

Overview

This standard covers the actions to be taken to carry out equine dental examinations in line with the requirements of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966).

It includes assessment of the horse and its mouth, development of a treatment plan and communication with the horse's owner/agent. Working practices must be in line with the current legislation and codes of practice and promote animal welfare and high standards of hygiene throughout.

This standard is for equine dental technicians. 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 the limits of your authority, expertise, training, competence and experience
2. identify and address health and safety risks in relation to the work area and the work being carried out for yourself, the horse and others
3. confirm that consent to carry out examination of the animal has been obtained from the owner/agent and recorded
4. obtain and record an appropriate history including signs of general health, dental and oral disease, and previous dental treatments
5. recognise and interpret equine behavioural signs in relation to an equine dental examination
6. ensure the horse is appropriately handled to enable the examination to take place
7. recognise behaviours, conditions and procedures/treatment required that indicate chemical sedation is required
8. communicate professionally with a veterinary surgeon to arrange provision of sedation at a mutually convenient time and location, if required
9. establish measures to maintain suitable levels of hygiene and biosecurity and ensure they are maintained throughout
10. conduct a physical assessment of the horse including external structures adjacent to the dentition
11. examine incisors, canines, interdental space, and look for signs of wolf teeth
12. place an appropriate oral speculum safely
13. remove retained food by rinsing
14. perform a visual examination of the horse's mouth using the appropriate instrumentation
15. perform a manual/digital examination of the horse's mouth
16. identify visible oral abnormalities
17. chart findings clearly and accurately, and formulate a treatment plan
18. advise on appropriate treatments within defined categories and procedures and obtain agreement from owner/agent for the work to be carried out and the costs involved, including when no treatment is required
19. refer to another equine dental technician or a veterinary surgeon, where required by the findings of your dental examination in relation to the categories of

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equine dental procedures and your own capabilities

20. confirm that the horse's welfare is maintained throughout and that your behaviour does not cause adverse reactions

21. comply with current animal health and welfare legislation and codes of practice at all times

22. confirm that working methods promote health and safety and are consistent with the relevant legislation and codes of practice

23. maintain the appropriate levels of hygiene and biosecurity throughout

24. 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 importance of obtaining and recording informed consent before starting work
3. how to recognise and interpret equine behaviour and the conditions when sedation might be required for examination
4. equine anatomy and physiology relevant to the:
 - K4.1 oral cavity
 - K4.2 head
 - K4.3 respiratory system
 - K4.4 digestive system
 - K4.5 nervous system
5. the legislation governing the use of animal medicines
6. the effect of sedation on the horse and how that will affect your working practices and the techniques used
7. equine behaviour, including signs of avoidance, pain, malnutrition, oral pain and oral diseases, where relevant
8. the conditions that cause signs similar to dental conditions
9. the pathogens relative to equine oral diseases
10. the signs of transmissible disease
11. the zoonotic risk when working with horses
12. the disinfection, sterilisation and the control of disease spread
13. the developmental anatomy of equine teeth and aging
14. the developmental dental disorders
15. the action of chewing and the wear of equine dentition
16. the diseases of wear afflicting equine teeth
17. the pathology of equine teeth, including dental fractures, caries, pulp disease and periodontal disease
18. the correct procedure to safely undertake oral examinations
19. the instrumentation for oral examinations and treatments
20. the appropriate oral specula for oral examinations, including their correct use

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and care

21. the routine treatments to correct disorders of dental pathology allowed within the remit of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966)
22. the treatments requiring referral to veterinarians, and indications for veterinary diagnostic imaging
23. the treatments requiring referral to other equine dental technicians due to the limitations of your training and experience
24. how to behave professionally when collaborating with veterinary and other professionals and paraprofessionals
25. how to develop a treatment plan with the owner/agent of the horse, including recognition of when no treatment is required
26. the importance of discussing findings and treatment with the owner/agent and obtaining their consent to continue
27. your responsibilities for the duty of care of animals under animal health and welfare legislation and codes of practice
28. your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation and codes of practice
29. the importance and correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
30. the methods of maintaining hygiene and biosecurity and the reasons why they are important
31. your professional responsibilities as an equine dental technician
32. 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.

Horse

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

LANEDC4



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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	LANEDC4
Relevant Occupations	Equine Dental Technician, Equine Dentist, Horse Dentist
Suite	Equine Dental Care, Veterinary paraprofessional activities
Keywords	dental examination; equine; incisors; canines; wolf teeth
