
Overview

This standard covers humanely handling and controlling horses so that equine dental procedures can be carried out, so that risks to the horse, the handler, yourself and others are minimised.

You will be able to assess the risks involved, identify appropriate humane methods of handling and control for the horse and its requirements, and use these methods effectively and safely. You will be able to take account of the factors that may affect horse behaviour.

You will need to communicate with others to agree the requirements for handling and control to ensure that:

- the safety of personnel, including yourself, is maintained
- the welfare of the animal is maintained
- the appropriate equipment is selected and used correctly

This standard is for those who need to handle and control horses in order to carry out equine dental procedures. Users of the standard will need to ensure that their practice reflects up-to-date information and policies, and that they work within the limits of their authority, expertise, training, competence and experience.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. work in accordance with the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966) and within the limits of your authority, expertise, training, competence and experience
2. select a safe working environment for yourself, the horse and others
3. identify and address risks in relation to the work area and the work being carried out for yourself, the horse and others
4. discuss and agree the handling requirements with others in order for the dental procedures to be carried out safely and efficiently
5. confirm that consent to handle and carry out dental procedures on the animal has been obtained from the owner/agent
6. use the appropriate personal protective equipment
7. select a method of humane handling and control that is appropriate for the horse and its requirements in order to minimise the risks to the animal, the handler, yourself and others
8. communicate professionally with a veterinary surgeon to arrange provision of sedation if required
9. prepare handling equipment
10. approach the horse in a manner that promotes animal welfare, minimises distress to the animal and maintains health and safety
11. handle and control the horse using the method and equipment selected
12. adapt the handling and control of the horse in response to its reactions and behaviour
13. adopt a working position that is safe for the horse and yourself and enables dental procedures to be carried out
14. ensure that the animal's welfare is maintained throughout
15. ensure that your approach to handling the horse does not adversely affect its behaviour
16. assess the risks involved and ensure working methods promote health and safety and are consistent with the relevant legislation and codes of practice
17. comply with current animal health and welfare legislation and codes of practice at all times
18. maintain the appropriate levels of hygiene and biosecurity throughout
19. maintain your own professional standards and ethics as an equine dental technician

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the requirements of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966) in relation to your role and the categories of equine dental procedures, to cover:
 - K1.1 Category 1
 - K1.2 Category 2
 - K1.3 Category 3
2. the different methods of handling and control and the risks to yourself, the horse and others
3. why the horse may require handling and control and how this might affect the method selected
4. the range of equipment used for handling and control and how to assess its suitability for use
5. how to plan the handling and control of the horse
6. how to assess the risks inherent in handling and controlling the horse
7. the conditions when sedation might be required and the role of the veterinary surgeon
8. the factors that may cause distress or alarm for the horse and how to recognise these
9. how to identify situations or conditions where it is not suitable for a person to approach, handle or control the horse without assistance and the possible consequences of doing so
10. how to identify a suitable working environment
11. how to identify suitable working positions that will minimise the risk of personal injury or ill health
12. how to approach, lift, hold and work with the head of the horse
13. the safe working limits around the mouth of the horse
14. the precautions to be taken to prevent injury to the horse
15. how to minimise risks to yourself, the horse and others
16. the importance of gaining informed consent for handling, and any dental procedures, from the owner/agent
17. the importance of maintaining appropriate levels of hygiene and biosecurity and how this can be achieved
18. your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation and codes of practice

-
19. the importance and correct use of personal protective equipment
 20. your responsibilities for the duty of care of animals under current animal health and welfare legislation and codes of practice
 21. your professional responsibilities as an equine dental technician
 22. your legal and professional liability when working as an equine dental technician and the importance of appropriate insurance cover

Glossary

Animal welfare legislation:

England and Wales – Animal Welfare Act 2006

Scotland – Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006

Northern Ireland – Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

Category 1, 2 and 3 Equine Dental Procedures:

Category 1 Procedures

Those procedures which an individual can perform after recognised training without specific attainment of qualifications.

examination of teeth;

removal of sharp enamel points using manual rasps only;

removal of small dental overgrowths (maximum 4mm reductions) using manual rasps only;

rostral profiling of the first cheek teeth (maximum 4mm reductions), previously termed “bit seat shaping”;

removal of loose deciduous caps; and

removal of supragingival calculus

Category 2 Procedures

Additional procedures suitable for delegation to an EDT (Equine Dental Technician) who has trained and passed an examination approved by DEFRA:

examination, evaluation and recording of dental abnormalities;

the removal of loose teeth or dental fragments with negligible periodontal attachments;

the removal of erupted, non-displaced wolf teeth in the upper or lower jaw under direct and continuous veterinary supervision;

palliative rasping of fractured and adjacent teeth; and

the use of motorised dental instruments where these are used to reduce overgrowths and remove sharp enamel points only. Horses should be sedated unless it is deemed safe to undertake any proposed procedure without sedation, with the full informed consent of the owner.

Category 3 Procedures

All other procedures and any new procedures, which arise as a result of scientific and technical development, would by default fall into category 3, which are those procedures restricted to qualified veterinary surgeons and are not proposed for deregulation. It is therefore NOT legal for these to be performed by non-veterinarians.

Factors affecting equine behaviour:

- age
- breed
- gender
- health status
- temperament
- environment
- experiences
- external influences

Horse

For the purpose of this standard the term “horse” includes donkey, ass, mule, hinny, pony and other equidae.

LANEDC2

Handle and control horses in order to carry out dental procedures



Developed by Lantra

Version Number 2

Date Approved 28 Feb 2025

Indicative Review Date 28 Feb 2030

Validity Current

Status Original

Originating Organisation Lantra

Original URN LANEDC2

Relevant Occupations Equine Dental Technician, Equine Dentist, Horse Dentist

Suite Equine Dental Care, Veterinary paraprofessional activities

Keywords horse; handle; control; restrain
