

Essential guide to assessment of BHSQ qualifications



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Introduction

This document is to support strong assessment practice. It can be used by anyone involved in qualifications, from internal and external verifiers, to assessors, to candidates and managers. It is not the answer to all questions but it may offer clarification. If there are any aspects that require further comment or any additions then please email enquiries@bhsq.co.uk

Qualification specification

The qualification specification is a great start point. This is the “go to” document and details what a candidate needs to learn and do. It also contains lots of information about how the qualification should be delivered and managed. It goes without saying it is crucial the most recent qualification specification is used. These are updated regularly to ensure candidates are being trained and prepared for the sector as it is today. Please refer to the BHSQ website for the most up to date specifications: www.bhsq.co.uk/our-qualifications

All BHSQ qualifications are regulated. This means they are subject to strict procedures to ensure their suitability. Regulators produce level descriptors that detail the performance expected by candidates at this level, whatever their subject or context. It is useful to read and understand these. They often give clarity and understanding of the “bigger picture”.

Appendix 5 details the level descriptors for qualifications.

<p>Information at the front of the specification</p>	<p>It is really important this is read and understood fully. Often this part is missed. It is easy to go straight to the content as this is seen as the most important part-what the candidate must learn and do. This is clearly very important. However, the aspects at the front in the “blurb” explain who can take the qualification, its purpose, what it will lead to, how to register and what to expect when certificated, who can assess and internally verify, what adjustments can be made and so on.</p> <p>Too often problems are caused much later, mostly during external quality assurance, when this information has been missed. By this point these types of difficulties are challenging and can lead to delays in certification. This is why it is important to read this information fully, seek clarification early and prevent any later problems.</p>
<p>Learning outcomes</p>	<p>The content of the qualification specification includes learning outcomes. These are statements that describe significant and essential learning that candidates will achieve and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course or program.</p> <p>In other words, learning outcomes identify what the candidate will know, understand and be able to do.</p> <p>The following classifications are broadly applied in BHSQ qualifications. There can be variation depending on the complexity of the topic. For example, a candidate may be asked to identify a complex topic at level 3/stage 3.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry Level 3 / Level 1 - know and do • Level 2 - know, understand and do • Level 3 - understand and do <p>Command verbs are broadly associated with specific learning outcomes. However once again these can vary depending on the complexity of the topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge - identify/describe/sometimes explain/why • Understand - why/explain, analyse, assess, examine • Practice - be able to, to do, demonstrate, practice <p>BHSQ qualifications are practically based rather than theoretical with a greater emphasis on doing.</p>
<p>Assessment criteria</p>	<p>The content of the qualification specification includes assessment criteria. Assessment criteria identify what is expected from assessed work, whether this in practice or theory. They should clearly specify the standards that must be met and what evidence will be used to show achievement of the broader learning outcomes.</p> <p>Assessment criteria are made up of 2 essential parts – the command verb and subject matter</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'command' – instruction 'verb' – what is it you are to do, generally denotes the 'level' required 2. 'subject matter' – the topic <p>In order to achieve the assessment criteria, candidates must complete both parts.</p> <p>It is essential all involved understand fully both the command verbs and the subject matter. If there is any confusion the impact of this can be significant , causing delays to certification. The meaning of the command verbs is noted in appendix 1. It may be worth noting there are always examples every exam series of GCSE and A level candidates who do not do as well as expected because they do not answer the question. By this we mean address the command verb. They may write everything they know or provide a succinct bullet list. The key is whether they have followed the instruction.</p> <p>Understanding the subject matter is also vital. This is what ensures currency in industry and training a professional workforce. The content is regularly updated. If there are aspects that require clarification, this should be sought at the earliest point. Again it goes without saying, no one is expected to know everything, so clarification is encouraged. Please do not be afraid to ask.</p>

Assessment

Performance should be based upon recognised tasks, which require a demonstration of competence, through a combination of skills and related knowledge, relevant to the unit(s) being assessed.

Stages of assessment include:

- Assessment planning
- Collecting and collating evidence
- Judging evidence
- Making assessment decisions
- Assessment recording
- Providing feedback.

Assessment must be:

- **Valid** - assessment must be what is asked for in the assessment criteria
- **Authentic** - assessment must be by the candidate who is being assessed
- **Reliable** - assessment must be assessed at one point and be able to be reassessed by another at a different point, getting the same result
- **Sufficient** - assessment must be at the right level and right depth
- **Current** - assessment must be up to date and in line with good practice.

There are many different types of assessment that can be used in BHSQ qualifications. These include:

Initial assessment	<p>This is a broad term used to detail how an approved centre “gets to know” their candidates. This can include understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their personal characteristics and the impact on learning and assessment • Any additional needs to support their performance during assessment including special educational needs and disabilities and any subsequent reasonable adjustment requirements • Any social barriers to achievement such as access to transport, language barriers or any circumstances such as bereavement • Their knowledge and understanding of the content of the qualification • Their skills in the content of the qualification • Their previous and current experience in the content of the qualification • Any other qualifications or experiences • Any diagnostic assessment.
Diagnostic assessment	<p>This is a more specific term, to specifically measure performance in a particular subject or topic. For example, a test to understand the level of literacy.</p> <p>It is useful to know as much as you can about a candidate before they start their learning, so to support them to be the best they can.</p>
Formative assessment	<p>This takes place as a candidate learns, with feedback to support improvement. Other terms meaning the same or similar are ongoing and continuous assessment and subsequent feedback.</p>

	<p>Formative assessment and feedback often prepares candidates for their summative assessment. It is important this is supportive and developmental, to encourage a candidate to know what to do to be better. Most of all it needs to be accurate.</p>
Synoptic assessment	<p>This is where a candidate is tested on the different components of learning and their connections. This is often completed as part of a summative assessment, where learning throughout a qualification is needed to do well (not just one part).</p>
Summative assessment	<p>This happens at the end of learning. It is an assessment to quantify what has been learned or demonstrated and achieved. Summative assessment can be a grade. For example, GCSE and GCE exams taken at the end of two school years (key stages 4 and 5) with a grading. The driving test is another summative assessment. This is a pass or a fail.</p> <p>End point assessment used in apprenticeships and in BHS Stages 2-4 are also summative assessment.</p> <p>Usually the order is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Initial assessment including diagnostic assessment2. Formative assessment3. Synoptic assessment4. Summative assessment. <p>BHSQ focuses on summative assessment to ensure that decisions are accurate and certification is secure.</p>

Assessment methodology

In some qualifications the assessment methodology is set, so a candidate needs to demonstrate practical ability. In others there is a choice, so a candidate may write an answer or record this using audio recording.

BHSQ recommends, where there is choice, and during summative assessment, the best method for the individual is chosen. This means they will do the best they can in the subject area, rather than being limited for example by their literacy skills.

Making effective judgements

Assessors and verifiers use the qualification specification to make judgements about performance. These are made entirely by judging the performance of an individual against the assessment criteria. By that we mean, the command verb and the subject matter or content. Once the command verbs and the subject matter are understood fully, this is quite straightforward.

If a candidate performs strongly or weakly then assessment decisions can be very straightforward. If a candidate is on the border of passing or failing, this can be more difficult. Standardisation training should help here, as will an internal verifier. It is important to seek clarification if required.

However, when making a judgement it is useful to evaluate performance and add a rating or evaluative word to your notes or records. This then can be used to support the candidate to understand the assessment decision and importantly know how to improve.

The following approach may support effective assessment decision-making. Judgements are made up of a series of component parts.

1. The level and subject matter-what the judgement is about specifically and to what level it must be achieved. This is the assessment criteria.
2. The **evaluative word** that reflects the performance or quality of candidate when compared to the level and subject matter, the assessment criteria. **Appendix 2** highlights some useful evaluative words.
3. It is then useful to highlight what the impact is, so the candidate understands the relevancy to their performance both now and in the future. Useful phrases can include:
 - leading to...
 - contributing to...
 - this means...
 - resulting in...
 - as a consequence/result...
 - consequently...
 - subsequently...
 - therefore...
4. It can then be useful (but not always necessary) to provide an example. This can bring the judgement to life and explain the reality of the situation.

When justifying judgements, it is useful to avoid using subjective words such as '*obviously*'; '*some*'; '*feel*'. As an assessor or verifier, you should know. It is also useful not to use terms like '*all*' or '*none*' unless an assessor is absolutely sure this is the case. Terms like '*very limited*', '*almost always*' can be better.

Using quantities can also help such as, '*the vast majority*' or '*most of the time*', '*almost all*' or '*on a very few occasions*'. The following may be useful as a guide:

97-100%	vast/overwhelming majority, almost all	35-50%	minority
80-96%	very large majority, most	20-34%	small minority
65-79%	large majority	4-19%	very small minority, few
51-64%	majority	0-3%	almost none/very few.

Where something is not obvious use '*it is useful to state...*', '*there appears to be...*'; '*it seems that...*'. However when making an assessment decision this should be rare.

Providing effective feedback to candidates

Providing feedback is inextricably linked to making a judgement. When providing feedback, it may be useful to address the candidate directly. As a result of making a judgement, an action or recommendation can highlight to the candidate what they need to do to improve further.

These are examples of good feedback.

<p>What have you achieved</p>	<p>This is often denoted by a tick/cross, or achieved/not yet achieved, competent/not yet competent, or pass/fail.</p> <p><i>However, be careful here. Results are generally provisional and subject to internal and external verification. It is very important to say this (this usually comes as a standard phrase).</i></p>
<p>How well you have achieved it – using evaluative words</p>	<p>Well done Lottie you taught a progressive and enjoyable lesson. The participants benefitted significantly and showed improvement.</p> <p>You have excellent attention to detail and produced a detailed and purposeful plan that supported your teaching very well. You used a broad range of resources effectively and this helped the riders to stay motivated and enthusiastic despite the awful weather.</p>
<p>What you need to do next to develop/improve further</p>	<p>It would be useful for you to now develop further your contingency planning, so that you have a few ideas to refer to if the unexpected happens.</p>

Remember feedback should be evaluative and developmental but most of all it must be accurate.

Actions should be read as an **instruction**, be measurable and ideally followed up. Actions often start with:

- ensure
- fully implement
- systematically introduce
- must
- establish
- produce.

Recommendations are **advisory** and often use softer language. These are optional and generally are not followed up. Recommendations often start with:

- consider
- it may be worthwhile
- it may be beneficial
- it may be useful if.

It is very important to ensure feedback is accurate and clear. It needs to be accessible so avoid using jargon or words that may have multiple meanings. The language should be simple and easy to understand. This can be helped by using the following sentence structures.

For a candidate who has achieved/met the required standard sentences can be started with:

You have met the required standard because...

For a candidate that has not achieved/met the required standard sentences can be started with:

You have not met the required standard because... or

In order to meet the standard you need to...

This clarity is never more true than when a candidate has failed/not met the required standards. Candidates often become irritated by this, especially where they cannot understand why they have failed. Whatever we say or think, many will take this decision personally. It may be useful to state clearly why they have not met the required standards and then to use the assessment criteria as the structure for the feedback. For example, you have not met the required standard because you were **unable** to...**sufficiently**. The evaluative words in italics justify the assessment decision. The feedback remains factual.

In **appendix 3** there are examples, of good, appropriate and unsuitable feedback, with annotations.

Appendix 4 provides a useful checklist when assessing the quality of feedback.

<p>Reasons why the candidate did not meet the required standard – using evaluative words</p>	<p>Today you have not met the required standard.</p> <p>This is because you rode without balance and stability, and this meant that...</p> <p>You fitted the double bridle incorrectly, resulting in...</p> <p>Your feedback to the participants was inaccurate and this contributed to them not knowing how to improve.</p>
<p>What you need to do next to develop/improve further</p>	<p>You need to practice successfully fitting a double bridle to ensure the bits sit correctly in the horse's mouth.</p> <p>Your feedback must accurately identify the specific areas for improvement for the participants rather than being general to all.</p>

It is also important not to offer too much feedback. A candidate needs enough to understand the assessment decision and not too much that they don't read it or become confused. Feedback should offer the headlines. It is important again to order this clearly. Where a candidate has failed start with this judgement and the same for a candidate that has passed. The key is, whether feedback when compared to the assessment decision matches.

Feedback needs to be timely too so the candidate can remember the context sufficiently. This helps them improve.

It is also worthwhile remembering and highlighting that results are often provisional and subject to internal and external verification. It is very important to say this (this usually comes as a standard phrase) as candidates can become confused if they change. In short feedback should be:

- Accurate
- Highlights the key message first
- Of the right quantity
- Of the right quality so specific to the individual and circumstance
- Timely
- To support improvement.

Appendix 1: Command verbs for assessment

ACCOUNT FOR	An explanation of the topic is needed, giving reasons why. More than a description.
ANALYSE	Break down a complex topic into simpler parts, exploring patterns and explaining significance. Could be strengths, weaknesses, conclusions and often paired with making recommendations.
ASSESS	Consider several options or arguments and weigh them up to come to a conclusion about the effectiveness or validity. To decide the quality or importance of something. Similar to evaluate, though can be without the measure.
COMPARE and/or CONTRAST	Identify and explain the similarities and differences of the topic.
DEMONSTRATE	Carry out an activity or skill showing awareness and understanding.
DESCRIBE	Paint a picture in words. Not including reasoning.
DISCUSS	Present and examine clearly various views on a topic or issue, drawing a conclusion.
EVALUATE	Examine the strengths and weaknesses and come to a conclusion about their success/importance/worth. Evaluation is often against a measure or value.
EXAMINE	Lay out the essential elements of an issue and investigate.
EXPLAIN	Give reasons so often starting with because.
EXPLORE	Examine or investigate a topic or issue.
IDENTIFY	Indicate who or what someone or something is.
INVESTIGATE	A careful and systematic inquiry into a topic or issue.
JUSTIFY	Provide reasons why something is valid.
LIST	Provide information in a brief uncomplicated form, an item-by-item record. See state and identify.
OUTLINE	Identify the main features.
RESEARCH	Use a variety of sources to establish facts or collect information.
REVIEW	Produce a critical assessment of an existing situation.
SIGNIFICANCE	Consequence or importance.
SPECIFY	Identify clearly and definitely.
STATE	Provide information in a brief uncomplicated form. See list and identify.
SUMMARISE	Give an account of the main points.

Appendix 2: Useful evaluative words

The table below highlights evaluative words with potential levels of performance. It's a guide and it is worth considering that there can be significant overlap, particularly between good and requiring improvement.

These are suggestions and are often dependent on the context and the remainder of the sentence. Evaluative words can carry a positive or negative judgement, for example:

Effective – ineffective
Pleasing – disappointing
Strong – weak

<p>1 – outstanding</p> <p>Above standard Awesome Brilliant Encompassing Exceeding Excellent Exemplary Fabulous Innovative Polished Robust Smashing Superb</p> <p>use Very or equivalent as a pre-fix to some of the words listed under 2</p>	<p>2 – good</p> <p>Acceptable Adequate Appropriate At the level Capable Comprehensive Decent Effective Meets criteria Meets... OK Pass Satisfactory Strong Sufficient Well</p>
<p>3 – requiring improvement</p> <p>Appropriate Does not meet criteria Misleading Not satisfactory Not sufficient Poor Weak</p>	<p>4 – inadequate</p> <p>use Very or equivalent as a pre-fix to some of the words listed under 3</p> <p>Failed Inadequate Incorrect Insufficient Lacking Not up to standard Unacceptable Unsatisfactory Wrong</p>

Appendix 3:

Examples, of good, appropriate and unsuitable feedback, with annotations

Good feedback

For candidates that have achieved:

1. You had a lovely manner with the horses you rode. You showed a logical plan working in, and progression through your work to develop rhythm and suppleness. Your analysis of the way of going was correct at this level. Well done.

Positive, supportive and clear feedback, including specific detail.

2. You were well prepared for the assessment with an excellent understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the groom. You had a good understanding of safeguarding and wellbeing on the yard.

You practically achieved the criteria, fitting a snaffle bridle, discussing a range of nosebands and fit of a saddle. You demonstrated skill and familiarity of preparing for travel, loading and travelling horses. Well done.

You correctly described the digestive system, skeletal anatomy, feeding practices and fittening regimes. You had good recall of learnt knowledge and understanding of the digestive system, lungs, and heart, and applied the knowledge of behaviour, feeding, bones and fitness to the horse in front of you.

Excellent knowledge and discussion on administering medication (wormers calculating dosage), how to poultice, hot and cold tubbing, treating puncture wounds, colic, equine flu and hoof care.

For progressing onto Stage 3 you need to practice more "equitation terminology" and terms. For example, use the correct terminology to describe stereotypical behaviour. I would suggest spending time on competition yards and BHS approved commercial centres to develop the correct terminology. You also need to improve your industry speed, as your plaiting was neat but would need to be quicker for industry. The BHS books are also invaluable to support learning. Good luck with your progression on the BHS Career Pathways.

Strong use of evaluative words. It is clear to see this candidate achieved well. There are suggestions for improvement including what and how. The tone is positive.

There is repetition of the content, which is not necessary and aspects that descriptive.

However, on balance this is a good example.

3. I am very happy to say that I thoroughly enjoyed watching and listening to your coaching session today.

You showed excellent ability to relate the fences in the arena to what is going to happen when on a XC course. You developed the horses' range and rideability very well by helping the riders to understand the gears required for the fences. You developed your riders own learning by good use of feedback and the session was effectively rider lead.

Lots of evaluative words, of the right length, positive and supportive. Useful feedback which is clearly specific.

To use your own analogy - in your coaching session today, you had all the right ingredients to make a good cake!

For me this session was well above the standard required at Level 4/Stage 4 and is just what as an assessor we are all looking for. I wish you all the best in your future coaching career - and hope you maintain your enthusiasm for imparting information in such a cheerful and positive way. Very well done.

4. The group jump session was progressive and well managed throughout. The horses and riders were correctly assessed and the use of the fences and course helped them to improve, with good interaction and feedback between coach and riders. The session was well evaluated and an appropriate future plan was discussed. This was a strong performance. Continue to maintain this high level. Well done.

Lots of evaluative words, of the right length, positive and supportive.

For candidates that have not achieved:

1. You were unable to show an understanding of the scales of training, and how to use equipment and body language to good effect. You lacked sufficient control to have a satisfactory influence. You did stay calm, but you showed a lack of technique and were unable to use your body language and equipment to affect the way of going sufficiently. You could have applied the side reins sooner, and shorter to increase your influence.

You had a nice manner, but now you need to develop your experience of lungeing the more sensitive, reactive horse, in order to create confidence and relaxation.

2. You did not meet the required standard today as you were unable to develop a rapport with the rider. You did not ask relevant questions about the horse and rider initially and this meant the session did not flow or help the rider develop as well as they could. You were not sufficiently positive and encouraging and this meant the session was flat. However, you worked the rider without stirrups to improve her seat and body posture very well. This did make the rider sit in a more secure way and this was a good improvement. The horse was stiff and it would have been beneficial to give the horse a short rest a little earlier in the lesson.

In discussion, you evaluated your lesson accurately and offered appropriate ideas regarding future plans for development.

Feedback is clear, with lots of evaluation. Strong justification.

A point to consider is the Scales of Training should be Training Scale or Scale of Training.

This is clearly a borderline candidate. There are some areas of strength and some of development.

By putting the decision at the start it is clear what the judgement is.

Appropriate feedback

For candidates that have achieved:

1. Your underpinning knowledge throughout was of a very high standard today and well up to the required standard.

You handled the horses quietly, but at the same time you managed to complete all practical tasks quickly and efficiently.

A very good assessment. Very well done!

This lacks some specific detail to bring the feedback to life.

However, it is clear that it matches the assessment

2. You worked quietly and safely with the horse today. Your practical skills and knowledge were to standard.

I would advise further revision on the skeleton and the placement of the cannon bone. Remember to close the stable door at the start of the session, as this needed to be prompted.

This could do an example of what the candidate did well so it is clear how they worked quietly and safely. It is not clear if working quietly is a positive or negative and the latter part of the sentence is the same as the tick next to achieved, so is not adding anything new.

The suggestions for development are precise and accessible and this is good.

3. You demonstrated excellent voice and manner.

You showed authority when lungeing the horse. You assessed well and chose useful exercises. Your use of Q&A confirmed your riders enjoyment and learning.

Well done!

This is evaluative feedback, so it is clear the candidate is strong. It could benefit from a more precise example. Such as how the candidate showed authority and there is an apostrophe missing.

For candidates that have not achieved:

1. Today you were unclear about the Training Scales. Reading about them and discussing them with your instructor will develop an understanding of your priorities and goals when riding.

The same with your knowledge of aids. Expand your understanding, particularly of how position affects rider balance and therefore effectiveness of the aids.

You demonstrated promising skills today. However you lacked confidence which affected your position and ability to ride forwards. By developing your position and balance you will find the horses easier to communicate with.

You need to work on your depth of seat in sitting trot, which means relaxing your legs and following the movement of the horse through your

This really just lacks the heading of you were not successful today because... it starts with the key message and includes lots of detail. It would just benefit from a clear statement at the start.

seat and training your upper body to remain upright; the same in the canter; riding with the reins in one hand. Once the position is improved, you will find it easier to prepare for transitions and be able to define the lines of your school figures with preparation and positive influence.

2. Your lesson plan was clear overall, although you could have emphasised the main teaching points for introducing a rider to cross country further for lesson management. One of your riders, told you that she had not done cross country before, so needed more guidance.

You had both riders riding in light seat in canter, however, you did not explain the different types of canter required for different types of fences, or the risks involved jumping solid obstacles at speed without balance, which is necessary for safety.

Overall your activities were progressive, including crosspole, upright, oxer, stile, corner and offset double, however, Laura was not given enough instruction or explanation of what was involved in riding a stile. Before your pupils jumped the stile, I asked you if you wanted guide poles on either side of the stile, but you were happy not to. Unfortunately Lauras' horse, Skye, ran out and refused the stile a few times. After this you added the poles and Laura jumped it successfully.

When your pupils jumped the offset double, Sophies' horse made up too much ground and you needed to tell her to shorten her horses' canter when jumping the double. Lauras' horse took two strides the first time, and you did instruct her to ride into the double with a more forward canter, but on the subsequent attempts, the horse was having to reach to make the one stride distance, which concerned me as being unsafe.

You could have challenged Sophie more, with higher jumps, but I appreciate that Lauras' inexperience made that harder.

3. You spoke well on the topics discussed - and were confident with your answers.

You appeared to speak from experience and related well to the practicality of using a variety of techniques in the work place, giving examples where appropriate.

You demonstrated excellent voice and manner.

You showed authority when lungeing the horse. You assessed well and chose useful exercises. Your use of Q&A confirmed your riders enjoyment and learning.

Well done!

This lacks the heading of you were not successful today because...the decision is not absolutely clearly justified.

There is potentially too much feedback so it starts to become confusing. I am not sure the candidate would read and take all the detail in. It needs to be more succinct. There are also grammatical errors.

Although the decision is clear, this lacks specificity to the command verb. There are also typos. It would benefit from further justification.

Feedback that is unsuitable

For candidates that have achieved:

1. You lunged with a good sized circle and rein contact, and showed some progression in the horses way of going.

Too brief and some means anything from 1-99%

2. You were very practical with all tasks and had a good depth of knowledge and understanding. Speak to your farrier/coach to brush up on how frequently horses should have the farrier visit.

This is too generic, lacking in detail to support improvement.

3. You demonstrated a good balanced position on both horses at all times. You need to develop your knowledge of the footfalls of the paces and some equitation theory.

This is challenging language for a stage 2 candidate. The use of the word "some" is weak and there is very limited justification.

4. You showed good knowledge and understanding in your assessment and carried out your practical tasks quickly and efficiently. You achieved the required standard.

Almost of all of this can be gleaned from the tick of the assessment criteria. It adds little.

5. You showed sound practical and theory knowledge in the care sections.

Again this can be gleaned from the tick of the assessment criteria. It is too brief and generic.

6. You were very efficient in all your tasks today. You were sound in your theoretical knowledge. You showed practical experience throughout. For further development work with a variety of horses for more experience.

You were adequate to the standard today. You showed empathy to your horse. For further development you need to use your voice more."

"Today you showed good knowledge and practical skills to the level required.

Development - continue to develop your knowledge and skills to the next level."

This feedback is contradictory- summary feedback states very efficient and adequate and good. What and how to develop is not clear, particularly the latter comment.

For candidates that have not achieved:

1. You demonstrated a lack of practical experience regarding the fittening process. Although you had some recognition of the need for fitness and that it is necessary to start by walking, you didn't have any clear plan of what you may do next. You need to become more specific about timeframes and working towards a goal. Your 10 to 12 weeks to get fit enough for a novice dressage test was somewhat exaggerated unless there was also a distinct element of rehabilitation necessary. You need to gain more practical experience of recognising the visual and behavioural changes as the horse becomes fitter. You may also benefit from gaining some practical experience of using a horse walker.

You had a lovely manner with the horse and performed the practical tasks competently. Your assessment of the horse's confirmation was accurate.

2. Today you rode both horses with empathy and feel. Your school figures were accurate and you rode on the correct diagonals and canter leads. You spoke well about the two horses you had ridden and showed an understanding of the way of going of each horse. Your future development would benefit from more work to improve the suppleness of your lower back and hips. This would enable you to follow the horses' movement, in trot and canter, and help you to ride with a softer knee, so improving your balance.

3. You delivered the session with enthusiasm and good voice projection, engaging well with the riders encouraging their feedback.

The riders were all at Stage 2, working towards Stage 3. You now need to observe more experienced coaches working with riders through a grid at this level, so that you can extend your knowledge of how to effectively and progressively develop a grid pattern that offers sufficient challenge to the riders in terms of height and type of fences. Revise distances appropriate for gridwork and practise walking accurate distances, and be ready to adjust at any time to ensure they are appropriate for the horses in the session. Remember to also pay attention to rider position to help them develop their security and effectiveness to gain greater influence over the horses' technique.

The tone is aggressive and unsupportive. The last sentence is contradictory.

This feedback does not read as not achieved. It is unclear why the candidate has failed.

The opening is very positive and is not recognisable as not achieving the required standard.

The areas for development are detailed however the judgement is not clear.

4. You had an approachable, cheerful manner with your lead rein rider.

You need to accurately assess the rider to ensure that the exercises chosen are appropriate and of benefit. Take care not to ask too much of your young rider with the balance exercises. In discussion you recognised these could have been more progressive.

Ensure you look over your shoulder sufficiently to check their position and use of the rein when changing direction.

General:

You had excellent underpinning knowledge in the roles of the coach. You have a super open manner with your riders and a clear audible voice. Gaining more feedback from your riders will help you develop the session. In discussion you recognised that sometimes further explanation was needed when the phrase “well done” or “good” was used.

The opening is very positive and is not recognisable as not achieving the required standard.

The areas for development are detailed however the judgement is not clear.

5. Although you made good use of the arena and showed awareness of your surroundings and other riders; for further development you now need to find a more balanced position in the saddle to be able to follow the movement of the horse.

When mounting from the block, try to avoid pulling on the cantle.

Your rein aids would benefit from further refinement, and you need to become more secure in the saddle with and without stirrups.

When you are riding turns and circles, you have a slight tendency to twist against the direction of travel.

It would help you to practice describing the aids for transitions and discussing the way of going referring to the scales of training.

You did however ride with a positive attitude on both horses and understand the value of rewarding the horses after exercise.

The decision is not clear. If you read the feedback without knowing the decision it is not evident immediately if the candidate has achieved or not.

It is evaluative but would benefit from more reasoning for greater clarity.

Appendix 4: Aspects to consider when giving feedback

When assessing the quality of feedback, the following can be used as a checklist:

Does the feedback:

1. Make it clear immediately what the assessment decision is
2. Specifically address the correct command verb from the assessment criterion
3. Specifically address the correct content from the assessment criterion
4. Refer specifically to the candidate (not just by name, so it is not generic feedback that could be applied to anyone.)
5. Specify the performance of the candidate, using evaluative words (it is not a description of what the candidate has done)
6. Match the assessment decision
7. Highlight the key message first
8. Use clear and accessible language including words that can be misinterpreted
9. Avoid jargon
10. Avoid symbols and the use of etc, i.e. and e.g. and so on
11. Using abbreviations that are written in full in the first instance
12. Provide examples where needed to offer sufficient clarity
13. Avoid using words that are subjective or indecisive such as “feels, thinks and appears”
14. Use quantities correctly, avoiding words such as “some”
15. Use sentences that are short and accessible. In the most part less than 18 words.
16. Encourage improvement
17. Offer timely information, within a month of assessment

In addition, where appropriate does feedback include:

1. actions that are clear and could be followed up by anyone that wasn't at the assessment
2. actions that start with an instruction
3. actions that include a timescale
4. recommendations that are advisory, using appropriate language and with no timeline.

Appendix 5: Qualification level descriptors

Detailed below are the level descriptors as detailed on the Ofqual website. These must be used by awarding organisations when assigning a level to a qualification.

Source:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ofqual-handbook/section-e-design-and-development-of-qualifications>

What qualification levels mean:

<https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

Level	Knowledge descriptor (the holder...)	Skills descriptor (the holder can...)
Entry 1	Progresses along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of knowledge and/or understanding that relate to the subject or immediate environment.	Progress along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of skills that relate to the subject or the immediate environment.
Entry 2	Has basic knowledge or understanding of a subject and/or can carry out simple, familiar tasks; and Knows the steps needed to complete simple activities.	Carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities. Follow instructions or use rehearsed steps to complete tasks and activities.
Entry 3	Has basic knowledge and understanding to carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts; and Knows and understands the steps needed to complete structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts.	Carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts. Be aware of the consequences of actions for self and others.
Level 1	Has basic factual knowledge of a subject and/or knowledge of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined routine tasks and address simple problems; and Is aware of aspects of information relevant to the area of study or work.	Use basic cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined routine tasks and procedures. Select and use relevant information. Identify whether actions have been effective.
Level 2 <i>BHS Stage 2</i>	Has knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures and ideas in an area of study or field of work to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. Can interpret relevant information and ideas. Is aware of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work.	Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems. Identify, gather and use relevant information to inform actions. Identify how effective actions have been.
Level 3 <i>BHS Stage 3</i>	Has factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to complete tasks and address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine.	Identify, select and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills, methods and procedures to address problems that while well-defined, may be complex and non-routine. Use appropriate investigation to inform actions.

BHS Qualifications

Level	Knowledge descriptor (the holder...)	Skills descriptor (the holder can...)
	<p>Can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Is aware of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Review how effective methods and actions have been.</p>
<p>Level 4 <i>BHS Stage 4</i></p>	<p>Has practical, theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine.</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature of approximate scope of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Has an informed awareness of different perspectives or approaches within the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Identify, adapt and use appropriate cognitive and practical skills to inform actions and address problems that are complex and non-routine while normally fairly well-defined.</p> <p>Review the effectiveness and appropriateness of methods, actions and results.</p>
<p>Level 5</p>	<p>Has practical, theoretical or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts.</p> <p>Can analyse, interpret and evaluate relevant information, concepts and ideas.</p> <p>Is aware of the nature and scope of the area of study or work.</p> <p>Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the reasoning behind them</p>	<p>Determine, adapt and use appropriate methods, cognitive and practical skills to address broadly defined, complex problems.</p> <p>Use relevant research or development to inform actions.</p> <p>Evaluate actions, methods and results.</p>
<p>Level 6</p>	<p>Has advanced practical, conceptual or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors.</p> <p>Understands different perspectives, approaches or schools of thought and the theories that underpin them.</p> <p>Can critically analyse, interpret and evaluate complex information, concepts and ideas.</p>	<p>Determine, refine, adapt and use appropriate methods and advanced cognitive and practical skills to address problems that have limited definition and involve many interacting factors.</p> <p>Use and, where appropriate, design relevant research and development to inform actions.</p> <p>Evaluate actions, methods and results and their implications.</p>
<p>Level 7</p>	<p>Reformulates and uses practical, conceptual or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors.</p> <p>Critically analyses, interprets and evaluates complex information, concepts and theories to produce modified conceptions.</p> <p>Understands the wider contexts in which the area of study or work is located.</p>	<p>Use specialised skills to conceptualise and address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors.</p> <p>Determine and use appropriate methodologies and approaches.</p> <p>Design and undertake research, development or strategic activities to inform or produce change in the area of work or study.</p> <p>Critically evaluate actions, methods and results and their short- and long-term implications.</p>

Level	Knowledge descriptor (the holder...)	Skills descriptor (the holder can...)
	<p>Understands current developments in the area of study or work.</p> <p>Understands different theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect the area of study or work.</p>	
Level 8	<p>Develops original practical, conceptual or technological understanding to create ways forward in contexts that lack definition and where there are many complex, interacting factors.</p> <p>Critically analyses, interprets and evaluates complex information, concepts and theories to produce new knowledge and theories.</p> <p>Understands and reconceptualises the wider contexts in which the field of knowledge or work is located.</p> <p>Extends a field of knowledge or work by contributing original knowledge and thinking.</p> <p>Exercises critical understanding of different theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect the field of knowledge or work.</p>	<p>Use advanced and specialised skills and techniques to conceptualise and address problematic situations that involve many complex, interacting factors.</p> <p>Formulate and use appropriate methodologies and approaches.</p> <p>Initiate, design and undertake research, development or strategic activities that extend or produce significant change in the field of work or study.</p> <p>Critically evaluate actions, methods and results and their short- and long-term implications for the field of work or knowledge and its wider context.</p>

The level descriptors for other regulators can be found on the relevant websites.

Qualifications Wales

<https://gov.wales/credit-and-qualifications-framework-cqfw-level-descriptors>

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

<https://scqf.org.uk/about-the-framework/>

An information leaflet explaining how the various frameworks in different sectors compare with each other can be found here:

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/qualifications-can-cross-boundaries-updated-with-apprenticeships>