

Carry out Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures

Overview

This standard covers the procedures described as Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures and includes the safe handling of horses, customer care, the use of appropriate equipment, the promotion of animal welfare and the process of working within legal and professional responsibilities.

Under the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966), all diagnostic and treatment procedures in the horse's mouth are considered to be acts of veterinary surgery, with the exception of the manual removal of dental overgrowths with hand instruments. This means that most equine dental procedures are legally restricted to veterinary surgeons.

The Category 1 Procedures are not deemed to be acts of veterinary surgery and are accessible to equine dental technicians following training. The Category 1 Procedures form part of a grading system for equine dental procedures and have been accepted by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA), British Veterinary Association (BVA), British Veterinary Dental Association (BVDA) and the British Association of Equine Dental Technicians (BAEDT). The details of the Categories 1–3 equine dental procedures are shown in the glossary.

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.

Carry out Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures

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. obtain a history of the horse regarding its general health, dental and oral disease and previous dental treatments
4. confirm that equipment is prepared and assembled ready for use, including personal protective equipment (PPE)
5. ensure the horse is appropriately handled to enable dental procedures to take place
6. recognise behaviours, conditions and procedures/treatment required that indicate chemical sedation is required
7. communicate professionally with a veterinary surgeon to arrange provision of sedation at a mutually convenient time and location, if required
8. conduct a physical assessment of the horse focusing on the external structures adjacent to the dentition
9. perform a visual and manual/digital examination of the horse's mouth and record your findings
10. explain, advise and agree a treatment plan with the owner/agent of the horse, including recognition of when treatment is not required
11. undertake Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures as appropriate for the horse and the agreed treatment plan:
 - P11.1 examination of teeth
 - P11.2 removal of sharp enamel points using manual rasps only
 - P11.3 removal of small dental overgrowths (maximum 4mm reductions) using manual rasps only
 - P11.4 rostral profiling of the first cheek teeth (maximum 4mm reductions), previously termed "bit seat shaping"
 - P11.5 removal of loose deciduous caps
 - P11.6 removal of supragingival calculus
12. identify and recognise which lesions require referral to a veterinary surgeon or an alternative qualified and accredited equine dental technician and make recommendations to the owner/agent

Carry out Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures

13. confirm that the horse's welfare is maintained throughout and that your interaction with the horse does not adversely affect its behaviour
14. comply with current animal health and welfare legislation and codes of practice at all times
15. confirm that working methods promote health and safety and are consistent with the relevant legislation and codes of practice
16. maintain appropriate levels of hygiene and biosecurity throughout the process
17. 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 main risks to health and safety in the work area and how to minimise risk to yourself, the horse and others

3. how to handle and control the horse, the range of different methods of handling and control and their correct use

4. equine behaviour including signs of pain, distress, alarm and avoidance

5. how to recognise when sedation of the horse is required

6. the anatomy and physiology relevant to the:

K6.1 oral cavity

K6.2 head

K6.3 respiratory tract

K6.4 digestive system

K6.5 nervous system

7. the equipment, including personal protective equipment (PPE), and materials required to carry out Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures, to include their correct use, maintenance and hygiene

8. the importance of discussing findings and treatment with the owner/agent and obtaining consent to continue

9. how to carry out the following Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures:

K9.1 examination of teeth

K9.2 removal of sharp enamel points using manual rasps only

K9.3 removal of small dental overgrowths (maximum 4mm reductions) using manual rasps only

K9.4 rostral profiling of the first cheek teeth (maximum 4mm reductions), previously termed 'bit seat shaping'

K9.5 removal of loose deciduous caps

K9.6 removal of supragingival calculus

10. how to recognise the risk of iatrogenic injuries to a horse's mouth and how to reduce them

Carry out Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures

11. the role and importance of veterinary referral and communication with the veterinary surgeon
12. how to recognise the impact of your behaviour on the horse and how to minimise any adverse effects on its behaviour
13. your responsibilities for the health and welfare of animals under the current legislation and codes of practice
14. your responsibilities under the relevant environmental and health and safety legislation and codes of practice
15. the importance and correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
16. the methods of maintaining hygiene and biosecurity and the reasons why they are important
17. your professional responsibilities as an equine dental technician
18. the importance of keeping your knowledge up to date on evidence-based medicine and how to apply it
19. the role of professional organisations to support your role as an equine dental technician and the requirements for continuing professional development
20. 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.

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Horse

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

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