Updating Policy

Non Current PCA NCAS level 1 Coaches accredited under 2004 scheme

Rationale
Coaches accredited under the 2004 PCA NCAS Level 1 Course may have let their qualifications lapse due to the constraints of the previous course, the most notable of these being the requirement to hold a current Senior First Aid Certificate.

These people have already been assessed coaching in the Pony Club environment and are still actively coaching there.

Non current coaches accredited under the 2004 scheme who seek to be reaccredited under the new competency based system will need to become acquainted with the new course material and be made familiar with components that were not contained in the previous course. The most important being Inclusive Coaching and the Sports CONNECT Exemption process

Eligibility
To apply for updating the coach must be a financial member of a Pony Club affiliated through their State Association with Pony Club Australia Inc

Procedure

- Contact State/Territory PCA Office
- Purchase the PCA NCAS Level 1 Course material and complementary updating material specific to non current NCAS PC Level 1 Coaches.
- Read and sign the Coach's Code of Ethics
- Complete Updating activities and forward paperwork, including the signed Code of Ethics, to State/Territory PCA Office with cheque for $15.00.

Clare Lewin

Chair PCA Coaching Panel
March 2008

Sign off Sheets

The following notes and worksheets contain the requirements for a non current PCA NCAS Level 1 Coach accredited under the 2004 scheme to be updated.

Candidates must complete the work sheets which must then be submitted to their PCA State/Territory Office.

Please include

- ❑ Signed Code of Ethics signed
- ❑ Cheque for $15.00 payable to State/Territory PCA.

Candidates may work with a mentor to assist them to complete the questions in the work sheets.

Candidate's Name: .....

Address: .....

Date of Birth*: .....

Phone: …… Email: ……

* DOB required by the Australian Sports Commission to register via Sports Accreditation on line data base.

State/Territory Office Use:

Worksheets completed: .....

Date: .....

Coach's code of ethics

1.	Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being.	• Within the context of the activity, treat everyone equally regardless of sex, disability, ethnic origin or religion.
2.	Ensure the rider's time spent with you is a positive experience.	• All athletes are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.
3.	Treat each rider as an individual.	• Respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each individual athlete. • Help each athlete reach their full potential.
4.	Be fair, considerate and honest with riders.	
5.	Be professional and accept responsibility for your actions.	• Language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation should display high standards. • Display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved with the sport - this includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators. • Encourage your athletes to demonstrate the same qualities.
6.	Make a commitment to providing a quality service to your riders.	• Maintain or improve your current NCAS accreditation. • Seek continual improvement through performance appraisal and ongoing coach education. • Provide a training program which is planned and sequential. • Maintain appropriate records.
7.	Operate within the rules and spirit of your sport.	• The guidelines of national and international bodies governing your sport should be followed. Please contact your sport for a copy of its rule book, constitution, by-laws, relevant policies, eg. Anti-doping Policy, selection procedures etc. • Coaches should educate their athletes on drugs in sport issues in consultation with the Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA).
8.	Any physical contact with riders should be: • appropriate to the situation. • necessary for the riders skill development.	
9.	Refrain from any form of personal abuse towards your riders and their ponies. *	• This includes verbal, physical and emotional abuse. • Be alert to any forms of abuse directed towards your athletes from other sources whilst they are in your care.
10.	Refrain from any form of harassment towards your riders. *	• This includes sexual and racial harassment, racial vilification and harassment on the grounds of disability • You should not only refrain from initiating a relationship with an athlete, but should also discourage any attempt by an athlete to initiate a sexual relationship with you, explaining the ethical basis of your refusal.
11.	Provide a safe environment for training and competition.	• Ensure equipment and facilities meet safety standards. • Equipment, rules, training and the environment need to be appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes.
12.	Show concern and caution towards sick and injured riders and ponies.	• Provide a modified training program where appropriate. • Allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate. • Encourage athletes to seek medical advice when required. • Maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes.
13.	Be a positive role model for your sport and riders.	

* Please refer to the Harassment-Free Sport Guidelines available from the Australian Sports Commission, for more information on harassment issues.

Coaches should

- Be treated with respect and openness.
- Have access to self-improvement opportunities.
- Be matched with a level of coaching appropriate to their level of competence.

Coach's Code of Ethics Agreement Form

for registration or re-registration to the
National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS)

TO: Pony Club Australia Inc

I, _____ of _____
Full Name Address

_____
Address cont. Telephone contact

am seeking registration / re-registration (please circle) for the following PCA qualification:

_____
Level

I agree to the following terms:

1. I agree to abide by the PCA Inc Code of Ethics overleaf
2. I acknowledge that PCA may take disciplinary action against me, if I breach the code of ethics. (I understand that PCA is required to implement a complaints handling procedure in accordance with the principles of natural justice, in the event of an allegation against me)
3. I acknowledge that disciplinary action against me may include de-registration from the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme.

Please refer to the *Harassment-free Sport Guidelines* available from the Australian Sports Commission or, if you require more information on harassment issues.

_____ _____
Signature Date

_____ _____
(if under 18, parent / guardian signature) Date

Excerpts from the PCA NCAS Preliminary Workbook

Unit 1.3 – Risk Management

The next two pages are taken from the ASC Beginning Coaching General Principles worksheets 2008.

1 What are your legal responsibilities as a coach?

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- .....
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2 What is your 'duty of care' in coaching?

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3 An athlete has collided heavily with another player, and has been knocked unconscious. You are the first one on the scene. Outline the steps you would undertake to deal with this emergency situation

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4 What steps would you take if an athlete in your squad informed you that they had a medical condition such as asthma?

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5 List the steps of 'STOP' (for dealing with a soft tissue injury)

S .....

T .....

O .....

P .....

6 List the steps of RICER (for dealing with a soft tissue injury)

R .....

I .....

C .....

E .....

R .....

7 List the steps of No HARM (for dealing with a soft tissue injury)

No H .....

No A .....

No R .....

No M .....

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Use the following worksheet to identify potential risks in your local Pony Club environment. Once you have identified some of the key risks list some strategies you could put in place to minimise these risks and identify who will be responsible for implementing these strategies.

	Potential risks	**Strategies to reduce risk.**	**Who is responsible?**	**By when?**
Environment				
Equipment				
People and Horses				
Other				

Safety

1. A rider in your group is in danger of being bucked off. What should you do?

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2. A rider in your group has fallen off. Outline the steps you should follow both during and after the incident.

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Coaches should keep their own records of any injury or accident that occurs during their lesson. The following page contains a suggested example of an injury record form.

Clubs also have an Injury/Incident report form for Insurance purposes. This must also be filled in and the duplicate sent to the State/Territory Office.

Injury Record Form

Date: ----- / ---- / ----

Rider's Name: .....

INJURY

Location of injury : .....

How injury occurred: .....

.....

Place: .....

Time: .....

Other witnesses: .....

CARE AND TREATMENT

Describe initial action taken: .....

.....

Who administered care? .....

.....

Was an ambulance used? Yes No

Was the rider referred for other treatment? .....

.....

NOTIFICATION

Circle appropriate person:

Parents

Club Official

Competition organizer

Other .....

SIGNED: .....

Units 1.6, 1.7 & 1.8 – The Coach in Action

1. When teaching a new skill to a beginner, outline the steps you would use:

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2. You are explaining a new activity to the group. Charlie Chatterbox has been talking throughout your explanation, and is now distracting some of the others with his silly comments. What steps would you take to get Charlie's attention and stop his disruptive behaviour?

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3. A new rider has come to a rally where you are coaching. They have a hearing impairment which limits their ability to hear you speaking at a distance. Explain some strategies that you could use to safely incorporate this rider into your group

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4. How could you modify a training activity for a rider whose ability is at an earlier developmental stage than the majority of the group? Give a practical example.

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5. Identify a rule that could be modified to allow a rider with a mild physical disability participate in an activity on a level playing field.

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7. If the rider in question 5 wanted to enter a competition what steps would need to be followed to allow them to use the rule modification identified?

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8. List some techniques you could use to gain evidence to assess a rider with a mild intellectual disability attempting their D or D* Certificate.

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Excerpts from the PCA NCAS level 1 Workbook

Unit 1.4 – Inclusive Coaching

Work through the following exercises with a mentor coach.

(Mentor to indicate when the candidate is competent by placing their initials in the relevant section)

If there are no appropriate RDA riders available, use junior able-bodied riders for this task.

Learning outcome	**Initials of Mentor**
Teach a team game (such as a bending relay) to a group of riders (including one with a physical disability). Demonstrate how you can modify it to promote inclusive team participation.	
Demonstrate one of the following commonly used for riders with a disability: • support rider foot position in stirrup with rubber bands • safe attachment of stirrup iron to girth to stabilize rider leg position	
Teach a rider with a mild intellectual disability how to correctly ride a 20m circle using two or more communication strategies.	
Explain how the Sports CONNECT Exemption system and Exemption card would allow a rider with a disability to compete at a Regional or Zone level event.	
Demonstrate an alternate method of mounting for a rider with limited weight bearing capacity.	

Unit 3.11 – Lungeing

Identify, demonstrate or discuss the following with a mentor coach

(Mentor to indicate when the candidate is competent by placing their initials in the relevant section)

	Identify technique	**Initials of mentor**
Identify the principals of lungeing and its use in training the horse		
Identify the correct equipment for lungeing as outlined in the PCA Syllabus		
Identify correct fit for the equipment used		
Demonstrate the techniques required to lunge a quiet horse including; o control of the lunge rein o use of the whip o use of the voice		

Excerpts from PCA NCAS Preliminary Coaching Notes

1.2 The Role of the Coach

The Beginning Coaching Manual produced by the Australian Coaching Council describes various types of coach and the roles they play at different times during the coaching process. It is important that the coach gains respect by instilling high ideals in the riders they coach. A good coach is well organised, has a good knowledge of both riders and horses as well as an understanding of methods of coaching. Coaches need to understand that a coach has many roles and needs a number of skills to fulfil these roles. These are outlined in detail in Beginning Coaching. Coaches must also be conversant with the Coach's Code of Conduct.

Aims and Objectives of Pony Club

- to encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with horses and riding
- to provide instruction in riding and horsemastership and to educate Members to look after and to take proper care of their animal
- to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty thereby cultivating strength of character and self-discipline

When coaching children the following are to be considered in order of importance

- the safety of the child
- the comfort of the horse
- the enjoyment of the rider
- the progress of the rider

1.3 Safety

"Accidents can be prevented by educating people and insisting on a certain code of conduct during the performance of routine procedures" – ASC Beginning Coaching

Riding is a high risk sport and coaches must be aware of the importance of preventing potentially dangerous situations from occurring. They must be aware of the facilities and equipment being used, precautions to prevent injury to riders and horses and what to do in the case of an accident.

Facilities

Riding areas

- size needs to be appropriate for the activity
- any area used for beginner riders must be fenced
- separate from major sources of distraction
- surface must be even and non slip and checked for holes, stones etc
- sound, secure fencing
- gates must be wide enough to allow safe access and be easily operated. Latches should not protrude or have any sharp edges
- gates must be either fully open or fully closed
- the venue must be enclosed and have a gate which can be closed

People and traffic control

- separate pedestrians and horses
- where possible separate horses and vehicles
- have an agreed formula for moving riders from one area or class to another
- do not have spectators, dogs or other distractions in the arena whilst in charge of a lesson

Arena rules

- have arena rules and adhere to them at all times
- use consistent standard commands and terminology

The Coach

- use an area suitable for the group of riders and activity they are coaching
- ensure the equipment being used is safe
- insist on suitable spacing of horses and riders during the session
- be familiar with and follow arena rules and standard commands and terminology – see appendices

What to do if an Accident Occurs

Be prepared at all times in case of an accident. Know the Club's accident procedure and First Aid contact. Make sure there is a current emergency service number list and access to a working telephone.

- stay calm
- halt the ride
- check for any other dangers
- delegate someone to look after the class and/or catch a lose horse
- delegate someone to find the club First Aid personnel
- go quietly to the injured person

If conscious

- tell them to remain still and offer reassurance
- remove any possible dangers if possible
- talk to the rider, ask them if they can talk, if they have any pain, can they move their fingers and toes. (***If the rider is unable to move do not attempt to move them until trained help arrives)***
- stop any obvious bleeding by applying pressure to the wound
- stay with the rider until help arrives

If unconscious

- if the coach has first aid training follow the **DRABC Plan**
    - o danger
    - o response
    - o airways
    - o breathing
    - o circulation

Commence CPR if required and send for help

- if the coach has no first aid training they should send immediately for the trained first aid officer and/or contact medical assistance

Once the situation is in hand reassure the rest of the ride. As soon as possible, depending on the circumstances at hand, resume the lesson.

Accident report

Coaches must make an accident report as soon as possible after the incident, even if no apparent injury has occurred. Record details of the date, time, how the accident occurred and the actions taken. Clubs have accident/injury forms for this purpose there is also an example of one in the work book.

The coach's legal responsibilities

- **Provide a safe environment.**
  Facilities and equipment must be safe for both horse and rider. This includes checking the fit and maintenance of the gear and equipment used by the rider. Activities should be modified as required if weather conditions prove adverse.
- **Activities must be adequately planned.**
  Sessions must be planned with the age of the rider, range of abilities and progression of skills in mind
- **Riders and horses must be evaluated for injury and incapacity.**
  Riders and horses with an injury or incapacity should not be expected to perform a potentially harmful activity. No rider should ever be forced to participate in an activity that they do not wish to. Individual differences must be taken into account.
- **Riders and horses should be matched.**
  The rider should have horse that is suitable to their level of experience. Groups matched in relation to experience, level of maturity and fitness.
- **Riders should be warned of the inherent risks of the sport.**
  The risks of any activity can only be legally accepted by the riders if they understand and appreciate those risks. This includes a duty to warn others associated with the riders – eg parents and guardians.
- **Activities must be closely supervised.**
  Supervision is required to ensure all riders participate in a safe environment. The entire class should be visible to the coach at all times during a session.
- **Develop clear rules for activities and general conduct.**
  The coach and club should insist on clearly defined rules and general behaviour in all situations at an activity. This includes the tie up area and to and from the competition area or lesson.
- **Coaches should keep accurate records.**
  Adequate records are useful aids for planning and are essential in all cases of injury. Accident reports should be made as soon as possible after the injury or significant incident occurs even if no injury has been sustained. Remember that Accident reports are not a diagnosis.

1.7 Teaching special groups

There are vast array of needs which may have to be met within a group of riders. For example a rider may be nervous, from non English speaking background, hearing impaired, have an intellectual or physical disability or have a different skill level than the rest of the group. Coaches will need to recognise the differing needs of individuals within the group they are coaching and adapt their coaching style or coaching tasks to meet the individual needs.

At all times it is important to keep a positive outlook, include every one in the group and concentrate on the ability of the rider of the rider rather than the disability

- always remember who you are coaching
- make the session fun and enjoyable
- coach individuals even when in a group
- meet individual needs and challenge each to learn and improve
- give each rider a sense of accomplishment at the end of the session
- consider how each children learn and tailor the session for that to occur

Ways to achieve this:

- vary the method of communicating
- adapt terminology to suit the rider
- adapt the environment or equipment to encourage the development of independent riding skills
- change the style of coaching used
- set a challenge within the coaching task that reflects the riders ability and will allow them to achieve a successful outcome

1.8 Inclusive coaching

Riders with a mild intellectual disability are capable of learning independent riding skills and basic horse care. Do not assume that they understand what you are asking them to do, they may have difficulty comprehending. The most effective way to communicate is to use simple language and visual demonstrations. This may mean changing the way an explanation is given, keeping the number of words to a minimum and showing them what you want them to do.

At times it may be necessary to adapt or modify the riding environment, equipment or rules to assist riders in developing independent riding skills.

It is not only the coaching environment that may need to be adapted. Riders sitting their Efficiency Certificates may not be able to write, comprehend or communicate sufficiently well to carry out all the assessment activities laid down in the syllabus of instruction. These riders may be capable of demonstrating all the skills required but the methods of collecting evidence of this will have to be adapted for each individual.

Pony Club Australia wishes to acknowledge Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia Inc for the use of the following Inclusive Coaching notes written by Sue Harris and Sally Francis – January 2008

Getting Started

From time to time you may have riders in your lesson who have a physical, intellectual or sensory disability. Although this may seem challenging at first there are a few simple steps you can take to ensure inclusion for all participants in your program by working through the following:

What do I know about the rider's disability?

It is not so important to understand what the disability is, but how it affects the rider when participating in activities at pony club. Eg a rider with a hearing impairment may have difficulty hearing instructions at a distance on a windy day. A rider with mild cerebral palsy may have difficulty mounting in a conventional manner from the ground and a rider with an intellectual disability may struggle to memorise a dressage test or showjumping course.

What can I do to make it easier for the rider to participate?

An invaluable attribute of a good coach is to remain flexible and creative whatever the situation. Inclusive coaching is all about modifying the equipment, environment and coaching styles to accommodate all participants without losing the integrity of the program.

There are some simple steps to take known as the TREE principle:

- **T**eaching style
- **R**ules
- **E**quipment
- **E**nvironment

Teaching Style: You may need to be creative about verbal instructions, body language and use of demonstration riders to get your point across.

Rules: Modifying rules may allow riders to compete on a more level playing field. Eg a rider who is unable to mount from the ground may need to use a mounting block when playing "stepping stones". (Refer to the Sports CONNECT Exemption Application Guidelines and Terms of Reference in the appendices)

Equipment: Sometimes to allow riders with disabilities to be independent equipment modifications are used. Examples might include specially tailored reins for riders using only one hand, rubber bands to support a correct foot position in the stirrup or a monkey strap/stockman's breastplate to help with balance at faster paces.

Environment: Where an activity is taught can play a big role in its success. For young and novice riders learning independent riding skills an enclosed arena provides a sense of security. Indoor arenas and isolated outdoor arenas may provide a less distracting learning environment for riders with poor attention spans. Use of pictures with dressage markers will assist riders with poor literacy skills. (Eg "C" with a picture of a cat).

Teaching tips for riders with an intellectual disability

Keep instruction simple and clear. If the riders do not understand the instructions they are not going to be able to carry them out. If possible demonstrate what you are saying to

assist the rider to understand and remember new equestrian words, phrases and definitions If a person talks in sentences of about 5 words then instruction should be given in sentences of about 3 words. The important words should be at the start of the sentence e.g. `take up reins', rather than "I would like you to take up your reins'.

Some people with intellectual disability (including acquired brain injury) have poor short-term memory. This may be due to poor concentration or lack of understanding. Instructions tend to be better understood and retained if they are carried out immediately or are repeated back to the coach. Ask questions to see if the rider has understood. If the rider does not use expressive language (speak) he can point to or show what he is going to do.

Demonstration is vital. Learning by looking is most people's preferred way of learning. Riding coaches tend to use speech and listening rather than showing. Remember to explain and show, let the rider have a try straight away, and if necessary demonstrate again then let the rider have another try.

Encourage independence with your riders. People with intellectual disabilities often have difficulty doing things. There are several reasons for this:

- They wait for others to do it for them. This is often the result of things being done for them so they do not even try themselves.
- They take too long to do something so someone finishes the task off for them.
- They do not have enough practice to learn to do the task properly.
- They may refuse to have a try due to past experiences of failure, because no one has shown them how to do something, or because they cannot remember how.

It is usually much faster for the coach or parent to groom a horse or buckle a girth, but it is very important to give the rider a chance to learn to do tasks on his own, whether working around the horse or when riding.

Avoid talking down to people with intellectual disabilities but rather communicate with them as you would other children in your class. Keep age appropriateness in mind when deciding which games and activities to use.

Try to be consistent. Some people with intellectual disability learn slowly and can become confused if the instructions vary. This applies to several areas:

- Terminology - It does not matter which words the coach decides to use, but all coaches working with the rider should stick to the same ones. It is very confusing for riders if the same instruction has different words (e.g. stop and halt)
- Sequences of Aids - If a rider is to learn a skill, it must be taught in the same sequence, e.g. when mounting the same order of checking the stirrups and girth, holding on with left hand to reins and mane and so on. If the order is changed it is much harder for the skill to become automatic.
- Following instructions - If the coach is asking the rider to follow instructions, it is vitally important that the consequences of the riders actions are consistent,
- Praise - `Very good' must mean something is very good. Too often coaches over praise something. This devalues praise in the future. There are lots of ways of recognising a good effort without saying that something was good when it was not.
- Behaviour - Unacceptable behaviour must be treated in the same way each time it occurs. To accept an inappropriate behaviour on one occasion and then not to the next is not very helpful to the person as he will be encouraged to see if he can get away with bad behaviour rather than have a clear idea of what is going to be accepted. It is difficult to know when to pay attention to bad behaviour and when to ignore it. The coach should not

make a big deal about a behaviour problem and give the rider lots of attention. The coach can quietly tell the rider to `stop'. If he/she persists with the negative behaviour, it may be necessary to have the rider dismount and sit down somewhere away from the group. If inappropriate behaviour is a frequent problem, the coach should discuss the matter with the rider's parents to see how they deal with the behaviour and to ensure consistency.

Not all riders will understand signs of danger, some riders may not recognise hostile horse body language such as ears flat back or a swishing tail

Be innovative with your coaching. People with intellectual disabilities need a lot of repetition, but do not let yourself get bored because you have said the same things over and over again. Incorporate your teaching of skills into games and activities.

Set goals for the rider so they will succeed. The riders should be challenged by the lesson; however the goal should be attainable so that the rider does not get frustrated. The success in riding will contribute toward the rider's more positive self-image.

Encourage the riders to relate to others around them. If the rider uses signing as their main means of communication, then encourage other riders in the class to learn basic signing so that they can communicate with each other.

People with an intellectual disability often have a short attention span. It may be necessary to work on a riding skill for only a few minutes, and then take a break before repeating the skill again.

Appropriate social skills should be encouraged at all times. A good guide on social skills and behaviour in general is do not accept something which is an unacceptable behaviour in public. Give the rider an alternative rather than just telling him to stop the behaviour,

Make sure that riding activities are geared to the correct standard for the rider. Working on balance, stretching, co-ordination and fine motor skills can all be easily included in different activities. Activities need to be progressive so that the coach can teach and challenge the individual riders within a group lesson. For example an exercise for improving balance can have a range from: stopping, the rider standing in the stirrups at the halt, to standing in the stirrups with one hand above the head at the trot. Every rider can improve at their own rate without retarding the progress of others.

Teaching tips for riders with physical disability

It may be useful to know if a rider's disability is congenital (present at birth) or acquired later in life.

This may help you to understand how well the rider has adjusted to their condition. Remember the best expert on the condition and how it affects them will usually be the rider themselves.

Find out how the rider prefers to mount and whether any special equipment or assistance is needed eg a mounting block. Some riders may prefer to mount from the off side to compensate strength and balance issues.

Some riders may be using special equipment to help them become more independent. These might include modified reins, monkey straps and tailored breastplates, grip covers, wedges and blocks on saddles, rubber bands on feet and stirrup stabilising attachments. Other riders may be unaware of adaptive equipment options. Do not devise any special equipment until you have seen your Rider on a horse and decided in what areas help from

special equipment may be needed. Where possible discuss requirements with the rider. Refer to RDA for more information

Some paraplegic riders may benefit from an iron bar handgrip on the front of the saddle to help them balance and a pad behind the leg can help keen the leg in place. When a Rider has obtained a fair degree of balance and skill it is possible to introduce the use of dressage whip or whips to take the place of the leg aids.

It is a matter of trial and error whether riders lacking function and sensation in the legs are more confident using stirrups or having their feet loose. With stirrups the Rider's leg may be in a correct position but due to a lack of feeling the Rider will be unaware of a foot either coming out of the stirrup or becoming twisted in the iron. Use of rubber bands to stabilise the foot in the correct position will give riders maximum independence. Attaching the stirrup to the girth with a Velcro strap or similar will also help to stabilise the foot position.

Find out how long the rider's physical condition will allow him to ride at each lesson

Rising trot may be impossible for a Rider with impaired lower limb function but sitting trot and cantering is fine provided the rider is confident and can stabilise himself. Coaches should always be aware of the possibility of muscle fatigue with the riders and give ample opportunity for rest between activities.

Riders with Spina Bifida and other conditions involving paraplegia of varying degrees will inevitably have lack of sensation in their lower limbs. Make sure that adequate padding protects likely points of pressure on their seat bones and skin.

Some riders may have increased muscle tone as part of their condition and be subject to muscle spasms, which can be exacerbated by nervousness, excitement, fatigue and extreme cold. Others may have decreased (floppy) muscle tone as part of their condition and lack strength, mobility and stamina. These riders might require frequent breaks during the lesson.

Weather conditions can affect some rider’s functional ability. Ensure that riders are appropriately dressed and have access to shade, shelter and fluids.

Competitions, no matter how simple, are a great incentive for progress and should be encouraged as a learning experience and a mentally stimulating activity.

Remember that your Rider may also have hearing, sight and intellectual problems so plan your lesson accordingly and make sure that your voice can be heard.

Teaching riders who are hearing or sight impaired.

When teaching sight impaired Riders it is necessary to know the degree of impairment, i.e. is it complete or partial? Is it congenital or acquired? We cannot be sure how a Rider who has never had sight forms understanding of things but we do know how someone who has been sighted at some stage will visualise surroundings.

Never assume anything with Riders who cannot see. They must be orientated to their surroundings and their horses and gear each time they come to ride. Aids such as callers, bells, clappers and electronic audio aids are useful in assisting the rider to find the way.

Some riders with severe vision impairment may require “callers” to stand at each letter of a dressage arena and call the letter as the rider approaches to assist them navigate the dressage movement in training and competition.

Riders who cannot hear need to be taught by demonstration, the use of pictures and sign language. They must always watch the coach and an emergency signal should be evolved so that the Riders can be alerted to a dangerous situation.

It is, however, advisable to let the ring steward know if the Rider cannot hear instructions otherwise problems could develop!

Modifying mounting and dismounting techniques for riders with a disability

Where possible for more physically capable riders mounting and dismounting should follow the conventional pony club methods however it may be necessary to make some minor position changes as follows:

- Riders who have difficulty rotating once the right foot has left the ground may find it easier to begin the mount by facing the saddle or horses shoulder instead of the tail but care must be taken not to poke the horse with the rider’s left toes during mounting.
- Some riders with poorer balance and special awareness may prefer to hold the reins and pommel with the left hand and place their right hand on the off side waist for greater stability.
- It is advisable to have a person on the opposite side during the mounting process to counter balance the saddle as the rider mounts.
- To protect both horse and rider during the mounting procedure it may be advisable to use a mounting block, however always dismount to the ground.

NB it is not recommended that a rider hold the cantle during the mounting procedure as this puts unnecessary pressure on horses back and pulls saddle towards the rider. Their arm is also in the way when the rider places their leg over the saddle prior to sitting.

Language and Disability

Using the right language to describe people with disabilities in the pony club setting not only maintains “political correctness”, it rebalances the connection between the person and the disability.

For example: “a disabled person” is a dated definition replaced by “a person with a disability”. Why you ask? Isn’t it the same thing? No it isn’t. The “person” is the most important part and the “disability” is only one aspect of their being. Other terms to avoid are “suffers from”, “victim of” or “afflicted with” as these have negative undertones. Use “a person has… instead. People with disabilities are also very individual as most coaches would be very aware. Two riders with Down syndrome share the same condition by definition but function in very different ways. It’s important not to “stereotype” people with disabilities.

Here are some examples of inappropriate terminology and the appropriate alternative.

Unacceptable	Appropriate alternative
Mentally retarded, moron, simple, defective, retard, nuff nuff, subnormal, abnormal	Person with an intellectual disability
Spastic (used as a noun), crippled, gimpy, deformed, defective	Person with a physical (specify) disability
Mongol, mongoliod	Person with Down syndrome
Dwarf	Person with short stature
Epileptic	Person with epilepsy
Birth defect, congenital defect	Person with a congenital disability
Handicapped	Disability
Blind, deaf, dumb	Person with a sensory impairment (vision, hearing etc)
Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound	Uses a wheelchair
Fit	Seizure
Insane, lunatic, mental, psycho, schizo, maniac	Person with a psychiatric (specify) disability

For further clarification on any of the material contained in the above notes please contact your State or Territory RDA Office

Excerpts from PCA NCAS Level 1 Coaching Notes

1.4 Inclusive Coaching

Pony Club Australia wishes to acknowledge RideabilityVictoria for the use of the following Inclusive Coaching notes written by Sha Cordingly, Sally Francis and Rikki Raadsveld – June 2009

Introduction

Teaching people to ride, whether or not they are living with a disability, is based on a coaching system designed to empower the individual to develop the skills they need to participate in equestrian sport and recreation. The aspirations of a rider living with a disability do not differ significantly from any other rider.

This coaching module is primarily designed to ensure that a coach has the necessary skills to identify the type of support an individual rider, including a rider with a disability, needs. Support ranges from adapting the teaching methodology and sourcing the correct adaptive tack and equipment to identifying pathways for the rider to take up sporting and recreational opportunities with their peers.

As with any coaching situation, care must be taken to ensure that the rider and any auxiliary personnel are working and riding in a safe environment; this means we manage

risk not attempt to avoid it to the detriment of the rider's enjoyment of the sport or their right to learn riding skills.

On occasions a third person or persons will be within the riding area to support the rider (see below 'the person as an aid') and the coach will need to ensure that these people not only understand their role but agree to the rules set down by the coach.

Before undertaking this module the coach will have undertaken the NCAS Preliminary Pony Club Coach or equivalent qualification and be competent in –

- teaching riding and horse care skills
- identifying the learning style of a rider
- explaining rally and competition etiquette to riders
- safe mounting and dismounting procedures for riders with a disability
- Researching information about a rider's functional and cognitive ability[1]

Contents

1. Adapting saddlery, equipment and activities

Pony Club ensures the rider is educated in the best practice of using correctly fitting saddlery that caters for the needs of a particular horse and rider combination. To enable the rider with a disability to fully participate in Pony Club activities it is imperative that they are assisted to achieve their optimum riding position in order to apply their individualized natural and artificial aids to communicate in harmony with their horse.

A rider with a physical disability, in particular, may need adaptive saddlery as well as personal equipment and modified equipment to safely participate in activities. Consulting with the rider, their parent or guardian, RDA qualified coach, a medical practitioner or an allied health professional will ensure that the best and safest option for equipment or saddlery is used.

Adaptive saddlery

Adaptive saddlery refers to a saddle, bridle and other auxiliary gear that has been adapted to assist the rider with a disability achieve their riding goals in the safest and most effective manner. In terms of both safety and dignity, for example, the rider is never tied onto the saddle or on to the horse but may be assisted to maintain their optimum riding position with adaptive saddlery and equipment that will release under moderate pressure in the case of emergency. The following are the most common uses of adaptive equipment.

1. *To stabilize the rider position.*

   Adapt saddlery to assist the rider with poor balance to maintain his or her optimum riding position by:

   - attaching a holding strap to the front of the saddle;

[1] Information on medical conditions is continually updated, refer to relevant websites for further information

- attaching a holding strap to the stockman's breastplate;
- attaching a holding strap to the kneepads of a stock saddle;
- attaching a molded stabilizing bar that is positioned at the front of the saddle. This bar is secured into position between the sweat flap and top flap of the saddle (to be designed and fitted by a saddler);
- using a saddle fitted with roping horn (western or hybrid saddle);
- using a saddle fitted with extended kneepads (stock saddle);
- fitting shaped Velcro blocks to the back and/or front of the saddle;

2. *To stabilize the rider's leg position.*

   Adapt the saddlery to assist the rider with low muscle tone or paralyses to the legs maintain the optimum leg position by:

   - attaching Velcro blocks to the saddle on either side of the thigh as well as either side of the lower leg;
   - securing two Velband straps, 6 cm width, to the saddle from under the flap and fastening the first in a cross action method over the thigh and the second strap over the lower leg;
   - place the knee and thigh between the stirrup leather straps with additional padding attached over the upper strap to prevent discomfort or a potential site for a pressure sore;
   - tie the stirrup to the girth with a leather spur strap or Velcro strap;

3. *To stabilize the rider's foot position in the stirrup*

   Adapt the saddlery to assist the rider with poor foot control to maintain his or her foot in the stirrup by:

   - Using 2 heavy duty rubber bands linked together to gain length. Place the rider's foot into the loop of the first rubber band up to the rider's ball of foot. (The second rubber band should hang down from under the foot). Position the rider's foot into the stirrup[i2], twist the hanging rubber band underneath the stirrup and back onto the rider's foot thus creating a loop to secure the foot into the stirrup.
   - attaching a toe stopper or other type of clip on clog to the stirrup to assist the rider to maintain the stirrup on the ball of the foot. Leather clogs may also be used for this purpose.

4. *To improve hand function*

   Use different types of reins for riders to maintain the desired rein length.

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2. The rider's foot will need positioning in the stirrup in a manner that will not cause a spasm. Riders with Cerebral Palsy will either ride with their foot to home in the stirrup or more on the toes to prevent the ball of foot spasm from occurring.

Multiple loop reins: These reins have three padded loops positioned down the outside of each rein. To prevent the reins from hanging down in a potentially dangerous position from the added weight of the loops attach a strap from each rein across the horse's neck thus maintaining the rein position on either side of the crest.

Ladder reins: These reins have three padded leather straps running ladder like from rein to rein at the desired interval to enable the rider to ride with shorter and longer rein length.

Bar or polo rein: To be fitted at the desired rein length to maintain an even contact for the rider. To prevent the reins from flipping over the horse's head attach a strap to the end of the reins where the rider holds and using a clip attachment fasten it to the D ring of the saddle or the front of saddle holding strap.

Padded reins: These reins are padded with rubber tubing or specific handgrip material taped over the area of the rein where the rider holds to maintain the correct length of rein.

Coloured reins: These reins have corresponding coloured sections on each rein so the rider can identify where to maintain the correct length of rein.

Alternative rein aids:

Foot reins. Attach around the base of the stirrup in the most direct line to the horse's mouth.

Mouth reins. Run the reins from the bit through stabilizing rings, attached to the front of the saddle, to the rider's mouth. Try to keep the most direct line from horse's mouth to the rider's mouth. Note: the coach will need to obtain advice on this procedure. (Rideability Victoria)

Modified Personal Equipment

Personal equipment refers to the personal items used to assist the rider to achieve the optimum riding position. All personal equipment needs to be fitted for the rider in the riding setting and in consultation with a medical or allied health practitioner.

1. *To improve rider's head and neck position*
   - use a fitted foam neck brace
2. *To improve rider's shoulder position*
   - use fitted shoulder brace
3. *To improve rider's trunk and upper body position*
   - use a fitted back brace
   - use a fitted back protector
4. *To secure the rider's arm (low tone).*
   - use a wide supportive bandage around the arm and body
5. *To prevent the occurrence of pressure sores on a rider's seat bone and/or legs*

- cover areas of the saddle with sheepskin or other padded materials e.g. sheepskin seat saver
- use padded sleeves to cover stirrup leather

Modified Games Equipment

By modifying games equipment, the rider has the opportunity to complete a riding task independently and in a safe manner; without modified equipment the rider is compelled to rely on the support of a third party. Equipment is modified in a way that meets the individual needs of a rider, allows for maximum independence, and is developed by the coach and rider working together.

1. *Ideas for modifying equipment*

   Retrieving items Use a glove with Velcro strips on palm and items that will stick to Velcro when retrieved

   Games equipment holder Attach an equipment holder to the saddle so the rider may place items such as ball, stick or baton into holder and commence the task by using preferred rein aids.

   Flag poles These can be different lengths or diameters to suit the needs of a rider.

   The person as an aid In games where dismounting is part of activity a rider may need someone to bunk them back onto the horse in their preferred mounting procedure.

   A rider with vision impairment or short-term memory issues may need callers to provide directional commands e.g. a caller at each dressage marker calling the letter as the rider approaches or leaves the marker. Naturally, callers will need to be familiar with the dressage tests.

2. Modifying coaching strategies to achieve rider efficiency certificates

The coach, when preparing a rider with a disability for an efficiency certificate, at any standard, will firstly identify adaptive saddlery required by the rider and then modify the coaching strategy to teach riding and horse care techniques. As modifying strategies and tasks can be complex the coach may wish to discuss new techniques with another coach; in any event the coach should not develop strategies that are unacceptable to either the District Commissioner or the assessor.

If a rider has a physical disability that does not enable him or her to perform a task safely there are some strategies to assist the rider to demonstrate knowledge, for example, the rider may describe the task and its theoretical component or undertake the task at a slower pace in conjunction with the theory. The hand gallop in C Certificate, for example, may be modified to allow the rider with paraplegia demonstrate the position and the application of aids for the hand gallop at the halt, walk or trot. In addition, the rider, as well as knowing the footfalls of the gallop, could demonstrate their knowledge by identifying it on another horse or on DVD.

Similarly, the coach may deal with horse handling and horse care in the same manner and should offer the rider opportunities to undertake modified tasks if they are physically unable to do so safely or comfortably. A rider who uses a wheelchair is able to perform horse care and horse handling tasks if the strategy is thought through and risk to both rider and horse is minimized.

If a rider has difficulty in expressing him or herself in writing, they should complete the task orally or use a communication device. It is important that the coach briefs the assessor about the strategies used to coach the rider and any variations to the assessment criteria that may be necessary.

The coach will develop strategies to maximize the potential of the rider to achieve efficiency at any standard in the Pony Club syllabus of instruction.

3. The exemption system

Some Pony Club rules may make it difficult for a rider with a disability to compete. To ensure all riders, including riders with a disability, can compete an exemption system has been created to uphold the values of fair play and safety for the rider and horse. If a rider would like to apply for an exemption, they need to do the following –

1. Complete a "Pony Club Australia Application for Exemption with a Disability"
2. Provide supporting evidence/documentation as requested
3. Return the document to their Pony Club State/Territory office.

The application is forwarded to the nominated Exemption Committee (see Exemption Application Guidelines and Terms of Reference). Once a decision is made and an application is approved the rider will receive an Exemption Card, valid for 2 years. The rider and the club's District Commissioner will both receive an explanatory letter; this letter must accompany the rider's entry form for competition. If the request for an exemption is unsuccessful the rider is entitled to appeal according to the Pony Club grievance procedure. Riders with a disability will rely on their coach to assist them to apply for an exemption.

4. Accessible Facilities

All organisations have a responsibility under the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) to provide equitable access to goods and services and to premises used by the public; in the case of the Pony Club this will include grounds, facilities and buildings. The DDA provides uniform protection against unfair treatment for people with a disability and also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person, such as a friend, carer or family member, who is an associate and accompanies a person with a disability. The Act supports the principle that people with a disability have the same fundamental rights as anyone else in the community.

When a person with a disability wants to use public premises, such as a Pony Club facility, they must be provided with dignified access. This applies to all buildings, outdoor spaces, car parking areas, ramps, pathways etc. If appropriate access is not provided the individual may make a complaint under the Act.

The Building Code of Australia (BCA) applies to all new buildings and to those undergoing any major refurbishment. Compliance, under sections of the BCA, is required with a range of access provisions.

Australian Standard (AS 1428) – Design for Access and Mobility prescribes the basic requirements for physical access which should be considered for the planning and construction of buildings and facilities.

Currently, AS 1428 comprises four parts:

AS 1428.1:2001	Design for access and mobility General requirements for access – new building work
AS 1428.2:1992	Design for access and mobility Enhanced and additional requirements – buildings and facilities
AS 1428.3:1992	Requirements for children and adolescents with physical disabilities
AS/NZS 1428.4:2002	Tactile Ground Surface Indicators for the orientation of people with vision impairment

Standards are available for purchase from Standards Australia at www.standards.org.au. Australian Standards get updated regularly and care should be taken that the most current version is used to ensure that the requirements for access and mobility are met.

The following are areas that should be considered.

Car parks

- ✓ Parking bays of appropriate dimensions and location
- ✓ Level, firm surface
- ✓ Directional signage at correct height
- ✓ Bays marked with international symbol of access
- ✓ Continuous pathways from parking bays to facilities

Entrances

- ✓ Continuous accessible pathways entrance
- ✓ Correct doorway width
- ✓ Level threshold
- ✓ D or lever style door handles and doorbell at correct height
- ✓ Wheelchair circulation space
- ✓ Emergency exits and evacuation procedures
- ✓ Accessible exits with appropriate door handles etc
- ✓ Audible and visible alarms
- ✓ Signage
- ✓ Accessible pathways from buildings
- ✓ Fire hoses and extinguishers at correct height
- ✓ Emergency management plan

Floor/ground surfaces and internal walkways

- ✓ Slip resistant and firm, level surfaces in wet or dry conditions
- ✓ Minimum width of walkways
- ✓ Handrails on any stairs/ramps etc
- ✓ Minimum overhead clearances

Kitchens, dining areas and canteens, and meeting spaces etc

- ✓ Counter and sink heights
- ✓ Wheelchair circulation space
- ✓ Leg clearance under sinks and benches
- ✓ Seating with back and arm rests
- ✓ Appropriate reach for a seated person to taps, microwave, fire blanket etc
- ✓ Slip resistant floor surfaces

- ✓ Contrasts and lighting

Pathways and landscaping

- ✓ Continuous path of accessibility
- ✓ Free of plant species that drop litter and pods etc
- ✓ Clear lines of sight
- ✓ Pathways of correct width and overhead clearance
- ✓ Contrasts and lighting
- ✓ Handrails, closed risers and contrast nosing on any stairs etc
- ✓ Hazard TGSI's at top and bottom of any stairs

Ramps

- ✓ Correct gradient of 1:14 and appropriate landings
- ✓ Correct width of ramp and appropriate handrails
- ✓ Slip resistant in wet and dry conditions
- ✓ Hazard TGSI's at open edges of RDA mounting ramp
- ✓ Continuous path of accessibility to and from an RDA mounting ramp

Spectator facilities

- ✓ Wheelchair spaces and circulation area
- ✓ Lines of sight in viewing areas
- ✓ Appropriate seating
- ✓ Ramps, stairs and floor surfaces

Toilets, shower and change room facilities

- ✓ Designated unisex accessible toilet with appropriate signage
- ✓ Minimum floor area and circulation space for transfers
- ✓ Door opening width and threshold, door handles/locks and occupied indicator
- ✓ Emergency alarm and access
- ✓ Round toilet seat and grab rails
- ✓ Flushing controls and hand washing facilities
- ✓ Shower recess and grab rails
- ✓ Lever style taps
- ✓ Slip resistant flooring

5. Legislation and charters

A rider with a disability has similar aspirations to any other rider in that they wish to participate with their peers in their chosen sport and learn to ride correctly. In Australia, a person with a disability has the right to participate in the economic, cultural and social activities of the community and these rights are enshrined in law.

The overarching framework that protects the interests and rights of the person with a disability is the United Nations 'The Declaration of Human Rights'[3] and the 'Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities'[4]. The Convention embeds eight principles, which include non-discrimination, full and effective participation and inclusion in society, and accessibility.

[3] Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
http://www.un.org/events/humanrights

[4] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
http://www.un.org/disabilities/

Within Australia, there are several pieces of legislation that pertain to the rights of a person with a disability within the Commonwealth jurisdiction and each state also has legislation to govern equal opportunity and discrimination.

Alongside the legislation is the expectation that individuals do not experience discrimination through the use of unacceptable language that offends the dignity of the person or stereotypes or demeans a person with a disability. Acceptable language in reference to a person with a disability emphasizes the person first not the disability; thus 'disabled person' or 'the disabled' become a person or persons with a disability. Words that have been used to describe a particular condition over time and have taken on a pejorative meaning should be avoided. Above all language should focus on the concept of the person first and the disability second.

There are many guides on the use of acceptable language that outline why such expressions as 'the disabled' are no longer acceptable. These can be found by using a Google search. The following web sites will also be helpful.

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Guides on acceptable language

http://www.open.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching/pages/understanding-and-awareness/communicating-with-disabled-students.php

http://www.disability.qld.gov.au/community/communication/way-words/documents/way_with_words.pdf

http://www.acils.com/acil/talking.html

Relevant legislation

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
http://www.comlaw.gov.au/comlaw/management
The Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)
http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
Charter of Human Rights Victoria
http://www.liv.asn.au
http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/humanrights/
Disability Act 2006

Disability Discrimination Act 1992
www.dhs.vic.gov.au/disability/

Sports CONNECT

Sports CONNECT is an Australian Sports Commission initiative aimed at Creating Opportunities Nationally through Networks in Education, Classification and Training.

It focuses on the inclusion of participants with a disability across all sporting activities.

Pony Club Australia and Riding for the Disabled Association Australia have formed an alliance under the Sports CONNECT banner to develop pathways and provide opportunities for riders with disabilities within both organizations. This will allow riders to participate in activities best suited to their needs

What are we trying to achieve through Sports CONNECT?

- Provide support for riders seeking to join Pony Club or for current members who could benefit from rule exemption or gear modification
- Have a framework that allows us to act on an as needs basis with each individual request and situation.
- Acknowledge and develop relationships with RDA State Offices and Centres.

Sports CONNECT: Information Brochure

What is Sports CONNECT all about?

In a combined initiative Riding for the Disabled Association Limited (RDA) and Pony Club Australia Incorporated (PCA) have created pathways and initiatives which will allow riders with a disability to participate in a variety of equestrian activities. This has been achieved through the development and implementation of a Disability Action Plan.

The Disability Action Plan focuses on the four key areas of:

- **disability education**
- **accreditation**
- **classifier support and training**
- **athlete support**

Through this plan RDAA and PCA have:

- Identified the pathways, networks and structure that provide opportunities for people with a disability to participate and achieve their full potential at all levels.
- Ensured that the focus of the programs is on ability and skill level rather than disability.
- Raised awareness of the opportunities available for integrating people with a disability at club level. Some riders will begin to ride with RDA and as they become more proficient will be able to integrate into mainstream organizations such as Pony Club.
- Developed an Exemption System and card which will enable riders with a disability to participate and compete on a level playing field in a fair and equitable manner.

It's all about ability.

Athlete Pathways

RDAA and PCA are working together to recognise shared athlete pathways that will increase the opportunities for riders to move from grass roots participation to the elite levels of the sport.

Sports CONNECT initiatives will give clubs the ability to include riders at whatever level their structure, resources and facilities allow.

The Exemption System

The exemption system has been designed to recognise that some rules, regulations and equipment may need to be modified to allow riders to participate in activities and competitions.

The Exemption System can be accessed through the relevant State and/or Territory Offices.

Exemption can only be granted at a National level by recognised RDA and PCA appointed personnel.

Disability Education

The RDA and PCA National Coaching Accreditation Schemes (NCAS) incorporate inclusive coaching practices. Both organisations have a strong focus on Coach Education and through Sports CONNECT will include disability awareness training for Coaches, Administrators and Officials.

Accreditation

RDA and PCA are sharing experiences in the fields of coaching and officiating (for athletes with a disability) These areas are dynamic and need to be continually updated to remain inclusive and contemporary. By maintaining current accreditation courses RDA and PCA ensure that their programs remain relevant and inclusive of people with a disability.

Classification

To compete at an international level, riders with a disability need to be classified. Currently RDA riders are classified through the FEI Para Equestrian Elite Sport Classification system. RDA is committed to working with the Australian Sports Commission to increase training opportunities for interested classifiers.

Athlete Support

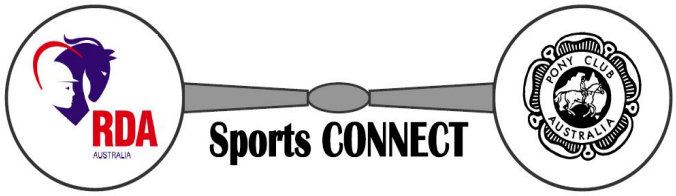
PCA and RDA are committed to providing support for the involvement of riders with a disability in equestrian sport. A significant step is the development of an RDA/PCA specific Exemption system which will create an even playing field for riders wanting to participate in pony club events and activities.

An Exemption Committee will consider applications and evidence based on the rider's disability and its effect on their ability to perform under the current PCA rules. A card will be issued which will exempt riders from specific rules or allow them to use modified equipment to ensure participation on a level playing field.

Further information is available from the PCA and RDA websites or State and Territory Offices.

Both RDA and PCA recognize and appreciate the significant support of the
Australian Sports Commission.

Sports CONNECT: Exemption System



Pony Club Club Australia Inc

ABN 95090080265

and

Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia Limited

ACN 11 64 085 87

Exemption Application Guidelines and Terms of Reference

1. Background

Equestrian sport and recreation is becoming increasingly popular particularly amongst children of all ages. Pony Club provides a safe and enjoyable learning environment for this activity.

Children with a disability also gain a sense of freedom and achievement from equestrian activities. Some will begin their riding career with organizations such as Riding for the Disabled and as they become more proficient, will integrate into mainstream organizations such as Pony Club.

Some rules and regulations prevent people with a disability being able to participate and compete on a level playing field. The purpose of the Pony Club Australia (PCA) – Riding for the Disabled Association of Australia Limited (RDAA) Exemption system is to address this issue in a fair and equitable manner for all. The exemption system upholds the values of fair play, safety for the rider and safety for the horse.

2. Membership of the Exemption Committee

The Exemption Committee is a State committee representing relevant Pony Club Association and RDAA and shall comprise the following:-

- Relevant Zone Rep or nominated member from the applicant's Zone
- A physiotherapist associated with RDAA
- An accredited RDAA coach with valid Pony Club experience

3. Purpose of the Exemption Committee

The committee has been established to oversee the decision making process for the exemption to Pony Club rules and to ensure the rights of the rider with a disability are protected. All information provided is reviewed for relevance to the request.

4. Principles

The following principles will be applied:

- Social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights will be considered in all aspects of the exemption process.
- Riders with a disability will be treated with respect
- All information will be treated confidentially at all times

5. Roles and responsibilities of the Exemption Committee

The role of the Exemption Committee is to consider each application in respect of the rider's disability and its effect on their ability to perform under the current Pony Club Association/RDAA rules. Equity for riders with a disability and fairness of competition for all competitors are paramount.

Each application is considered on its merit based on the information provided.

Exemption can only be provided to allow the rider to participate in Pony Club rallies, activities and competitions run under relevant State/Territory Pony Club Association Rules or RDAA Rules.

The exemption committee will be responsible for the following tasks:-

- Develop the terms of reference and work within these.
- Review each application and approve or not approve.
- Seek additional information if required and observe riders if needed prior to making a decision.
- To advise the rider of on any modifications/recommendations required to approve the application.
- In the case of an application not being approved, reasons will be provided by the committee and communicated to the rider for such a decision.
- Notify the relevant Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA of the decision.
- Ensure all records of riders granted/not granted exemption held by Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA are correct.
- Liaise with the Pony Club Association State/Territory Office annually regarding riders who hold exemption cards.
- A chairperson of the committee is appointed by mutual agreement.

Role of the Chairperson:-

- Liaise with RDAA regarding issues pertaining to exemption
- Liaise with Pony Club Association State/Territory Office regarding issues pertaining to exemption
- Liaise with committee members regarding individual applications
- Liaise with the rider if required
- Inform Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA of the decision regarding each application as determined by the committee
- Maintain a record of communication amongst committee members
- Maintain a data base of all exemptions approved

The role of the Coaching Director or State/Territory appointed personnel:-

- Accept enquiries from riders and clubs regarding exemption
- Receive applications and check all details are completed
- Fax applications with other relevant information to committee members
- Liaise with chairperson regarding final decision
- Prepare exemption card and e-mail to chairperson to be checked and signed.
- Send PCA/RDAA Exemption Card to rider with letter
- Maintain list of exempted riders
- File applications with a copy of the card
- Notify riders when renewals are required (every two years)

6. Decision making and quorum

The Exemption Committee:-

- will seek to support the resolution of issues in an open and collaborative manner
- will work towards achieving consensus from members on decisions made by the group. In the event of a contested decision advice may be sought from those outside of the committee eg medical experts or those with a sound knowledge of pony club competition.

All attempts will be made to ensure a decision is arrived at within six weeks of each member receiving the application. The rider should be notified of the decision within two months of application

Riders wishing to appeal or discuss the decision are encouraged to contact their State or Territory Pony Club Association who will manage the issue as per their Grievance Policy

7. Location

As the Exemption Committee comprises members located around each State/Territory, communication is carried out by e-mail for the most part.

8. Accountabilities

The Exemption Committee is accountable to Pony Club Association State/Territory Office and RDAA

9. Process

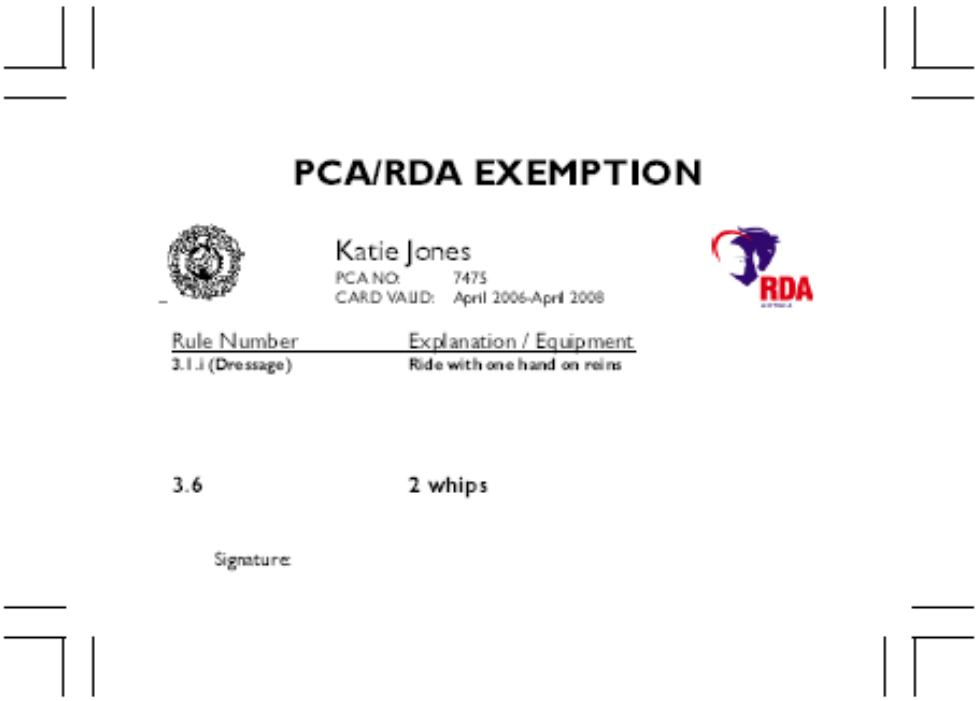
Riders who have restricted inclusion in competition or participation as a direct result of their condition (disability) have the opportunity to apply for an exemption from a rule/s providing the exemption does not give them an unfair advantage over their competitor. The application is made in the following way.

1. The rider requests a *Pony Club Australia Application for Exemption* form from the Pony Club Association State/Territory Office.
2. The document is completed and submitted with medical evidence and the administration fee for consideration
3. The Coaching Director or State/Territory appointed personnel forwards a copy to each member of the *Exemption Committee*
4. The *Exemption Committee* considers the application and if more evidence is required, may request some video footage or a practical viewing of the rider on their horse.
5. If the application is accepted an exemption card (valid for 2 years) is prepared and sent to the rider with a letter of explanation to be forwarded to organizing committees

of competitions, Pony Club DC etc to clarify the use of the exemption card on behalf of the applicant.

6. If the applicant is unsuccessful with their request they may make one appeal via their State or Territory Pony Club Association as per the Pony Club Grievance process.

Sports CONNECT: Card



PCA/RDA EXEMPTION

Katie Jones
PCA NO: 7475
CARD VALID: April 2006-April 2008

Rule Number	Explanation / Equipment
3.1.i (Dressage)	Ride with one hand on reins
3.6	2 whips

Signature: