



ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH RIDING SCHOOLS

TEACHING CERTIFICATE

SYLLABUS

The ABRS Teaching Certificate is for the experienced teacher capable of producing riders of quality, showing an awareness of the horse's correct way of going. While there is no minimum age limit our experience suggests that it would be unusual for a candidate to have the necessary skill and experience to fulfil the requirements of the syllabus before the age of 20.

REQUIREMENTS

A current HSE approved First Aid at Work or BHS Equine Specific First Aid Certificate.
A certificate of attendance at a Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop.
A Riding & Road Safety Certificate.

Plus one of the following:-

- ABRS Initial Teaching Award
- ABRS Grooms Certificate or Grooms Diploma
- ABRS Progressive Rider Tests 10 (Stable Management and Equitation)
- BHS Stage 3
- NVQ Level 3 (including riding)
- Pony Club 'A' Test
- Overseas or college equivalents of the above.

REQUIRED TEACHING EXPERIENCE

(All riding is with stirrups unless otherwise stated.)

Safety checks, involving both horse and rider, dismounted and mounted; adjusting girth, dismounted and mounted; assisting riders in mounting from the ground, using a mounting block and giving/receiving a leg up; method of adjusting rein length; method of changing whip from one hand to the other; placing the rider in the saddle emphasising position, posture and balance; 'warming up' procedures, including some gentle suppling exercises for the rider; lining up the riders, in different ways, at the end of the lesson and methods of dismounting the ride and preparing to lead in hand; halt to walk and walk to halt transitions; turns and circles at walk; walk to trot and trot to walk transitions; rising to the trot; how to recognise and change the diagonal; riding on a named diagonal; turns and circles at trot; riding at walk and trot without stirrups; trot to canter and canter to trot transitions; balance and posture in canter, circles and figures and riding without stirrups in canter; canter on a named lead; changes of lead in canter through trot; selecting leading file and keeping the riders at safe distances; numbering the ride and commanding simple exercises 'as a ride'; numbering riders into 2 rides with simple exercises to follow; forming a double ride, involving correct procedure for passing safely and controlling the rides, simple exercises for a double ride and the procedure for returning the ride to single file; safe control for transitions; methods of obtaining accuracy in school figures (turns, loops and circles); introducing riders to ground pole work and jumping; basic jumping position in all gaits; balanced position for riding over varying terrain in trot and canter; riders' correct posture and balance and the influence these have on the horse; allowing periods of rest for horses and riders, e.g. walking on a long rein, lining up and questioning; sequence of footfalls in walk, trot and canter; introducing riders to riding with two reins; flexing horses left and right; moving horses away from the rider's leg(s) in preparation for lateral movements; turn on the forehand; half pirouette/full pirouette; introduction to counter canter; principles of shoulder in.

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CONTENT OF THE EXAMINATION

Teach 4 - 6 riders in a group lesson of approximately 60 minutes incorporating exercises, figures and movements from the above list. The lesson should include lateral work if the riders are considered to be sufficiently established and in harmony/synchronisation with the movement of the horse. Towards the end of the lesson candidates **MUST** introduce riders to jumping position and, **ACCORDING TO THE ABILITY/EXPERIENCE OF THE RIDER**, progress to ground poles and a small jump.

Take a private lesson of approximately 30 minutes.

Give a 30 minute lecture/demonstration, which should be prepared beforehand, on any subject of the candidate's choice. Any hand-outs, equipment, training aids etc. may be brought to enhance the lecture/demonstration.

Discussion Theory – Candidates will be questioned on the general principles of teaching, the correct procedure for escorting hacks as per the ABRS Handbook, action in the event of an accident, the effects of weather conditions on the horses, teaching older riders, children and the handicapped, and other relevant topics.

GENERAL

Candidates are expected to arrive 20 minutes before the commencement of the examination and will be required to make their own arrangements for accommodation and food. They must bring to the examination riding clothes and any individual equipment they feel is necessary for the lecture/demonstration. The candidate's appearance will be taken into account.

As great emphasis is placed upon the candidate's ability to assess and teach unknown horses and riders, they may **NOT** be examined at the Centre where they have trained, unless they have been absent from that Centre for at least 12 months.

A list of examination dates and centres may be obtained from the Examinations Secretary at the ABRS Office.

Results will not be available on the day of the examination but will be forwarded to the candidate as soon as possible thereafter. The examiners' decision will be final.

RECOMMENDED READING

The Principles of Teaching Riding Julian P Marczak and Karen Bush

Drills & Formation Riding Shirley Renowden FABRS

Studies in Equitation Tony Silverman ABRS TC

The Riding Teacher Alois Podhajsky

CANCELLATION

The fee, less an administration charge, is returnable up to 4 weeks before the examination date. In the event of the examination being cancelled/postponed, the fee may be held over to the next scheduled examination, unless instructed otherwise by the candidate.

The Association reserves the right to postpone/cancel examinations, giving at least 10 days notice to the candidate.

In the event of a late notification of sickness/accident, accompanied by a Doctor's note, the examination fee will be forfeited unless the vacancy can be filled by another candidate. In this case, the fee may be held for a future examination date.

Please address all enquiries to the Examinations Secretary at the ABRS Office.

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PHILOSOPHY AND GUIDANCE NOTES

The focal point of all teaching methods should be to produce, without force or aggression, balanced, secure and effective riders who have an understanding of, and are in harmony with, the horses they ride.

It is vital, therefore, that riders are taught soundly from the outset; that time is taken with them in order that stability, confidence and a degree of effectiveness is achieved at one level before they are encouraged to try the next. The emphasis must be on good posture, this being the correct foundation.

A good teacher can keep a class interested and occupied with movements, exercises and drills, either in succession or as a ride, which are safe, stimulating, enjoyable and progressive and at the same time show a basic awareness of the horse's correct way of going.

Consideration for the horses and ponies used in the lessons must be shown at all times. Frequent periods of rest in the form of walking on a long rein, halting the ride to explain a new movement, exercise or transition, to ask questions, to establish understanding of what has been taught or demonstrated, are necessary both for the horses and their riders. Riders should not be hurried, as this is not only UNSAFE but can be traumatic and detrimental to their future riding.

The candidate coming forward for this examination must be well practised in the requirements of the syllabus and must be familiar with assessing riders and horses as it is unlikely that either riders or horses will be known to him/her. Safety must be paramount and any slackness in the initial checking of riders and horses or the placing of them in potentially dangerous situations will be severely marked. The examiner may stop the lesson and question at any time.

The ABRS Teaching Certificate, therefore, will be awarded to persons who can show, through experience, practice and result, that they are conversant with the requirements of riders beyond the basic levels, that they have the ability to develop a rapport with clients and can give lessons which are safe, enjoyable, stimulating and progressive, encouraging them to return. Such persons are in great demand within the horse industry.

The following notes are intended to provide prospective candidates with information, in addition to the syllabus, regarding the requirements of and standard required by the ABRS Teaching Certificate and, hopefully, give encouragement to those contemplating coming forward for this examination.

The format of the examination is as follows. The candidate is asked to imagine that s/he has been interviewed for a teaching position at a Riding School (the examination centre) and, having successfully passed the interview, has been asked to come to the school for half a day to demonstrate his/her teaching ability. S/he is required to take the normal clients, mostly good novices, for a group lesson of 50 minutes to 1 hour, a 30 minute private lesson and a 30 minute lecture/demonstration.

No subject is set for the group lesson. The candidate should assess the riders and should teach what s/he thinks is required to improve their posture and general riding ability while making the lesson safe, interesting, enjoyable and progressive. Towards the end of the lesson the candidate must introduce riders to a jumping position and, **according to the experience of the riders**, progress to ground poles and small jumps.

The horses, like the riders, will not be known to the candidate and the ability to 'read' them is very important. While adopting safe procedures at all times and being quick to prevent hazardous situations developing, the candidate should seek to achieve improvement in the horse's way of going. Throughout, the candidate should teach the riders to have good

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posture and a balanced seat, independent of the reins. Neither riders nor horses should be stressed and the candidate should show empathy with both.

The ages and physical ability of the clients must be considered when any exercises are requested.

When exercises and movements are commanded, it is essential that the class understands clearly what is required and the movements should be ridden in walk before riders are asked to ride the same in trot and canter. Basic ability and safe posture must be established in the individual at a slower gait before riders are encouraged to attempt more demanding work.

The lecture/demonstration section of the examination, on any subject of the candidate's choice, is to be prepared beforehand in order that the candidate can show his/her ability to the best advantage. The lecture/demonstration should be structured so that it has an introduction, a middle section and a conclusion. Any visual aids, hand-outs etc. can be used to highlight this section and make it as interesting as possible.

The discussion theory is based on the principles of teaching as well as the practical application of the candidate's horse knowledge.

It is hoped that these notes will be of benefit and will encourage those interested in furthering their teaching career to come forward and take the examination.

*The **Teaching Certificate** is a qualification in its own right. Candidates achieving the Certificate will be entitled to show the letters **ABRS TC** after their names. It is NOT a prerequisite for the ABRS Advanced Teaching Diploma, which is the next and final level.*