horse. In hot weather use any available shade to keep the horse out of direct sunlight.

23. During summer weather, horse boxes and trailers can get very hot. If the horse is kept onboard ensure the roof vents and windows are open and the ramp left down.

24. Young horses will require confident handling. The show atmosphere can prove exciting to youngsters lacking experience. Shouting and hitting the animal in most circumstances will make the situation worse.

25. Stallions should be handled by experienced persons 16 years or over. The temperament for the stallion must be taken into consideration and he should not be taken to a show ground if he is likely to be a danger to anyone present. If it is the opinion of the show officials that the stallion may cause an accident to any person or horse at the show ground, the stallion will be disqualified and asked to leave the show ground.

26. Competitors must consider the health and safety of other competitors, spectators and those working and assisting at the show.

27. To prevent the spread of disease, horses should not share water buckets or troughs.

Exhibitors are strongly advised to provide their own feed, buckets, hay nets and not to loan or borrow grooming kit, tack or other equipment.

There is an increased disease risk when stabling horses away from home. Best practice is to remove any pre-existing bedding and treat the stable with an effective disinfectant before bedding down with fresh bedding material.

28. By entering, the competitor has agreed to abide by the rules, code of conduct and guidelines set by the show organisers.

29. Under the Welfare Acts, the parents / guardians of under 16 year olds are responsible for the welfare of their children's animals.

30. Handlers should recognise potential problems and keep a good distance from any individual having difficulties controlling their horse.

31. The temperament of horses must be taken into consideration, it should not be on a showground if they are likely to be a danger to anyone or any other horse present.

32. Blatantly dangerous and irresponsible handling of the horse will result in disqualification from the class and the show at the discretion of show management.

33. Every competitor should keep a safe distance away from other horses.

34. Competitors should follow instructions from the show stewards and judges.

35. The judge's decision is final. No competitor should argue with the show steward or judge. There is an appeals process that can be followed after the class.

36. All accidents must be reported to one of the show organisers.

37. The health and safety of all those who attend the show ground is vital. With this in mind every person attending may be required to sign in with their arrival time and a contact number and sign out on departure; this enables us to account for all those attending. At MHCGB area & National Shows this will be at the secretary's desk.



JUDGES RULES & GUIDELINES.

Judge Applications.

Judge applicants are required to complete the MHCGB application form available at www.mhcgb.co.uk and may be subject to assessment.

Annual Appointment: Judges are appointed annually. The Directors reserve the right in their absolute discretion to not appoint or re-appoint to the Judges' Panel and remove Judges privilege from the Panel at any point without prejudice.

Judge Levels.

Level 2 judges: Judges enter at level 2 and may judge Area Shows and can progress to level 1 after judging two shows and attending an MHCGB judges/educational seminar.

Level 1 Judges: is eligible to judge HOYS qualifiers/National/County/Championship Show/Assess Gradings, mentor probationer judges and will have attended an MHCGB judges/educational seminar.

Level 3 Performance only.

Probationary Judges

Judges on no other breed society panels, on being accepted, are required to apprentice judge with a Level 1 judge, who will report on the suitability of the probationer at two shows. It is the responsibility of the Probationary Judge to make the necessary arrangements. Probationary Judges must not apprentice with any judge related to or are friends/acquainted with.

Junior Judges Programme.

MHCGB offer a junior Judges Programme open to 14 to 24 year olds by way of a progression to the MHCGB Judge Panel in the future.

Applicants are required to complete an application form available at www.mhcgb.co.uk. The programme will entail ring stewarding, attending training days and learner judging with mentor judges to gain valuable experience.

From 2021 all judges will be expected to sit a rule book test biannually, sent via email. Failure to complete will result in removal from the MHCGB judges panel.

Regulations.

Judges are required to acquaint themselves with the MHCGB show rules and it is advisable to have a copy of the MHCGB Rule Book, (which can also be found at www.mhcg.co.uk), with you during your judge's appointment.

1. Judges Who Compete: A Judge shall not be an Exhibitor, Trainer, Producer, or Groom, in or out of the ring, in any classes at any Show, on the same day, at which he/she, or an Immediate Family Member, is officiating as a Judge. (2025) This Rule also applies to Probationary Judges.
 - (i) A Judge must not knowingly judge any member, or a close relative of this member, who has shown a Horse belonging to them or a close relative and/or produced or stabled a Horse for them or a close relative during the current or previous season.
 - (ii) Judges must not knowingly judge any member for whom they have shown a Horse during the previous or current season.
 - (iii) A Judge must not knowingly judge any member that they have had a direct connection or business association, or any relationship that can be deemed a conflict of interest, financial or otherwise, nor is in the employment of someone they also have a direct or business connection with in the current or previous season. This ruling excludes service fees for stallions and keep for mares whilst at stud.
2. Judges are required to acquaint themselves with the Breed Standard of Perfection.
3. Judges shall appear for their assignment suitably attired to appear before an audience.
4. MHCGB asks all judges to carefully consider their use of social media and to avoid communicating about any horses or competitors they have judged or may judge during the season. MHCGB requests that all Judges refrain from commenting on social media posts regarding horses that they may find themselves judging. Judges are required to report to show management any contact made by an owner/exhibitor/handler/member prior to a show they are book to officiate at.
5. Judges are required not to accept Social Media Friend Requests from Miniature Horse Owners prior to an advertised judging appointment
6. Conflicts of interest for Judges:
 - (i) A Judge of MHCGB has a duty to avoid any conflict of interest as per our rules and policies and should not act in any way that undermines the integrity of MHCGB.
 - (ii) A conflict arises when a Judge is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity.
 - (iii) Any activity which even appears to look like a conflict of interest should be avoided. If you are in any doubt you should immediately inform the office in writing to determine whether the activity is unethical, improper or might damage the reputation and standing of MHCGB.
 - (iv) All Judges must declare any gifts or hospitality of any value received in the current or previous season, before undertaking any judging commitments for MHCGB.

- (v) If a judge accepts any hospitality from a competitor or owner at the show they are judging at, it is considered a Conflict of Interest.
 - (vi) MHCGB asks all judges to carefully consider their use of social media and to avoid communicating about any horses or competitors they have judged or may judge in the future.
 - (vii) Any breach of these rules could result in disciplinary action by MHCGB.
 - (viii) At any point the Directors can call into question any conflict of interest they deem inappropriate and act accordingly. The Directors findings will be final and may result in horses or Judges being removed from any shows affiliated to MHCGB.
7. A judge may be hired by the Show Manager/Show secretary only who will be their only point of contact.
 8. Any judge suspended from the judge's panel will require to reapply after a two year period and will be subject to reassessment.
 9. A judge will arrive no earlier than 60 minutes prior to his/her class commencing.
 10. A judge shall not visit the stabling area, nor speak with owners, exhibitors nor their representatives nor discuss any horse entered in the show before the judging.
 11. A judge shall not review the show catalogue until judging has been completed.
 12. Each horse shall be given equal and careful consideration.
 13. All rosettes must be awarded placing first to sixth.
 14. Any horse that presents in unruly/dangerous manner may be disqualified from the ring. Similarly, if the judge feels a competitor cannot control their horse in an acceptable/safe manner they must be disqualified.

The following actions are not acceptable and will result in horse and exhibitor disqualification for the remainder of the show:-

- a) The competitor venting their anger and frustration by hitting or rough handling of the horse
- b) **2026 amendment: Shanking** which is the practice of sharp, forceful yanking of the lead rein (which often has a chain attached), to make a horse more animated in halter competitions.

This practice is considered to be an abusive training method as it applies sudden, aggressive pressure to the horse's sensitive head.

Exceptions: Shanking is only permitted in emergency situations where a horse is dangerously unruly and immediate drastic measures are necessary to regain control and prevent harm to the horse or people nearby. The horse must then immediately leave the ring or the warm up area on safety grounds.

We look to promote a calmer, more consistent communication and positive reinforcement methods to build trust and partnership .

- c) Disciplining the horse for its behaviour in the show ring after it has left the ring.

15. Competitors may not carry a whip/crop/cane, with the exception of driven classes and long rein classes

16. Any horse acting in an unruly/unsafe manner may be disqualified from a class by the judge or steward for safety reasons. **2026 amendment: Continually drawn stallions may be penalised after an initial warning.**

17. Horses are not to be shown stretched, which means all four feet are flat on the ground and at least one front and one rear cannon bone remain perpendicular to the ground. STRETCHED HORSES TO BE PENALISED (See diagram), after the initial warning by the judge in each class. It is permissible to hand set the horse.

18. Judges are asked to discourage exhibitors for sitting, squatting, kneeling in front of horses (with the exception of weanlings). If after a warning is given, exhibitors may be penalised.

19. Horses may be clipped or shown in full coat.

20. **Razoring the horses facial hair is not allowed, clipping only is acceptable.**

21. If, in the opinion of the Judge, a horse is unsound, the exhibitor shall be given the option of withdrawing the horse from the class or being placed at the bottom of the line. If this option is not accepted a Veterinary Surgeon maybe called but if not immediately available, then the Judge's decision is final.

22. Overbites/underbites that exceed 1/2 depth (thickness) of the teeth will be severely penalised, with the exception of geldings. Judges MUST check teeth on all stallions and mares.

23. MHCGB does not welcome nor approve of unsportsmanlike behaviour at ringside by competitors including but not limited to; detrimental remarks regarding the judging process, horse's placings and horses/handlers in said class will not be tolerated. Judges are required to report any such incidents to Show Management for further action.

24. Exhibitors are requested not to approach a judge for comments on their placing after a class unless initiated by the judge. Any such requests from exhibitors are required to go through Show Management.

Horses are judged on:-

- I. **CONFORMATION** – Consider the correctness of structure and conformation. Identify any faults and weaknesses
- II. **QUALITY** – Includes the harmony and balance of body parts, the refinement and density of bone in the legs and the smoothness of muscling.
- III. **WAY OF GOING** – Perhaps meriting a higher consideration. Not just the quality of movement but the technical correctness of the stride, articulation of the joints, elevation and impulsion.

- IV. **TYPE** – The horse must possess horse like qualities in a smaller size and proportion. Pony-like traits are not desirable in the modern miniature horse.
- V. **PRESCENSE**

RING STEWARDS GUIDELINES

Stewarding is an excellent way to learn more about how classes are judged and to gain invaluable ring experience, it can be a very rewarding experience and will impart much knowledge from experienced judges. Anyone who would like to undertake any stewarding duties should contact any of the MHCGB Directors/Show Management for details.

1. Stewards are expected to present themselves in a smart appearance, wearing either smart casual trousers and suitable shirt, or suit with shirt and tie for men; or skirt, smart casual trousers or suit for ladies with suitable top. Jackets/coats may be worn in cold or inclement weather. Suitable footwear. Hat. Stewards are expected to wear evening wear when applicable.
2. Stewards must carry a copy of this Rule Book during all stewarding appointments and carry a spare pen.
3. Stewards should make themselves fully conversant with all rules pertaining to the classes they are covering.
4. Stewards should be polite at all times to both their judge and to competitors.
5. Stewards will, when requested by the judge, instruct competitors as to what they are required to do - i.e. they will instruct them when to perform and how to form the line-up.
6. All classes using the MHCGB showing format, stewards must be familiar with this format.
7. Any horse that presents in unruly/dangerous manner may be disqualified from the ring or collecting ring. Similarly, if the steward feels a competitor cannot control their horse in an acceptable/safe manner they must be disqualified.

The following actions are not acceptable and will result in horse and exhibitor disqualification for the remainder of the show:-

- a) The competitor venting their anger and frustration by hitting or rough handling of the horse
- b) **2026 amendment: Shanking** which is the practice of sharp, forceful yanking of the lead rein (which often has a chain attached), to make a horse more animated in halter competitions.

This practice is considered to be an abusive training method as it applies sudden, aggressive pressure to the horse's sensitive head.

Exceptions: Shanking is only permitted in emergency situations where a horse is dangerously unruly and immediate drastic measures are necessary to regain control and prevent harm to the horse or people nearby. The horse must then immediately leave the ring or the warm up area on safety grounds.

We look to promote a calmer, more consistent communication and positive reinforcement methods to build trust and partnership .

- c) Disciplining the horse for its behaviour in the show ring after it has left the ring.

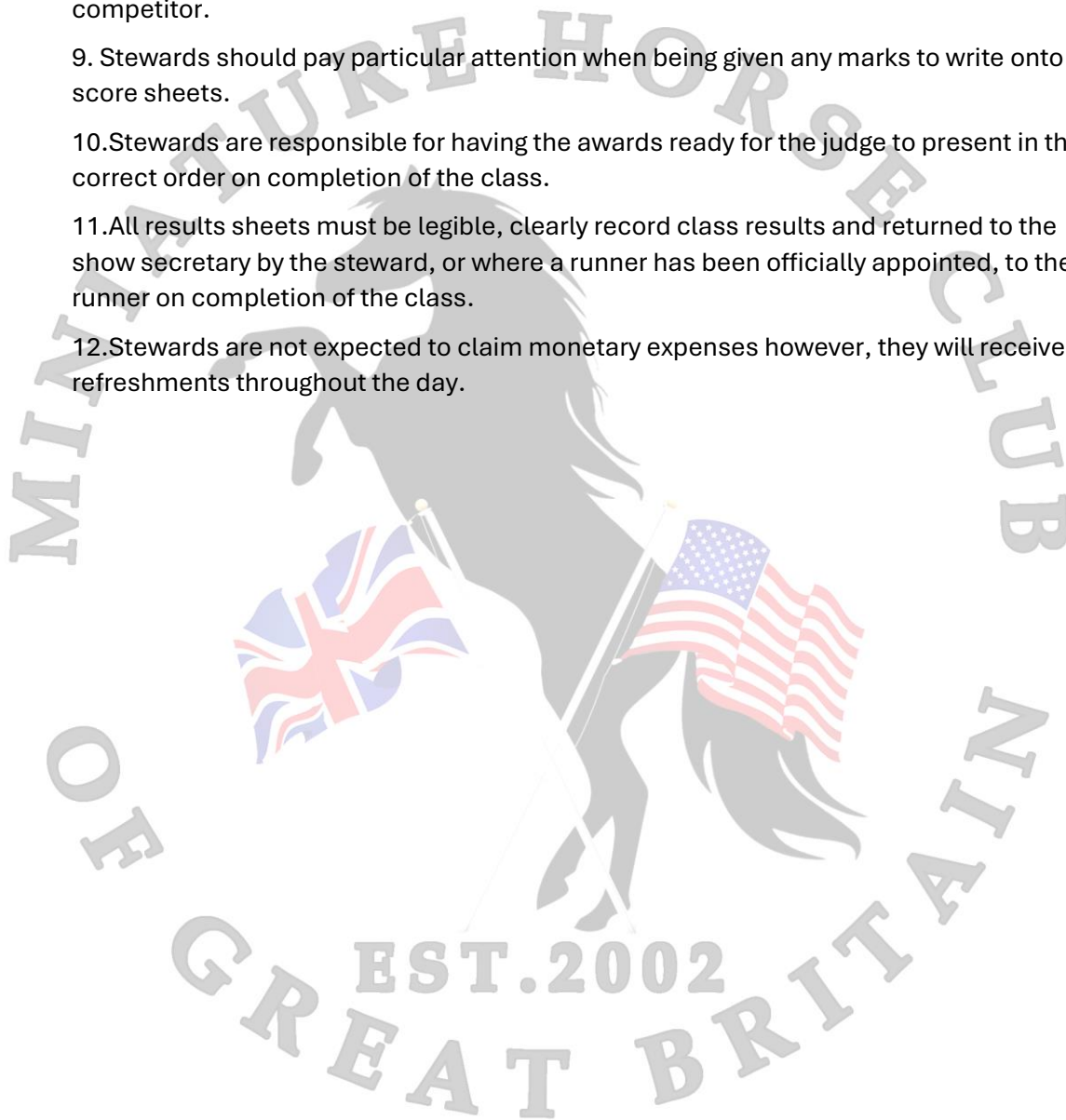
8. Stewards should not stand so close to the judge as to obscure their view of any competitor.

9. Stewards should pay particular attention when being given any marks to write onto score sheets.

10. Stewards are responsible for having the awards ready for the judge to present in the correct order on completion of the class.

11. All results sheets must be legible, clearly record class results and returned to the show secretary by the steward, or where a runner has been officially appointed, to the runner on completion of the class.

12. Stewards are not expected to claim monetary expenses however, they will receive refreshments throughout the day.



REGISTRATION AND PASSPORTS

American Miniature Horse Club GB is the DEFRA approved passport issuing Office of MHCGB.

We hold the only approved breeding book for American Miniature Horses and horses with American bloodlines applying the following criteria:- We offer three sections within our Studbook

Studbook A Registration criteria

- a) the Foal's parents meet the Main Studbook Breeding criteria both parents are purebred horses registered in a recognised Studbook for pedigree horses ie. AMHA, AMHR, ASPC.
- b) the Foal is DNA tested and parentage tested if any of the following criteria have not been met:-
 - i) the Stallion Report must have been submitted to the AMHCGB Registry Office within the year of covering. Or,
 - ii) In the case of outside coverings. A covering certificate must accompany application.
 - iii) the Foal must be 5 months old or less when the Registration application form is completed by the Vet.
 - iv) the Foal must be at Foot with its mother when identified by a veterinary surgeon.
- c) Pure bred American Miniature Horses imported from the USA with current papers.
- d) Horses hardshipped into the AMHA cannot be entered into the main stud book under UK/EU legislation.

Studbook B Registration criteria Open to horses with a minimum of 25% American bloodlines. I.e., one grandparent and meeting the following criteria:-

- i) the Stallion Report must have been submitted to the AMHCGB Registry Office within the year of covering, or,
- ii) In the case of outside coverings. A covering certificate must accompany application.
- iii) the Foal must be 5 months old or less when the Registration application form is completed by the Vet.
- iv) the Foal must be at Foot with its mother when identified by a veterinary surgeon.

Studbook C Registration criteria Open to horses which comply with the breed characteristics laid down in the breeding programme but do not comply with parentage criteria rules

AMHCGB will not enter into ownership disputes.

All passports must be applied for in the current year of birth (excepting imported horses).

A veterinary surgeon must implant the microchip and complete the AMHCGB silhouette page.

- ✚ Information must be correct to the best of owner's knowledge and will be checked with the appropriate studbook online.
- ✚ All prefixes used must be registered with Central Prefix Register and shall be a minimum of two letters, no hyphens, spaces, numerals or apostrophes.
- ✚ Registrations are available to both members and non members of MHCGB, the former paying a lesser fee as a benefit of membership.
- ✚ The correct fee must accompany all passport application, stallion breeding reports, change of ownership, gelding notifications. No action will be taken until full payment is received.
- ✚ AMHCGB will enter into the breeding book, animals of the same breed, line or cross that are eligible for entry under the Society's breed criteria, without discrimination on account of their country of origin."
- ✚ It is strongly recommended that when posting any registration passports/documentation, that this is done by recorded delivery using a padded envelope.

Your legal obligations

Due to the new Minimum Operating Standards for PIOs that came into force in October 2018 we are obliged to inform you of your responsibilities regarding the passporting of your horse. It is a legal requirement for all horses and ponies to be issued with a passport. Horse Passport law is governed by the commission Regulation (EU) 2015/262, and in England by the Horse Passport Regulations 2009, and where applicable, any subsequent amendments or successors to these regulations.

- A horse's passport must be kept with them at all times.

- It is illegal to travel a horse without their passport
- No animal may have more than **one** passport.

Passports are the property of the Passport Issuing Organisation (PIO) and the passport must be returned to the issuing PIO for the following reasons:

- If the animal changes ownership (within 30 days), with transfer of ownership form and correct fee.
- If any alterations are required (for update of adult colour, castration etc)
- If extra pages are required for vaccination records etc
- If the document is damaged
- When the animal dies (within 30 days), with correct form and fee.
- Part II Section II (or pre-2016 Section IX) has been signed to permanently exclude the horse from the human food chain, within 14 days

✚ Late Passports are still available and will be marked as 'Duplicate' Passports

✚ If the passport is lost, a duplicate may be applied for with correct fee. See www.mhcgb.co.uk

✚ It is mandatory from October 2020 that all horses are microchipped. Please ensure to complete the form from MHCGB website and return to the office. It is your responsibility to inform AMHCGB the microchip has been implanted in order for the transponder number to be recorded on your horses data and uploaded to Central Equine Database.

Transfers of Ownership

A horse passport does not constitute proof of ownership of the horse. Return passport with appropriate form downloadable from mhcgb.co.uk and correct fee **within 30 days** of acquiring a horse in order to update owner records.

All horses are required to be entered on the MHCGB Show Register to be eligible to compete. A one off registration.

Overstamping

A horses passport may be overstamped by AMHCGB to enter The Show Register and/or AMHCGB Breeding Book.

All Horses, by law, holding an EU passport must have this passport overstamped with the relevant breed society to ensure this horse now has data records held in the UK.

Overstamping form to be found at www.mhcgb.co.uk

Naming of your Horse

MHCGB is affiliated to the Central Prefix Register (CPR), an organisation set up in 1978 by the British Palomino Society in order to prevent the duplication of breeders' prefixes by different breed societies. Using a registered prefix, a breeder may derive credit and advertisement from winning stock. Registered prefixes are protected from duplication. If you are a breeder, and wish to register a prefix/suffix the application form available at www.mhcgb.co.uk.

The owner of the mare at time of foaling may use his/her prefix on the foal or with the agreement of the owner of the mare at time of covering their prefix.

To clarify the prefix used to name/register a foal is the choice of the owner of the mare at time of foaling.

STALLION LICENSING

It is advisable that all stallions should be licensed in order to breed.

Please check www.mhcgb for stallion license application forms.

Licensing will be carried out by a Veterinary Surgeon to determine that horse to be free from inheritable deformity.

Applications can be made with the appropriate fee.

ACAN TESTING.

ACAN testing is primarily associated with dwarfism in miniature horses and Shetland ponies, where it identifies mutations in the aggrecan gene. There are four known mutations (D1, D2, D3, and D4) that can lead to severe health issues, including early abortion or dwarfism in affected individuals. Testing can detect these mutations through next-generation sequencing, which is crucial for understanding the genetic basis of dwarfism and informing breeding decisions.

Any stallion presented for licensing should have had a clear ACAN test with results submitted with the stallion license application form.

STALLION & MARE GRADING

AMHCGB promote the grading of stallion and mare grading for breeding horses registered in their book. Grading is an indication of breeding from the best. Graded horses are recognised as being superior breeding animals to maintain a high standard within the breed, free from hereditary disease, poor confirmation and possessing excellent breed type.

Benefits of Grading

- Improvement of the Miniature Horse breed.
- The horse is recognised as being of an extremely high standard; an aid for advertising stud services and selling offspring.
- Recognition in the AMHCGB studbook.
- Promotion of all Graded animals via the MHCGB website and the Societies trade stand which attends events around the country.
- Eligibility for mature stallions to compete as an entire with other Societies such as CHAPS.

General Rules

Please refer to our website Stallion & Mare Grading page for all the necessary application forms.

1. Complete the Grading entry form and return to Head office with the appropriate fee.
2. Print off the Veterinary Inspection form which must be completed, signed and stamped by your Veterinary upon inspection.
3. Return the Veterinary Inspection form to Head office ten days prior to a National Show date.
4. You will be informed of a decision and invited for assessment at a National Show.
5. Animals must Be 3 years old or over.
6. Must hold an AMHCGB passport or overstamped passport.
7. Be owned by a current member of MHCGB
8. Horses will be measured for grading.

Marks

To be awarded **Premium** status horses must achieve an average mark of 7.5 or above

To be awarded **Graded** status horses must achieve an average mark of 7.0 for conformation assessment and receive an overall mark of 6.5 or above.

Should an animal receive a mark of 5 or below at any point in assessment it will automatically fail

ALL MARKS OF SUCESSFUL STALLIONS WILL BE PUBLISHED.

ELITE Breeding Horses

Premium or grades animals will be granted **elite status** when they fulfil the following criteria:

Place Supreme at an MHCGB National Show and also have progeny who have been placed Supreme at an MHCGB National Show.

Veterinary Inspection

The first part of the process is a veterinary inspection of your horse, including measuring by the vet. Please refer to the Stallion Veterinary Inspection document available at www.mhcgb.co.uk.

No horse will be invited for assessment without the signed and stamped Veterinary document. Please ensure this document is brought to the attention of your Veterinary Surgeon before grading.

Assessment Procedure

All horses will be assessed on conformation, movement in hand and breed type as per the AMHCGB Standard of perfection. Form available at www.mhcgb.co.uk

The grading will be undertaken by MHCGB Level 1 judge/AMHA judge and/or Stallion Assessment Committee.

All animals will be measured at presentation for grading.

Performance horses

Please notify on the application form if your stallion is for performance assessment only.

The stallion Committee reserve the right to alter or amend these rules and regulations from time to time as they see fit. The stallion Committee also reserves the right to assess individual cases on their merit and in exceptional circumstances certain dispensations may be granted.

Disputes pertaining to Passport Issuing

Should a dispute arise from passport issuing or misuse of the Studbook the following procedure will be adhered to:-

1. A formal, signed and dated letter should be received by the Registrar at the registered office address outlining the issue.

2. The Registrar will send acknowledgement of receipt of this letter within fourteen days.
3. The Registrar will forward copies to the President and Vice President of MHCGB.
4. A closed meeting will take place. This will be treated as sensitive information and will only be discussed between the President, Vice President and Registrar. If it is found a rule has been breached, the individual who the complaint is against will be asked to file their response within a thirty day period.
5. Upon receipt of this response or with no response within the thirty day time frame, a second closed meeting will take place between the Registrar, President and the Directors of MHCGB. The findings of this meeting will be forwarded to the complainant and the individual.
6. Either party may then ask for a date for a hearing between the parties, the Registrar and the MHCGB Directors, (The Hearing Board) within a maximum of thirty days.
7. A date will be set giving all parties a thirty day notice period.
8. During this hearing every effort will be made to protect individual rights and satisfactorily resolve the dispute between the parties.
9. All parties will be notified of the Hearing Board's decision by registered mail, within thirty days of the Hearing.
10. The Society upon the findings of the Hearing Board may suspend any member from the Society and deny member privileges to non members if it is found by satisfactory evidence that a rule or regulation has been violated. The society may additionally fine a member or non member, at the Final Hearing Board's discretion, a sum up to £500.
11. Appeal - Within a maximum of thirty days of a hearing a final hearing can be sought. Two further MHCGB members of good standing with a minimum of ten years membership will be appointed to the Hearing Board. All information that has been gathered during the initial investigation will be forwarded to the Final Hearing Board. The Hearing board will designate the time, place and date of the Final Hearing.
12. All parties will be given 30 days notice of the Final Hearing.
13. All parties will be asked to appear in person (with counsel if desired) to hear and refute evidence offered against them Without Prejudice. The common law will not apply at the Hearing, but the Final Hearing Board will determine the admissibility of evidence and weight to be given to the evidence submitted.
14. The decision and action of the Final Hearing Board will be final and binding on all parties.
15. Notice of Charge – MHCGB will be responsible for notification of the Final Hearing Board's decision by promptly mailing, by registered mail, a copy thereof to the charged person with thirty days of the final Hearing. Right to take Disciplinary action. The Society upon the findings of the Final Hearing may suspend any member from the Society and deny member privileges to non members, if it is found by satisfactory evidence that a rule or regulation has been violated. The society may additionally fine a member or non member, at the Final Hearing Board's discretion, a sum up to £1000.



The Showing Council
Equine Welfare and General Best Practice Guidance
and
Unified Rules Pack

Moving our dial from “what’s traditional” or “what we’ve always done”


to

“what’s best for our horses”

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Status of this Guidance

- This document has been produced by The Showing Council and represents welfare-led best practice guidance in keeping with our wish to uphold our Social Licence to Operate.
- This document has been developed to support responsible ownership, promote best practice, and will continually seek to support improvement of the ways in which we keep our horses by prioritising their wellbeing.
- A scientific evidence base supports its recommendations and will be reviewed annually as new evidence emerges.
- All Member Bodies are strongly recommended to follow this guidance.
- If a Member Body decides they do not wish to follow this guidance, the responsibility and the liability shall be their own. A guidance document, such as this, can be used as a benchmark for standards when used within a court of law.
- This guidance principally applies to events, although some aspects apply equally outside the competition environment.

- This guidance is provided for Competitors, Owners, Producers, Show Organisers, Judges, Show Officials and Volunteers. For simplicity the term **Exhibitor** will generally be used throughout the document to cover many of these categories.
- This document is intended to provide guidance for the wellbeing of all equids (horses, ponies, donkeys and their hybrids). For simplicity we will use the term horse.
- Where the  symbol appears, this element of the guidance is unified and accepted across all the Showing Council's member bodies

Underpinning welfare principles

The standards developed under British Equestrian's (BEF) Charter for the Horse have helped our approach to this guidance. As a member of BEF, The Showing Council has committed to endorse the highest standards of equine welfare, wellbeing and ethics included in this Charter.

The Charter for the Horse has been developed with BEF stakeholder groups to be adopted across the equestrian industry. Under the six headings of **empathy, care, respect, consideration, ethics and learning**, the Charter outlines actions we must observe to guarantee the individual mental, physical and behavioural needs of our horses are met.

At the heart of the Charter are the internationally recognised 'three Fs' of freedom, friends and forage, and the Five Domains Model (Mellor et al 2020) which refer **to nutrition, physical environment, health, behavioural interactions and mental state** as the crucial factors for an animal's positive experience.

The Five Domains Model emphasises both the negative and positive aspects of welfare, moving beyond preventing suffering to **positively promoting wellbeing and helping horses attain a good life**. It is widely used in research, policy-making and veterinary practice and across all animal keeping sectors and may also be known as good husbandry.

THE CHARTER FOR THE HORSE

As responsible members of the equestrian community, we pledge to this charter for the ethical and fair treatment of all horses and other equids under our care.



Empathy

Recognising horses are intelligent and emotional beings, we always prioritise their mental and physical health and overall wellbeing.



Care

Throughout their entire life, during exercise and rest, we offer horses a secure and suitable setting to create positive experiences that address their social, behavioural, nutritional and physical needs for a high quality of life.



Respect

Through compassionate, mindful, patient and empathetic interaction, we foster positive relationships with horses based on trust and respect.



Consideration

Each horse is an individual, and we strive to understand and meet their specific needs, including how they learn. We don't push horses beyond their health, fitness or ability levels, and we never let competitive or commercial influences compromise their welfare.



Ethics

In all our equine interactions, whether for leisure, training or sport, we adhere to the highest standards of equine welfare, safety, equipment, veterinary care and biosecurity, always guided by ethical principles.



Learning

Through continuously improving our equine knowledge, we evolve our behaviours based on education and informed advice from qualified professionals and the broader equestrian community.

General

1. This guidance should be interpreted in the spirit of integrity, transparency and common sense.
2. It was initially developed in conjunction with the British Horse Society which kindly continues to support us. We are grateful for help provided by British Equestrian and The Horse Trust.
3. The relevant laws that underpin this guidance are the Animal Welfare Act (2006), the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, The Protection of Animals During Transport Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005 as implemented by The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 and corresponding legislation in the devolved administrations. These are collectively referred to as the Welfare Acts. Every exhibitor has a duty of care to ensure a horse's wellbeing under the Welfare Acts, failure to do so may lead to prosecution in a court of law.
4. For horses of all ages, at all stages during preparation and training, welfare is paramount. This includes, but is not limited to good horse management, training methods, farriery, use and fitting of tack and transportation, on and off the showground. At no time should welfare of the horse be subordinated to commercial or competitive interests.
5. There is a requirement upon all exhibitors to inform member bodies or show organisers as soon as possible if they have witnessed unacceptable practices.
6. In any and all contact with horses, exhibitors must be suitably and safely dressed. This means wearing correctly fitted current standard safety body protection, headwear, suitable

footwear and gloves. In jumping classes, current standard safety body protection should be worn and this is a requirement for riders under 16 years of age.

Forbidden substances

This means banned substances and controlled medication.

7. No substance can be administered to a horse before entering or on a showground which may mask an underlying health problem, enhance performance or bring about sedation, whether that horse is intended to compete or not.

8. At the current time there is no unified anti-doping policy run by The Showing Council, all Member Bodies should have one of their own.

Biosecurity

This means the methods we use to promote good health and reduce the spread of infectious disease. Both the owners and keepers of horses, along with veterinary surgeons, have a legal duty to report any suspicion of a specified communicable (designated as “notifiable”) equine disease to the Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA).

9. The risk of spreading equine disease is a significant when attending shows. Exhibitors should not attend a show if there is a disease outbreak at their yard or nearby, even if the horse appears well, because some diseases have an incubation period of up to 21 days.

10. Exhibitors should be aware of their horses’ usual temperature and vital signs in order that they can identify when they deviate from the norm, potentially indicating that they are incubating disease. Further information is available on the British Equestrian website in the Health & Biosecurity section¹.

11. Vaccinations. Exhibitors must check the specific vaccination requirements for each event and comply with vaccination requirements of affiliated societies.

12. For show organisers, it is advisable to check the vaccination rules of a particular venue when hiring equestrian facilities and notify exhibitors in advance of any specific requirements.

13. Equine identification is central to traceability in the event of disease. Exhibitors must ensure that they comply with the relevant equine identification regulations for the region they live in and are travelling to/from - which includes making sure that the ownership details in their horses’ identification documents are up to date².

14. Should a competition be part of a wider FEI show then FEI Regulations will take precedence.

¹ <https://www.britishequestrian.org.uk/equine/health-biosecurity/biosecurity>

² <https://www.gov.uk/horse-passport/update-or-replace-a-passport>

15. To prevent the spread of disease, horses should not share water buckets or troughs. Exhibitors are strongly advised to provide their own feed, buckets, hay nets and not to loan or borrow grooming kit, tack or other equipment.

16. There is an increased disease risk when stabling horses away from home. Best practice is to remove any pre-existing bedding and treat the stable with an effective disinfectant before bedding down with fresh bedding material.

17. Horses that are not competing may only be on the showground by prior arrangement with the show organiser.

Transport

18. Exhibitors should familiarise themselves with the Welfare Acts, listed on page 3, to ensure they have the necessary vehicle and transporter authorisation.

19. A Certificate of Competence for transporting horses is a compulsory qualification for individuals transporting horses for economic purposes/activity on journeys over 65km (40 miles) in the UK. This will demonstrate an individual (either the driver or attendant) has been assessed and has the knowledge and skills to ensure the welfare of the horses during transit. The qualification covers various aspects of animal welfare, transport regulations, and practical handling. Economic activity is not defined in the regulations but would include anyone transporting horses for hire or reward or in the course of business or trade and can include those paid to transport horses to an event.

20. A general duty of care exists under UK domestic law, primarily the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which mandates that all owners and keepers must prevent their horses from suffering and meet their welfare needs. This means any person transporting horses must ensure they are prepared for and habituated to undertake the journey (both mentally and physically) and that the journey is planned to be as short as possible, and that the transport conditions, including space, ventilation, access to food, water, and rest, are appropriate so as to ensure the horse's wellbeing.

21. In extremes of temperatures, consideration must be given to the best time of day to travel and to minimising travel outside of these times.

22. Travelling can be stressful and tiring for horses and can compromise their wellbeing, potentially weakening their immune systems. This should be taken into consideration at all times, particularly during the busy show season, avoiding frequent long journeys.

23. Transported horses must be accompanied by their up to date equine identification document (passport) in accordance with Equine Identification Regulations for England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and across these borders.

24. Any vehicle used to transport horses must be safe and designed for the purpose.

25. It is recommended that horsebox or trailer recovery insurance is in place.

Welfare of horses

26. Responsibility for the horse lies with the owner (even if they are not present) as well as the individual who is in charge of the horse (or keeper) on the day of a show. All those responsible for horses have a duty of care in all circumstances to meet their horse's welfare needs as undertaken in the Charter for the Horse and as set out in law. These people must follow the advice of stewards and officials.

27. Sensory hairs provide natural protection and are important for equine wellbeing and comfort. The hard hairs located on the horse's muzzle (nose and mouth) and around the eyes are also known as 'whiskers'. Sensory hairs should not be trimmed, clipped, shaved or removed other than for veterinary purposes where a vet's letter should be provided in good time to the relevant member body/show organiser.

28. Sensitive hairs are also found inside the horse's ear. These hairs are a barrier to foreign objects entering the ear canal. Trimming of ear hair should be minimised.

29. No exhibitor shall be penalised for leaving a horse's sensory or sensitive hairs untrimmed.

30. Weighted Tails should not be used.

31. Nose nets should not be used.

32. Blood before competition. On occasions a horse may accidentally injure themselves whilst travelling or whilst being warmed up. Each situation shall be individually considered by a veterinary surgeon in consultation with officials, and a decision taken as to whether the horse may continue to compete.

33. Blood in competition. Blood on the flanks, mouth or nose during competition shall lead to elimination. Abrasions in the same areas that have not yet resulted in blood will be referred to a veterinary surgeon who may, following examination and consultation with officials, determine an approach that can safely be taken.

34. Blood or abrasions in other areas on the body shall be considered by a veterinary surgeon who may, following examination and consultation with officials, determine an approach that can safely be taken.

35. In the event that a show does not retain a veterinary surgeon on site for the event, an alternative suitably qualified and experienced person shall be appointed to intervene by the Show Organiser.

36. Horses and exhibitors must be fit, well prepared and competent enough for the work asked of them, including the journeys to and from the event, in order to compete.

37. Body Condition Score (3). All horses should be fit and healthy for the competition they are participating in or the work they are undertaking, this means a body condition score of 2.5-3. Horses should not compete with a body Condition Score of below 2 or above 4.5 on the Carroll & Huntingdon Scale. A healthy body condition significantly decreases the risk of developing serious health issues such as:

- Equine metabolic syndrome
- Laminitis
- Arthritis
- Increased stress on heart and lungs and breathing difficulties
- Increased risk of development of orthopaedic problems in young and growing horses
- Strain on feet, joints and limbs
- Inefficient body temperature cooling

The Showing Council and its member bodies continue to work closely with The Horse Trust's Body Condition Awards scheme (#weightowin).

Whips, canes and



spurs

38. Show Canes and whips must not exceed 75cms (30") in any classes (ridden or in-hand)

39. Hunting crops are only permissible for riders over the age of 18 in ridden championship classes.
40. The use of schooling whips is not permitted within any area of a showground, with the exception of classes where British Dressage tests form part of the assessment, and are permitted for those exhibitors only.
41. Padded whips may be used provided they do not exceed 75cms (30"). The end of the whip must be padded and smooth with no raised surface and must be made of shock absorbing material throughout.
42. When lunging, the use of a lunging whip is permitted, but it must not come into contact with the horse.
43. A whip or cane, not more than one metre in length 99cms (39"), may be carried in Side Saddle classes, and be of sufficient length to be used as a "right leg".
44. A whip must only be used as a light tap to support leg aids in encouraging the horse to go forwards, or to help the rider to encourage the horse in the right direction, such as down the shoulder to keep a horse straight on the approach to a fence.
45. A whip must never come into contact with the horse more than twice in any incidence.
46. The arm must never be raised above the shoulder whilst using the whip.
47. The whip must always be carried and used in the backhand position (handle pointed upwards) and never in the forehand position (handle pointed downwards).
48. If whips are used in anger, or against the head or neck, the competitor will be referred to the steward, the official veterinarian and the organiser, who will expel them from the event.
49. Spurs may be worn for warming up only if permitted within the rules of a class(es) the horse is competing in.
50. Spurs must only be made of smooth material (metal or plastic) and must be blunt. The overall length should not exceed 2cm from the back of the boot to the end of the spur.
51. Spurs may only be used lightly to reinforce leg aids and must never be used to reprimand a horse. If they are, the competitor will be referred to the steward, official veterinarian and the organiser and will be expelled from the event.

(3) Body Condition in Horses

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/equine/documents/Body,Condition,Scoring,in,Horses,and,Ponies.pdf>



52. When their horses are out of the stable or vehicle, exhibitors must ensure that numbers are worn at all times in order that they can be clearly identified.
53. Tack must always be designed and fitted correctly and used in a way that protects and safeguards the welfare and safety of both horse and exhibitor. Tack that has been modified is not permissible.
54. Horses must only be warmed up and ridden in tack and/or equipment that is permitted within the class(es) that they are competing in, with the exception of a correctly fitted running or standing martingale.
55. If used, a standing martingale may only be attached to a cavesson noseband, not to the higher or lower steps of a grackle noseband.
56. Officials may use measuring devices to make sure that nosebands are not too tight. For example - FEI-regulated equestrian events mandate the use of a standardised measuring device to ensure nosebands are not too tight. The device slides under the noseband on the horse's nasal bone and if it cannot pass through easily, the noseband is too tight (4) and will require loosening.
57. Neck straps are permitted.
58. Bits must be smooth and never be used to reprimand a horse.
59. No modifications to a bit manufacturer's standards are permitted, and curb chains must only be attached using the curb chain hooks.
60. For guidelines on the use of bandages and boots, refer to the relevant society.

(4) Noseband tightness guidance video <https://youtu.be/rJNYzf1W5IU>

Welfare of the horse on the

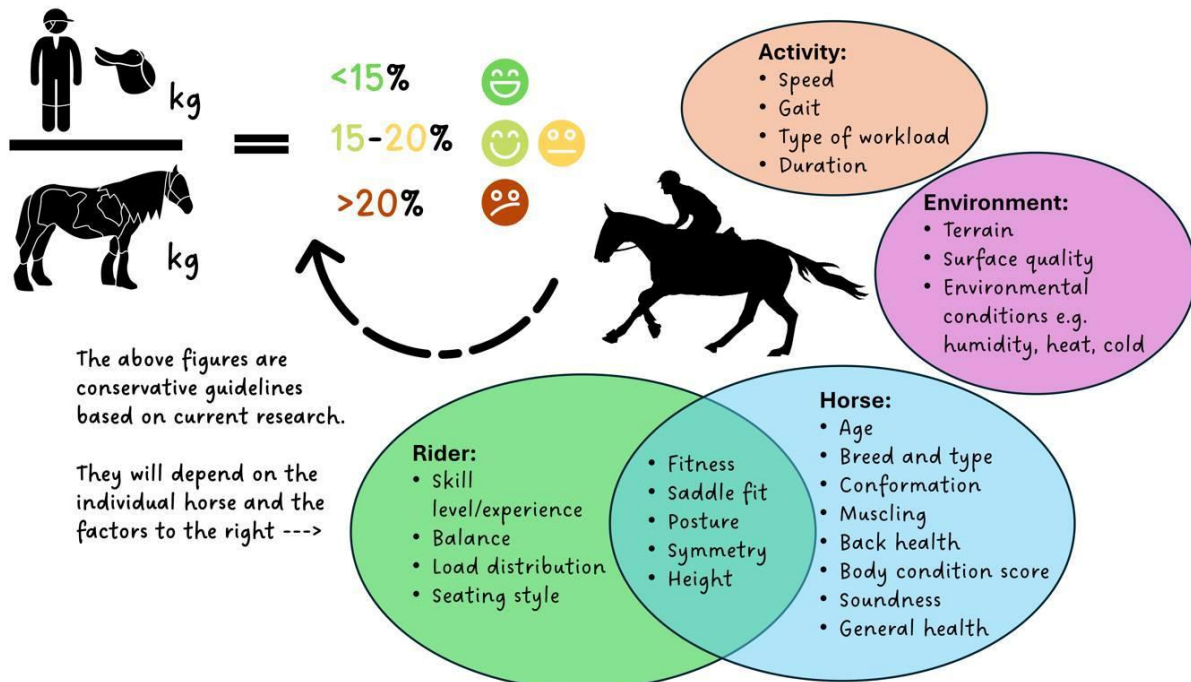


showground

61. Horses must not be undersized for the rider (applicable to both adults and children) when being ridden in the ring or warmed up. Where we refer to size, we take into account both height and build of the rider.
62. It is recommended that the weight a horse is required to carry, including tack and equipment, should ideally be between 15-17% of their horse's body weight, and no more than 20%, as set out in the graphic below provided by the Suitably Mounted Group (5)

Am I suitably mounted?

How much weight can my horse comfortably carry and what impacts their ability to do so?



63. A horse's body condition score should be under 4 (ideally 2.5-3) according to the Carroll & Huntington Scale. Find out how to Body Condition Score your horse (6)

64. No horse should be left unattended unless they are in a stable or horsebox/trailer and have been well habituated enough to remain comfortable being left.

(5) Suitably Mounted Group <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61578141354678>

(6) Body Condition Scoring <https://storage.googleapis.com/worldhorsewelfare-cloud/2025/01/9d2f5fde-fat-scoring-instructions-and-resources-dec24.pdf>

65. Supervised horses tied to the outside of a horsebox/trailer must be safely tied, using a quick release knot or device, and never tied to a hay net.

66. All horses must have regular access to forage and water.

67. Weather conditions affect a horse's needs. Exhibitors must make the necessary adjustments to safeguard wellbeing in adverse conditions such as very high or very low temperatures or excessively wet conditions.

68. During hot weather the temperature in horseboxes/trailers becomes high very quickly and in order to maximise air flow, windows and roof vents must be kept open and ramps left down provided it is safe to do so. Horses must be well hydrated and cooled (7).

69. During wet weather, consideration should be given to using waterproof sheets whilst warming up and these can be kept over the horse's hind quarters until they enter the class. At the discretion of the judge, grooms may enter the ring to provide a waterproof sheet in inclement weather.

70. No horse should be ridden or lunged for an extended period. "Extended period" is not defined for the time being, however a maximum duration may be added as necessary. It is preferable to manage the horse's day to day environment at home, in line with the Charter for the Horse agreement, using a combination of training, ridden work, work from the ground and turnout, such that prolonged riding in or lunging periods at events are not needed.

71. Lunging duration is indicated by the age and fitness of the horse as well as weather conditions but should not in any case exceed 10 minutes, based on walk, trot and canter all being included, equally on each rein. FEI lunging guidance is here ⁽⁸⁾

72. All handlers lunging horses must be over the age of 16 and do so within a designated safe space.

73. Horses must be lunged in a cavesson or bridle with the noseband removed, or a head collar.

74. Ideally horses would be warmed up unrestricted. If side reins are used, they may only be of the flexible/elasticated type.

75. Lunge whips are for safety and guidance and must never be used against the horse.

76. Long reining is not permitted.

(7) Cooling of horses <https://www.fei.org/stories/lifestyle/teach-me/3-steps-cooling-down-your-horse-cavalor>

(8) Lunging of horses <https://www.fei.org/stories/lifestyle/my-equestrian-life/how-structure-20-minute-lunging-session-your-horse>

Stabling

77. It is the responsibility of the Exhibitor to ensure overnight provisions and stabling offer the space to lie down, get up and turn around and unrestricted clean, fresh water in a safely contained space. Provision of facilities should be checked in advance of arrival at a show since horses must not be kept overnight in a horsebox/trailer.

Age & gender of horses

78. Horses under four years of age must not be ridden at any event.

79. Pregnant mares are not permitted to compete under saddle without the prior written agreement of a veterinary surgeon.

80. Mares may not be ridden after six months of gestation.

81. Mares with a foal at foot, born during the current year may not be shown in ridden classes.

82. When stallions are being exhibited, a stallion disc must be worn on the bridle. The exhibitor must be at least 16 years of age and competent to handle, compete or strip the horse in the ring and/or lunge.

83. Stallions should be noted on all activity application/entry forms and if being stabled must be in a suitable and safe environment with regard to other horses stabled in close proximity.

84. When being led, stallions must be led from a bit with reins or with a lead rein.

85. The temperament of all horses must be taken into consideration and he should not be on a showground if they are likely to be a danger to anyone or any other horse present.

86. All horses, especially young and/or inexperienced horses require quiet, confident handling which must be carried out by someone with the necessary skills and experience.

General conduct and responsibilities

87. Under the Welfare Acts (page 3), parents/guardians of those under 16 years old are responsible for the welfare of young peoples' horses and must supervise them at all times.

88. Exhibitors must consider the Health and Safety of other people at the event and must not behave in any way that could cause accident, injury or stress or harassment to any other person.

89. Where young handler classes are scheduled, societies should have documented processes to ensure that safety protocols are in place.

90. When riding outside the warm-up areas and show rings, exhibitors should remain in walk or controlled trot and be vigilant at all times.

91. Horses must be ridden or led in designated horse-walks, where provided

92. Grooms and spectators must use designated pedestrian walkways

93. Exhibitors should adhere to the rules of warming up in an arena or other dedicated space:

- passing left-hand to left-hand
- only making a tack adjustment when safe to do so
- announcing the intention to enter an indoor practice arena
- not halting or walking on the outside track
- giving way to the faster pace

94. When lunging is allowed, exhibitors must only do so in designated areas and at such times that do not interfere with others.

95. Exhibitors should keep alert for potential problems and maintain a sensible distance from any individual having difficulties with their horse.

96. Any horse that falls in a warm-up area should only compete with the agreement of an official veterinary surgeon or other suitably qualified and experienced person as advised by the Show Organiser.

97. In a jumping warm up arena, no horse should jump a fence in the wrong direction and fences must be flagged accordingly at all times.

98. Practice fences should be no higher than permitted in a competition nor modified nor added-to in any way.

Conduct in the show ring

99. Exhibitors must behave in a safe and respectful manner at all times.

100. Exhibitors must follow instructions from the judge, ring stewards or veterinary surgeon at all times.

101. The amount of work and number of classes a horse participates in must be in accordance with its age, experience and fitness.

102. No one under the age of 16 years may enter a show ring to groom, strip or handle horses.

103. Those entering show rings must be suitably and safely dressed.

Insurance

104. All exhibitors are strongly advised to have Public Liability insurance in place to provide cover for potential third-party injury or property damage arising from legal liability or negligence. This is a standard requirement of entry for many events.

105. Personal Accident insurance, in addition to Public Liability insurance, should be in place for all judges.

Conduct of show organisers with regard to spectators

106. Organisers should put in place adequate information/signage to ensure that:

- Children (under 16 years of age) are fully supervised at all times and people who are not directly connected to an exhibitor remain at a safe distance from horses.
- Prams or buggies are prohibited from all warm up arenas, stabling areas and horse walks. In the lorry park they must be kept at a safe distance from horses and overseen at all times.
- Spectators are made aware they should not run, shout or cause excessive noise in the vicinity of horses and are prohibited from entering lorry parks and stabling areas without the necessary access pass.
- If dogs are allowed on the showground they must be kept on a short lead away from horses and safely managed at all times.
- Dogs must be given access to water and not left unattended in vehicles in hot conditions.

Provision for equine veterinary and emergency treatment at events

110. Show Organisers should carry out a risk assessment with regard to the provision of on site veterinary provision.

111. At some Shows a veterinary surgeon may not actually be in attendance, in which case the Show Organiser should ensure that a veterinary surgeon is available 'on call' and within reasonable driving time (suggested maximum 20 minutes).

112. Show Organisers should plan for the provision of adequate interim care whilst awaiting arrival of veterinary cover.

113. All shows should endeavour to have:

- Communication for use in an emergency which have been circulated in advance to relevant parties and rehearsed
- Good accessibility to the venue and planned routes to bring in equipment directly to a patient as quickly and efficiently as possible
- Facilities for dealing with minor injuries, e.g. clean stable or other covered well-lit area and provision of clean water
- A horse ambulance for equines to be transferred to a referral facility if necessary and a plan for where and how euthanasia is to be carried out if necessary
- A designated responsible person to attend an oversee any significant occurrence and to act as a liaison point with the show organiser.
- The responsible person must be capable of producing an accurate record at the scene of any incident, to include taking photographs and logging contact details of relevant persons including witnesses.
- A screens protocol, in place to ensure privacy for both equestrian and exhibitor injuries, to be rehearsed in advance
- An emergency incident communications plan, including appointment of spokesperson, prepared draft media statements and social media protocol to promote positive communication, minimise distress to all affected parties and reduce likelihood of disinformation
- Under the provisions of the Welfare Acts (page 3) there is joint responsibility between exhibitors and show organisers, however the exhibitor of a horse has prime responsibility for its welfare and as such must ensure that:
 - The owner is clearly identified on the entry form
 - Next of kin stated
 - Contact details are listed in case of an emergency during the day, or night if their horse is being stabled
 - It is clear who has responsibility for making decisions about their horse with regard to provision of emergency treatment, transfer to a surgical facility and/or euthanasia

Advisory note

This guidance does not detail specific rules. Where such detail is needed, please refer to the rule book of the society you are showing under.

The Showing Council will review and revise this document on an annual basis. Within the 2027 revision, sections proposed for inclusion shall be:

- The working of horses with heads behind the vertical position

- Horses that appear unlevel in the ring and veterinary involvement
- Riding four year olds in qualifying classes
- Bitting and bridle fitting
- Application of topical products to the skin and coat of a horse
- Reporting and handling of welfare and safeguarding concerns and incidents, accidents and fatalities to relevant bodies and recognised centralised IT systems
- Guidance on leaving the arena whilst a class is underway
- Docking and shaving of tails

1 November 2025



Notes



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MINIATURE HORSE CLUB
OF GREAT BRITAIN
EST. 2002

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