

Coach Handbook

Overview of awards

Welcome to the BHS challenge awards! We hope you will enjoy delivering the awards and use them as a supportive and progressive learning tool for your participants. This handbook will guide you through all you need to know to deliver a course, from registration to certification. Once you have read this guide, and other supporting materials, if you have any further questions or queries, please contact the BHS Education Team.

The Challenge Awards will be delivered and assessed on a continual basis by [BHS Accredited Professional Coaches](#) or BHS [Approved Centre coaches](#).

New to the Challenge Awards are the 'Horse Explorers'. The award titles and syllabus are the same, the booklets are just designed differently for the two different age ranges:

- Horse Explorers (guided ages 12-18)
- Challenge Awards (guided ages 18+)

We are extremely excited about the Horse Explorers and can't wait for you and your participants to get started with them!

There are 42 awards in total; 34 Core Awards split over five levels: Introduction, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum and 8 individual awards which can be taken in any order (Horse Knowledge Part 1/Horse Knowledge Part 2/Horse Health/Mounted Games/First Pony Guide/Breeding Part 1/Breeding Part 2/Breeding Part 3).

For each pack listed, you can select where you want the Horse Explorers booklets or Challenge Awards (this does not include our 8 individual awards).

The core awards consist of two sections; **About the Horse** and **About the Rider**. These awards begin with an introduction challenge for each section; *introduction to horse care* and *introduction to riding*. You may want to select either, or both, of these for very novice participants who have no, or little, experience with horses but it is not compulsory to begin with either of these awards.

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Each of the **About the Horse** and **About the Rider** sections encompass four topics, covering a broad range of knowledge and skills for stable management and riding.

About the Horse - Introduction to horse care

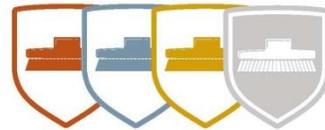
KNOWING YOUR HORSE



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Understand how to look after horses by developing your knowledge of basic anatomy and feeding. Know why they need to be fit and healthy for the activities you do together.

CARING FOR YOUR HORSE



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Enhance your special relationship with horses. Understand the best way to keep them in a healthy condition by developing your grooming skills and knowledge of horse psychology.

HANDLING YOUR HORSE



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Develop techniques to boost your confidence when handling horses. Enhance your skills fitting tack correctly and comfortably, and loading a horse so you can go out and have fun together.

LUNGEING YOUR HORSE



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Lungeing is important to horse health, fitness and happiness. Challenge yourself to lunge the horses you look after safely and with confidence.

About the Rider - Introduction to riding

RIDING FIT



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Build your flexibility, balance and all round physical and mental fitness. Improve your riding experience, confidence and core strength, as well as the welfare of the horses you ride.

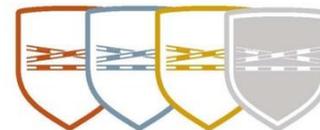
RIDING FLAT



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Improve your balance and position. Develop a feel for all the horses you ride by practicing school movements and riding without stirrups.

RIDING JUMP



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Take on the challenge of leaving the ground. Improve your riding knowledge and develop your jumping skills, from riding over poles to jumping a small course of fences in balance and harmony.

RIDING OUT SAFELY



BRONZE SILVER GOLD PLATINUM

Gain the confidence and skills to ride safely on roads and when out and about. Know how to plan routes and prepare yourself and your horse to enjoy the countryside.

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Horse Health:

- A must for every horse owner or anyone who spends a lot of time around horses! It would also be beneficial for those training towards their BHS Stage assessments. This award includes recognising a range of common health conditions that can affect horses and ponies, first aid procedures and gives participants an opportunity to practise basic treatments and procedures.

Horse Knowledge (Part 1 and Part 2):

- A progressive two-part theory course, that can be delivered entirely in a classroom setting! Participants receive two booklets to work through and there are PowerPoint presentations for coaches to accompany each topic. The Horse Knowledge awards provide a solid foundation for participants to progress onto the Bronze About the Horse challenge awards where they can focus on developing their practical skills.

First Pony Guide:

- Ideal to help anyone thinking about taking the plunge and getting themselves or their child that first horse or pony! Delivered through a combination of theory and practical sessions participants will be introduced to the basics of looking after a pony such as potential costs, livery options, and daily care through to essential practical skills such as safe handling, mucking out and tacking up.

Mounted Games:

- A fun practical award that will introduce participants to the world of games on horseback. No specialised equipment is required, and this award is suitable for all riders from novice through to experienced. Participants learn the skills required to take part in a variety of games and have fun along the way!

Breeding Challenge Awards:

- Whether you are considering breeding from your own mare or just want to find out more about breeding horses in general, these challenge awards are a great place to start. There are three Breeding Challenge Awards in the series these can be completed starting with part one or you pick the one most relevant to you.

Part One – You will learn about the suitability of a mare for breeding, the knowledge and time required, the facilities required, and the potential costs involved.

Part Two – You will learn about how to choose a stallion, the required characteristics of the mare, how the mare is covered, how to care for the mare during pregnancy and the foaling process.

Part Three – You will learn about the care required from birth to three weeks, the care required from three weeks to weaning and the care required from weaning to two years.

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Taking the Awards

How many awards your participant completes, or the order they complete the awards, are flexible depending on your participant's current experience, knowledge, skills and what they want to achieve. To allow you and your participants to achieve the most benefit, we recommend participants begin at introduction or bronze, and progress through silver, gold and then platinum; however, this is not compulsory, and they can enter a higher level if you and the participant feel this is suitable. You could work across the topics at each level (for example, all the About the Horse bronze awards before progressing through the silver topics). Alternatively, your participant can pick and mix the awards they would like to complete and tailor their course specific to the topics they have an interest in. There will be certificates issued for completion of a single award (for example, *lungeing your horse* bronze) and an enamel pin badge is awarded when a participant has completed all four topics within a level (for example, About the Horse bronze); so, all your participants will receive recognition of their achievement; whether they complete all challenge awards or pick and mix individual awards.

Silver Ride Safe Challenge Award

The Silver Ride Safe Challenge Award can be delivered at any BHS Approved Riding School or at the participant's own yard with their horse with an Accredited Professional Coach. The riding school or coach must have gone through the Silver Ride Safe training with a BHS Ride Safe Advisor before they can deliver the Silver Ride Safe to their candidates. Once you have received this training, you will then be able to deliver the training and complete the assessment with the participant*

To become a Ride Safe Trainer, you must meet the following criteria:

- Hold the Ride Safe Award (or BHS Riding and Road Safety)
- Attendance at a Ride Safe training session.
- Minimum coaching qualifications of 'BHS Stage 3 Coach' and a 'BHS Accredited Professional Coach' membership (your coaching status must remain current for your Ride Safe Trainer status to be valid).
- Minimum coaching qualifications of 'BHS Stage 3 Coach' and a 'BHS Approved Centre Coach' membership (your coaching status must remain current for your Ride Safe Trainer status to be valid).

***TRAINING IS NOT REQUIRED TO DELIVER ANY OF THE OTHER CHALLENGE AWARDS.**

Certificate examples



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Where can I deliver the awards?

You can deliver the awards within a BHS Approved Riding Centre or on a freelance basis. If you are freelance, the awards can be delivered at the participant's livery yard using the participant's horses (the livery yard does not have to be a BHS Approved Livery Yard), or at a British Riding Club grounds if delivering a course for a BRC group. However, if the participants do not have their own horses, or their horses are not suitable, the awards must **only** be delivered at a BHS Approved Riding Centre. You cannot deliver Challenge Awards within non-Approved riding centres with horses on the riding school licence. This includes clients with horses on a working livery or loan agreement with the riding school. If you are in doubt, please [contact us](#) before you begin your course, and we will be happy to advise further.

Please note if any Accredited Professional Coach is training participants towards the challenge awards at a non- approved Riding Centre, the coach will be in breach of their BHS professional contract. Theory courses can be delivered in any appropriate classroom setting but if you are delivering it at a yard it must be a BHS Approved Centre.

Eligibility for Awards

All the Challenge Awards are open to anyone who wants to take part, they are not required to be BHS members.

For any participants that are not already members of the BHS and would like to become a member, they can join online (www.bhs.org.uk/membership) or by calling the Membership team on 02476 840506.

There are no age restrictions to the Awards, please use your discretion as to the ability of your participant. You do also have the option to deliver the Pony Stars to any of your younger candidates! (under 12 years old).

Support materials for you

All the below support materials are available to download from the [BHS Accredited Professional Hub](#).

1. Session plans

We are here to support you as much as we can and we have produced a series of session plans for each award, to provide suggestions and ideas for the content to include in your sessions. Following a session plan is not compulsory, and we encourage you to adapt them to suit your participants, the facilities, time of year and horses available to you. You should expect and plan to spend more time on some areas, or repeat sessions, to build participant confidence and allow them time to achieve the skills required for the task – remember there are no time restraints or time limits.

Within the riding plans there are several suggestions for suitable exercises to help develop and progress your riders over several sessions. Emphasis in the riding awards should be on maintaining the rider's confidence and developing an independent seat. Correcting rider position should be the key focus in each lesson and developing the rider's awareness of their own positional strengths and weaknesses is crucial to helping them improve and achieve.

The session plans we have included can be delivered as a group or on a one to one basis. There are no minimum or maximum group sizes for the awards. This is left to your discretion and the facilities and equipment available to you.

2. Group exercises

We have included a list of possible group exercises for each award. These are a mixture of practical group tasks that can be completed on the yard to facilitate your participants to work together and be part of a team, or discussions and debates to explore topics and scenarios in further detail. The ethos surrounding the challenge awards is of a community spirit, to encourage friendships and working together. It is essential to encourage collaboration as some of your participants may go on to own horses of their own and it is so important that they are encouraged to seek advice and work with professionals to care for their horse. We hope that by developing this mind-set during the Challenge Awards, it will stay with them as a best practice approach for the future.

3. Feedback exercises

We have also included a few different types of feedback sheet for your participants to use as and when you see fit. Not every session will require a self-evaluation or peer review, so again this is a resource you can pick up and use at your discretion.

The first document is a self-evaluation form; titled *'How am I doing?'* This is a resource that will encourage discussion between yourself and the participant and is an ideal opportunity for you both to reflect on the progress made, discuss what they are doing well, and to collaboratively set targets for future sessions.

The second form is designed to encourage members of your group to give feedback on each other, titled *'Team mate feedback'*. You could use this for a practical activity where the participants work in pairs and can provide feedback to each other, or perhaps when it is only safe for one or two participants to carry out a certain task (for example, lungeing a horse) so this gives the other participants a role to play and to still be actively involved in the session.

The final evaluation form is the *'End of award feedback'* to be given to the learner once they have completed an award. This is the only evaluation form that we ask you to send the Equine Excellence Team after completion so that we can work towards constantly improving the awards and the resources provided. The learner can either pass the form to you to return to us, or they can send it direct to us.

Of course, if you would like to provide us with any feedback about the awards and resources, you are welcome to contact us at any time.

4. Checklist guidance notes

At the end of each booklet there is an award checklist that identifies a combination of knowledge and skills the participants are required to demonstrate. There are guidance documents that will give you an indication of the level required for sign off, to avoid over assessing.

About the Horse

The checklist criteria should be carried out adopting a safe technique, using suitable horses and ponies. Appropriate PPE should be always worn. Participants should be encouraged to work efficiently (although bear in mind these are not professional awards and as such, the participants do not need to work to industry speed) and to make sure their work space is clean and tidy e.g. skipping out before working in the stable.

About the Rider

The focus is on the position and balance of the rider with the emphasis on working towards developing an independent seat. Participants are not expected to work their horse in an outline or to be able to improve the horse's way of going; if they are not detrimental to the horse, they are able to pass the awards.

5. PowerPoint presentations

For the Horse Knowledge awards there is a PowerPoint presentation to go along with each topic. These are available to download as one presentation covering the whole course or as individual topics.

Information booklets for participants

We will provide an information booklet for each award. These are not available to download but will be sent to you when you register a participant for an award. Each booklet will include lots of helpful advice, pointers, top tips, fun facts and home challenges for the participant to read through as they complete the course. The information booklet contains the award checklist at the back; this is the list of tasks/knowledge criteria you sign off as the participant completes the award. Once the participant has completed the award there is space for you to write some feedback.

Throughout the booklets there may be tips that direct the participant to download a free BHS leaflet from the website, watch a video in the [Education Resource Hub](#) or be familiar with finding [events in their area](#). Please help by becoming familiar with the website yourself (if you aren't already) so you can show them relevant pages or point them in the right direction.

Health and Safety

Time should be taken at the start of each session to cover health and safety rules and procedures and what to do in the event of an emergency. General housekeeping should be included in each session, especially if the participants are not familiar with the yard.

Throughout each session participants should wear appropriate and correctly fitting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) relevant to the task they are undertaking. Horses and ponies used for the course should be accustomed to novice people working around them and suitable for the tasks for which they are used. Equipment used should be in a good state of repair and safe to use.

Risk Assessment

We advise you carry out a risk assessment before each session and keep this on file. You are able to download a template risk assessment form from the BHS Cloud

Suitability of horses

The challenge awards are aimed at the recreational market, and as such, participants may already own a horse or pony. The Challenge Awards can be completed with the participant's own horse or with horses as part of a BHS Approved Centre. Horses should be of a suitable level and temperament for the tasks asked of them. There are no height restrictions for the type of horses or ponies used so please use your experience and discretion to match suitable horses or ponies to each participant (if the participant is not using their own). Bear in mind that no participant should be under, or over, horsed. If at any time you feel the welfare or safety of participant or horse is compromised during a session, please arrange for the horse to be swapped if possible or stop the session. If the participant is using their own horse have a friendly chat to them about why you have stopped the session and your concerns, as they may not understand what happened.

If candidates are using their own horse we do advise the horse should be over 4 years old. Don't forget to check over the equipment and tack they are using for suitability and safety before beginning a session.

Reminder: If you are an Accredited Professional Coach and have opted to include the insurance within your membership package, you are covered to coach riders on their own horses. The Care, Custody and Control cover also allows you to handle that horse during demonstrations as appropriate. Approved Centres must abide by their own riding school insurance conditions.

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Award checklist sign-off

You will purchase a participant information booklet for each award. Please distribute these to the participants as they begin each award. Each information booklet will include an award checklist which lists the skills and knowledge required to complete an award; think of it as a checklist of what the participant needs to do. Within the checklist will be space for you to date and sign when the participant has demonstrated competence for a practical task, or able to discuss a topic confidently. There is no time limit for a participant to complete an award so they can work through at a pace which suits them. We do not require you to set up formal assessments with the participants and the award checklist should be signed off on a continuous basis, as each task is completed. There is also not a requirement for the participant to be 'assessed' on an individual basis, for example, carrying out daily field checks could be done with a group, with each participant discussing their role, what they're looking for and observing. We don't expect you to take each participant out to the field individually.

- ✓ We recommend that any knowledge based topics take place in a practical setting with participants able to discuss the subject, or what is in front of them, in a relaxed environment
- ✓ Throughout each practical task, the participant should be observed carrying out safe procedures when working around or near the horse. If a safe procedure is not observed the participant would be deemed not yet competent and further training and guidance is required before you can sign off the checklist
- ✓ Where possible, participants should work with a variety of suitable horses. This will help them to build up their experience and confidence, and to recognise that every horse is different.

Once all the award checklist has been signed off, we encourage you to give feedback to the learner in the box provided. **Be positive**; highlight areas they did really well and they should be proud of, to encourage them to challenge themselves for the next award. Of course you will be giving verbal feedback throughout the course as a whole, but written feedback that can be filed and referred back to by the learner is always appreciated and will go a long way.

How to register participants for the Challenge Awards/Horse Explorers

Packs are available from our online shop. Please note, this is a hidden web page with exclusive prices and discounts specifically for the use of Accredited Professional Coaches and Approved Centres. Please do not forward the link to anyone else for them to buy packs.

You don't have to provide any registration details for your participants, and they don't need to be members of the BHS to take part in the Challenge Awards. You, the coach, or a centre representative, can buy the packs for your participants by here. There are no restrictions on the number of packs you can buy with bulk buy discounts available (price list on page 13-17 of this document). You will be asked to fill in your Accredited Professional Coach or Approved Centre details and these will be checked against our records before the order is dispatched.

Claiming certificates and badges

Certificates and badges are to be issued by you, the coach, upon completion of an award. An award is completed when all the criteria within the award checklist has been observed and signed off. These badges are included as part of the packs you can purchase online.

Learner resources

The resource pack for the **About the Horse** awards includes:

- 1x Knowing your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Handling your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Caring for your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Lungeing your Horse Award booklet
- 4x certificates (one for each award)
- 1x About the Horse Badge

You select the level you want the pack for; Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum and the type of pack; Horse Explorers or Challenge Awards)

Price

- Type of pack: Horse Explorers, Challenge Awards
- Level: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum*

*Selection option for number of packs

RRP of individual items is £23.00 (include P&P)

Bulk buy your packs to save money:

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount
10 - 24	£21.50 each	£1.50 off each pack
25 - 49	£20.00 each	£3.00 off each pack
50 - +	£18.50 each	£4.50 off each pack

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Learner resources

The resource pack for the **About the Rider** awards includes:

- 1x Riding Fit Award booklet
- 1x Riding Flat Award booklet
- 1x Riding Jump Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Guide
- 4x certificates (one for each award)
- 1x About the Rider Badge

You select the level you want the pack for; Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum and the type of pack; Horse Explorers or Challenge Awards).

Price:

- Type of pack: Horse Explorers, Challenge Awards
- Level: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum*

*Selection option for number of packs

RRP of individual items is £27.50 (including P&P)

Bulk buy your packs to save money:

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount
10 - 24	£25.00 each	£2.50 off each pack
25 - 49	£22.50 each	£5.00 off each pack
50 - +	£20.00 each	£7.50 off each pack

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Learner resources

The resource pack for the **Individual** awards includes:

- 1x Award booklet
- 1x certificate for award chosen

(Please note if selected Silver Ride Safe if you will also receive the Ride Safe Guide)

Price:

Type of Award: Horse Explorers, Challenge Awards

Level: Starter Award, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum

Selection options: If selected Starter Award- Horse Health, Horse Knowledge Part 1, Horse Knowledge Part 2, First Pony Guide, Mounted Games.*

If selected bronze, silver, gold, platinum- Caring for your horse, Knowing your horse, Handling your horse, Lungeing your horse, Riding fit, Riding flat, Riding jump, Ride Safe*

Selection option for number of packs

RRP of individual items is £6.00 (not including P&P) with the exemption of the Silver Ride Safe item is £12.00 (including P&P) Bulk buy your packs to save money (individual awards):

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount
10 - 24	£5.50 each	£0.50 off each pack
25 - 49	£5.00 each	£1.00 off each pack
50 - +	£4.00 each	£2.00 off each pack

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Learner resources

The resource pack for the **Ride Safe** award includes:

- 1x Bronze Ride Safe Award booklet
- 1x Silver Ride Safe Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Guide
- 2x certificates (one for each award)

You select the type of pack you want either the Horse Explorers or Challenge Award

Price:

Type of pack: Horse Explorers, Challenge Awards

Selection option for number of packs

RRP of individual items is £15 (including P&P) Bulk buy your packs to save money (Silver Ride Safe):

Quantity	Price per pack	Discount
10 - 24	£14.00 each	£1.00 off each pack
25 - 49	£13.50 each	£1.50 off each pack
50 - +	£12.50 each	£2.50 off each pack

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Learner resources

The resources for the **Coach Pack** includes:

The perfect pack for you as a Coach to keep and refer to whilst delivering your sessions. You will get a copy of all booklets from bronze-platinum

- 1x Horse Health Award booklet
- 1x Horse Knowledge Part 1 Award booklet
- 1x Horse Knowledge Part 2 Award booklet
- 1x First Pony Guide Award booklet
- 1x Mounted Games Award booklet
- 1x Knowing your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Handling your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Caring for your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Lungeing your Horse Award booklet
- 1x Riding Fit Award booklet
- 1x Riding Flat Award booklet
- 1x Riding Jump Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Award booklet
- 1x Ride Safe Guide

You select the group either the Horse Explorers or Challenge Award

Price:

Selection options: Horse Explorers, Challenge Awards*

Selection option for number of packs*

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE HORSE EXPLORER OPTION WILL INCLUDE THE INTRODUCTION/BRONZE/SILVER HORSE EXPLORER BOOKS AND THE GOLD/PLATINUM CHALLENGE AWARD BOOKS AS THESE ARE NOT YET AN OPTION FOR HORSE EXPLORERS.

RRP of individual items is £50 (including P&P)

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Reasonable Adjustments

The BHS aims to promote equity, diversity and equality of opportunity within the challenge awards. We recognise that due to the practical nature of the awards, adjustments may need to be made in order to allow access for all applicants.

We recommend you find an appropriate time to discuss confidentially with each participant, their learning or physical requirements for the course. There is no formal reasonable adjustment form required to be completed for BHS HQ; so follow your normal procedure for recording and applying adjustments within your everyday lessons. Adjustments can be made to allow access for participants, but they must complete all the challenge criteria to complete an award.

If you have any queries regarding adjustments, please contact the Equine Excellence Team on 02476 840508.

Data Protection

The BHS complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. You should adhere to GDPR best practice. Further information regarding your responsibilities is included on the BHS Cloud and found at www.bhs.org.uk/apcdataprotection. As a general guide, you need to have measures in place to ensure that information and data you collect from participants will be:

- Dealt with sensitively and used fairly and lawfully
- Used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- Used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- Handled according to people's data protection rights
- Kept safe and secure

If you have any queries relating to GDPR please contact the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.org.uk

Office contacts

For help or guidance with delivering the challenge awards, or if you wish to provide us with any feedback, please contact: challengeawards@bhs.org.uk or call us on 02476 840508.

Links to the equine Excellence Pathway

We are delighted to offer entry to the BHS Equine Excellence Pathway for challenge award participants who may wish to transition to our suite of professional qualifications.

Groom Pathway	Groom with Riding Pathway	Complete Horsemanship Pathway	Ride Leader Pathway
<p>Completion of the following challenge awards will provide direct entry to BHS Stage 2 Care and Lunge*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ About the Horse silver 	<p>Completion of the following challenge awards will provide direct entry to BHS Stage 2 Ride*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ About the Rider silver 	<p>Completion of the following challenge awards will provide direct entry to BHS Stage 2 Care, Lunge and Ride*:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ About the Horse silver ✓ About the Rider silver 	<p>This pathway is for those that wish to work in the equestrian tourism industry. The suite of professional qualifications range from ride leaders through to equestrian tourism centre managers. The entry level qualification within the Ride Leader pathway is Stage 2 Riding Out. The entry requirements for Stage 2 Riding Out are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Completion of the following challenge awards: <i>Riding out safely</i> silver and gold ✓ Stage 1 Care or About the Horse silver

**Please note the minimum age for a participant to sit any Stage 2 Care, Lunge or Ride assessment is 14 years old and they are required to be a BHS Gold Member.*