



Qualification Specification

GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy

610/5026/X

This qualification is subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny and General Moderation policy.

Section 1 - Qualifications Overview

1.1 Introduction: About the Gatehouse Awards Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy Qualification.

Gatehouse Awards (GA) qualifications are designed to give learners the skills to be active in the modern labour market and progress in their career and/or into higher level study.

This specification covers the GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy.

The GA Level 4 Diploma has been designed to meet the demands of a rapidly advancing equine hydrotherapy industry. Recognised as a specialised profession, equine hydrotherapy requires a thorough understanding of the wider sports and rehabilitation sectors, equine physiological systems, and the importance of professionalism and accurate record-keeping.

To ensure practitioners are well-equipped to handle the complexities and risks of the field, this qualification covers a broad spectrum of topics, enabling therapists to enhance their practice, improve equine welfare, and establish a recognised career in equine hydrotherapy. It provides a valued qualification for those committed to becoming equine hydrotherapists, acknowledged by both insurers and veterinarians as the industry continues to develop.

Following successful achievement of the GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy, candidates will be eligible to apply for membership with the Institute of Equine Hydrotherapists (IEH), a subgroup of the Institute of Registered Veterinary and Animal Physiotherapists (IRVAP), affirming their dedication to professionalism and best practices within the field.

Providers offering this qualification are also eligible to apply for Recognised Education Provider (REP) status with the Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP)

This document provides centre staff, candidates and employers with a comprehensive overview of the qualification content as well as the assessment and quality assurance requirements for this qualification.

The qualification is regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations (Ofqual) in England and is part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

All versions of this qualification are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications which is operated by Ofqual at <http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>.

This qualification is not designed to replace any existing qualifications.

1.2 Institute of Registered Veterinary Animal Physiotherapist (IRVAP)



“The GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy is proudly endorsed by the Institute of Registered Veterinary and Animal Physiotherapists (IRVAP), with the Institute of Equine Hydrotherapists (IEH) serving as a distinguished subgroup. The IEH upholds high standards of professionalism and clinical excellence in therapeutic equine hydrotherapy, and achieving this qualification is an essential step towards meeting the IEH’s membership criteria. The IEH actively supports its members and the wider equine hydrotherapy community by providing guidelines, free CPD opportunities, resources, and a collaborative forum for networking and discussion.”

- (Institute of Registered Veterinary Animal Physiotherapist (IRVAP) Council.

This qualification has been strategically designed to promote excellence in practice, aligning fully with the missions of both the IEH and IRVAP. By emphasising rigorous training and adherence to best practices, the diploma ensures practitioners are well-prepared to meet the evolving needs of equine athletes and to contribute positively and professionally to the field of equine hydrotherapy.

1.3 Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP)

The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) has reviewed the content of this qualification and has provided GA with the following wording, which may be of interest to learners and centres:

“The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) is a voluntary industry regulatory body for the professions of Physiotherapy, Chiropractic and Osteopathy. To reach RAMP academic entry criteria practitioners must complete 360 credits in relevant topics in one of the three professions at RQF Level 4 and above, with 120 credits successfully assessed at RQF Level 6 or above. Within these credits, 1000 hours of practical education needs to be evidenced.

RAMP would welcome applications from any provider as a potential recognised education provider (REP) of this Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy. If RAMP recognition was achieved graduates could use some or all of the credits to combine with other relevant academic achievements to support RAMP entry criteria.”

1.4 Qualification Title, Qualification Number and Important Dates

Qualification Title and Level	Qualification Number	Operational Start Date	Operational Review Date
GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy	610/5026/X	20/01/2025	December 2029

1.5 Qualification Aims and Objectives

This qualification is designed to prepare learners for a successful career in equine hydrotherapy. This qualification aims to enable candidates to develop effective study skills and engage in reflective practice, enhancing their clinical reasoning and critical thinking abilities. This qualification emphasises the importance of professional development and working within one’s scope of practice while critically appraising the legal, ethical, and professional standards, obligations, and accountability required in the field of equine hydrotherapy.

Learners will also learn to apply clinical risk assessment skills, health monitoring, and equine emergency first aid in a hydrotherapy environment. Additionally, they will evaluate the assessment process to strengthen clinical reasoning, discuss and apply hydrotherapy treatment techniques, and refine skills for managing equine hydrotherapy water systems. Throughout, learners will assess and adhere to current health and safety standards required in the field of Equine Clinical Hydrotherapy.

1.6 Qualification Structure and Overview: GLH, TQT, Credit Values and Units

The GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy qualification is listed on the Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications as part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

The structure of this qualification is as follows:

GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy (610/5026/X)				
Mandatory Units	Unit Reference	Credits	GLH*	Study Time**
1. Introduction to Equine Hydrotherapy	A/651/4000	3	7	18
2. Equine Hydrotherapy Water and Equipment Management	D/651/4001	4	11	29
3. Clinical Risk Assessment, Health Monitoring and First Aid	F/651/4002	3	7	18
4. Equine Functional Anatomy and Biomechanics	H/651/4003	6	30	34
5. Equine Pain and Behaviour	J/651/4004	3	7	25
6. Equine Assessment and Clinical Reasoning	K/651/4005	3	7	25
7. Treatment Pathways and Common Conditions	L/651/4006	3	11	23
8. Hydrotherapy for Performance	M/651/4007	3	7	18
9. Professionalism, Ethics and Legalities	R/651/4008	2	7	16

10. Equine Clinical Hydrotherapy	T/651/4009	10	75	25
		Total Credits 40	Total GLH* 169	TQT** (GLH + Study Time) 400

*Guided Learning Hours (GLH): Definition

The activity of a learner in being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

**Total Qualification Time (TQT): Definition

The number of Guided Learning Hours assigned, plus an estimate of the number of study hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by – but, unlike Guided Learning, not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

The number of study hours a learner is expected to undertake in order to complete each unit is expressed in the 'Study Time' above. This, including the GLH, provides the Total Qualification Time, or TQT, and represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of this qualification.

The estimates for Guided Learning Hours and Total Qualification Time above have been produced with due regard to information gathered from those with experience in education and training and is in line with guidance published by Ofqual on the allocation and expression of Total Qualification Time and Guided Learning Hours.

Level

The qualification within this specification is designated at Level 4 on the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF) according to the Level Descriptors for knowledge and understanding, which build on those used within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). This means that this qualification is considered by GA to lead to the outcome as follows:

Achievement at Level 4 reflects the ability to identify and use relevant understanding, methods and skills to address problems that are well defined but complex and non-routine. It includes taking responsibility for overall courses of action as well as exercising autonomy and judgement within fairly broad parameters. It also reflects understanding of different perspectives or approaches within an area of study or work.

1.7 Intended Audience, Age and Entry Requirements

The GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy qualification is intended for candidates whose current or desired job role requires them to develop knowledge and understanding of equine hydrotherapy. Learners will have experience of working with horses but are looking to pursue a career as a qualified equine hydrotherapist with a career path.

This qualification is available to learners:

- aged 18 and over, and
- who are capable of working at Level 4 or above, and
- who have experience of working with equines in a rehabilitation or performance setting.

In addition to the above, learners must be employed or have secured a work placements in an Equine Hydrotherapy setting in order to complete this qualification.

Due to the nature of the qualification content, those undertaking the qualification must also have a proficient level of English and maths.

We recommend that learners hold formal English language, maths and core science qualifications of at least Level 2, e.g.

- GCSE English Language, maths and science (A* - C / Grade 4 or above), or equivalent

If English is not the learner's first language, an English language level of International English C1 (CEFR) is required.

Learners who have not achieved secondary education-level qualifications in English, maths and science may have work experience which can count towards entry, e.g. through submission of a portfolio of evidence.

All learners will be screened via an initial assessment with the training provider to ensure their suitability for the qualification.

It is recommended that prior to commencing a programme of study leading to this qualification, learners receive detailed advice and guidance from the training provider in order to ensure the programme will meet their needs.

1.8 Rules of Combination

The Rules of Combination for this qualification are:

- in order to achieve the GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy qualification, Learners must successfully achieve all 10 mandatory units.

1.9 Recognition of Prior Learning and Transfer of Credits

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessing whether a learner's previous experience and achievements meet the standard requirements of a GA unit or units prior to the candidate taking the assessment for the qualification, or part of the qualification, they are registered for.

Any prior learning must be relevant to the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be assessed as part of that qualification, and GA will subsequently amend the requirements which a candidate must have satisfied before they are assessed as eligible to be awarded the qualification.

Where there is evidence that the candidate's knowledge and skills are current, valid and sufficient the use of RPL may be acceptable for recognising achievement of a unit, units or whole qualification. The requirement for RPL in such instances will include a consideration of the currency of the knowledge gained by the candidate at the time they undertook the prior learning. RPL cannot be guaranteed in instances where industry practice or legislation has significantly changed in the time since the prior learning was undertaken / a previous award was issued.

All RPL decisions and processes are subject to External Quality Assurance (EQA) scrutiny and must be documented in line with GA's quality assurance requirements.

No transfer of credits is permitted.

1.10 Relationship to Other Qualifications & Progression Opportunities

The GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy qualification is an ideal qualification for learners who wish to progress onto further higher-level study or higher level practical occupational training or employment or self-employment. A natural progression qualification is the Level 6 Diploma in the Principles of Equine Hydrotherapy or the Level 6 Diploma in Applied Advance Equine Hydrotherapy.

1.11 Language of Assessment

This qualification is offered in English. Further information concerning the provision of qualification and assessment materials in other languages may be obtained from GA.

1.12 Grading

All learning outcomes and assessment requirements must be met before a learner can be considered having achieved this qualification.

This qualification is not graded on a scale. Learners are assessed as Pass or Fail. Learners who aren't successful can resubmit work within the registration period.

1.13 Qualification Availability

This qualification is available via GA Approved Centres in the UK and internationally. If you would like further information on offering this qualification, please contact us.

Our contact details appear on our website, www.gatehouseawards.org

Section 2: Qualification Delivery, Assessment & Quality Assurance Model

2.1 Teaching and Learning Requirements

Courses leading to this qualification may consist of e-learning courses or classroom-based courses, or a blended option.

Learners can therefore undertake learning and assessment on a flexible basis.

Candidates must have suitable access to teaching and assessment staff as well as technical support. Specialist staff, high quality learning materials and access to assessment opportunities are essential for all centres.

Further details and guidance on the content of teaching and learning for each unit can be accessed by approved GA centres, or upon request.

2.2 Assessment and Quality Assurance Model

All units are delivered in-centre, where learners' work is internally assessed and internally moderated by centre staff to clearly show where learners have achieved the learning outcomes and qualification requirements.

Assessment, internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and quality assurance conducted by GA. Centres operating this model are subject to the GA Centre Assessment and Standards Scrutiny (CASS) and General Moderation Policy.

2.3 Registering Candidates & Unique Learner Numbers

Candidates must be registered through the Ark, the GA online Learner Management System.

Owing to the Total Qualification Time of this qualification, the validity period of registrations made will be 3 years. Should a candidate not have achieved in the timescale, a new registration is required.

Each approved GA centre is provided with a user account to allow approved staff access to the online system.

Where the Unique Learner Number (ULN) of a candidate is known, this should be provided at the point of registration in order for GA to issue updates to the Learner Record Service.

2.4 ID Requirements

It is the responsibility of the centre to have systems in place to confirm each learner's identity.

Learners are required to declare that all work submitted for assessment is their own work.

2.5 Record Keeping

Records of learner's details, their work and any records of Reasonable Adjustments, Special Considerations and records containing learners' personal details must be kept by the centre in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR and all relevant privacy regulations) for a minimum of 2 years.

The centre must operate a safe and effective system of care and comply with clinical and information governance requirements, with appropriate policies and procedures in place to maintain confidentiality related to clients, staff and learners.

All records must be easily retrievable and made available to GA or the Regulator upon request.

Portfolios must be retained until the following External Quality Assurance visit to allow them to be sampled. Following external moderation and the award of a qualification by GA, centres may return portfolios to learners.

Records of all internal quality assurance and moderation activity undertaken must be kept and made available to GA upon request.

Section 3 – Centre Requirements: Assessment & Quality Assurance

Course providers offering these GA qualifications must ensure that they have the following resources in place.

3.1 Staff

The knowledge and experience of all staff involved in the teaching, assessment and internal quality assurance of this qualification will be considered during the approval and re-approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

The course provider must ensure that they hold up-to-date and detailed information about the staff involved with the delivery and quality assurance of this qualification and must make records available to GA upon request. The information GA expects the course provider to hold for each member of staff includes, as a minimum:

- current up to date CV
- copies of relevant qualification certificates
- relevant and up to date CPD (Continuous Professional Development) records

The centre must also ensure that they have management and administrative arrangements in place which are suitable to support the registration of candidates and qualification delivery.

Requirements for Tutors and Assessors

Teaching staff ('Tutors') include those who deliver teaching and learning content for knowledge and understanding elements and those who are involved in teaching and learning of practical skills.

The primary responsibility of an Assessor is to assess a learner's performance and ensure that the evidence submitted by the learner meets the requirements of the qualification.

All Tutors must:

- hold a minimum of Level 4 qualification in the subject being taught or in a related clinical field
- be actively working in the industry
- hold, or be working towards, a recognised teaching or training qualification, e.g. Level 3 Award in Education and Training or equivalent*

All Assessors must:

- hold a minimum of Level 4 qualification in the subject being taught or in a related clinical field
- be actively working in the industry
- hold, or be working towards, a recognised assessor qualification or their recognised equivalent** e.g.,

- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement
- A1 Assess Candidate Performance Using a Range of Methods
- D32 Assess Candidate Performance and D33 Assess Candidate Using Differing Sources of Evidence.

*In the absence of a regulated teaching qualification, the Tutor must ensure that they are able to demonstrate that they have delivered a minimum of 30 hours of teaching or assessing. They are then required to agree to update their training to an Ofqual-regulated teaching qualification within two years of commencing their role in order to continue to deliver the qualification. Trainee Tutors MUST be mentored by a suitable qualified Tutor.

**Assessors may be working towards a relevant equivalent qualification in assessing under the guidance of a suitably qualified and experienced Assessor and their IQA. Trainee Assessors' decisions MUST be counter-signed by a suitably qualified, experienced Assessor.

All staff involved with the delivery and assessment of this qualification must also be able to demonstrate ongoing professional development relevant to the sector subject area.

Further information about supporting staff members working towards the required qualifications, including requirements for mentoring, counter-signatories and record-keeping, along with expectations for participation in centre-led standardisation activities and instructions for increased sampling and internal moderation activities are also detailed in the Centre Handbook.

Requirements for Internal Moderators (also referred to as an Internal Quality Assurers or IQAs)

IQAs are responsible for internal moderation and quality assurance of the qualification to ensure standardisation, reliability, validity and sufficiency of the assessor's assessment decisions.

IQAs therefore need to have a thorough understanding of quality assurance and assessment practices, as well as sufficient technical understanding related to the qualifications that they are internally quality assuring. It is the centre's responsibility to select and appoint IQAs.

Assessors may have one or several appointed Internal Moderators.

This qualification is assessed by an Assessor and internally moderated and quality assured by an Internal Moderator to ensure standardisation, reliability, validity and sufficiency of the Assessor's assessment decisions.

To be able to perform the internal moderation and quality assurance role, an Internal Moderator must:

- hold a minimum of Level 4 qualification in the subject being taught or in a related clinical field
- be actively working in the industry

AND

- hold, or be working towards**, one of the following internal quality assurance qualifications or their recognised equivalent:
 - Level 4 Award in Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
 - Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
 - V1 Conduct internal quality assurance of the assessment process
 - D34 Internally verify the assessment process

**Internal Moderators may be working towards a relevant equivalent quality assurance qualification under the guidance of a suitably qualified and experienced Internal Moderator. Trainee Internal Moderator's decisions MUST be counter-signed by a suitably qualified, experienced Internal Moderator.

Staff may undertake more than one role within the centre, e.g., Tutor, Assessor and Internal Moderator. However, members of staff must NOT IQA their own assessment decisions.

The Internal Moderator must have relevant occupational experience and hold relevant qualifications in the particular subject area being assessed. They must hold a regulated qualification at least at the level of the qualification they are assessing.

The knowledge and experience of Tutors, Assessors and Internal Moderators will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

External Moderation (also referred to as External Quality Assurance or EQA)

Assessment and internal moderation and quality assurance activities are subject to external moderation and wider scrutiny and centre controls as per GA's quality assurance arrangements. This includes GA's Centre Assessed Standards Scrutiny (CASS) arrangements for centre-assessed qualifications. Further information can be found in the *GA CASS Strategy and General Moderation Policy*, which is published on the GA website.

3.2 Assessment of Candidates

The centre must ensure that Assessors meet the requirements listed in Section 3.1 above in order to make assessment decisions leading to the award of these GA qualifications.

Candidates are assessed on the evidence contained within their portfolio.

3.3 Assessment Strategy

- Component 1 – Theoretical and practical assessment criteria for the following units must be assessed and evidenced: Units 1 to 9.
- Component 2 – Log of a minimum of 80 hours of practical skills, within an equine hydrotherapy setting (recorded on the *Clinical Skills Log*, confirming competence in skills related to Unit 10).
- Component 3 – Final assessment of skills relating to Unit 10, consisting of a:
 - Summative Practical Assessment.
 - Professional Interview.

Further details of the practical assessment and professional interview are contained in Section 3.4 below.

Unit Number and Title	Assessment Criteria	Assessment Method
1. Introduction to Equine Hydrotherapy	ALL	Portfolio
2. Equine Hydrotherapy, Water and Equipment Management	ALL	Portfolio
3. Clinical Risk Assessment, Health Monitoring and First Aid	ALL	Portfolio
4. Equine Functional Anatomy and Biomechanics	ALL	Portfolio
5. Equine Pain and Behaviour	ALL	Portfolio
6. Equine Assessment and Clinical Reasoning	ALL	Portfolio
7. Treatment Pathways and Common Conditions	ALL	Portfolio
8. Hydrotherapy for Performance	ALL	Portfolio
9. Professionalism, Ethics and Legalities	ALL	Portfolio
10. Equine Clinical Hydrotherapy	ALL	Practical Assessment and Professional Interview, (records of which to be included in the completed Portfolio)

3.4 Assessment

Component 1 - Portfolio Requirements

Learners are expected to build a portfolio of evidence, clearly demonstrating where they have met the learning outcomes and qualification requirements.

Various types of evidence may be used, for example:

- essays/assignments
- short questions and answers
- professional discussions
- observations of performance in the workplace
- workbooks
- product evidence
- reflective accounts
- witness testimony
- records of questioning

Evidence in the portfolio should be mapped against the learning outcomes, reflect the type of evidence supplied and indicate its location within the portfolio. By using portfolio reference numbers, it will enable the learner, assessor, IQA and EQA to quickly locate the evidence submitted.

Component 2 – Practical Hours & Clinical Skills Log

Learners must demonstrate the completion of at least 80 hours of practical experience before being awarded this qualification. GA provides a *Clinical Skills Log* document to approved centres for this purpose.

Learners must be employed in, or be undertaking a work placement at, an Equine Hydrotherapy unit. Where placements are used, it is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that the placement offers a safe environment for the candidate and provides a sufficient case load to meet the requirements of the qualification.

A learner may complete their required hours across multiple placements. Where a work placement is used, the centre must maintain regular contact with both the learner and the supervisor throughout to monitor the learner's progress.

Requirements for Supervision

The centre must ensure that a suitably qualified and experienced staff member supervises the learner's clinical practice. This may be the learner's teacher or assessor, or be a nominated work-based practitioner who is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake this supervisory role.

The supervisor must be able to verify the learner’s completion of Component 2, confirming successful completion of a minimum of 80 practical hours. It is the responsibility of the centre to identify and address any conflicts of interest or bias arising from the allocation of staff and supervisors.

Learners must demonstrate achievement of all Assessment Criteria for Learning Outcomes of Unit 10 by completing the *Clinical Skills Log* document.

Component 3 – Summative Practical Assessments & Professional Interviews

Learners must complete:

- a) 4 x Practical Assessments
- b) 4 x Professional Interviews

a) Summative Practical Assessments

Each Practical Assessment will last a maximum of 60 minutes.

The learner must complete their *Clinical Skills Log* prior to being permitted to undertake the Summative Practical Assessments & Professional Interviews.

The learner must complete FOUR Practical Assessments.

As part of the Summative Practical Assessment, every learner must complete the following in line with the assessment strategy for Unit 10:

During the Practical Assessment, the learner will prepare the horse, handle the horse, and execute the session on three pieces of equipment. These can take place on more than one site in cases where all necessary equipment is not located at a single site.

Rehabilitation Case	Performance Case
1 x Underwater Treadmill	1 x Underwater Treadmill
1 x Spa	1 x Salt Oxygen or Pool

All sessions must reflect real scenarios and enable learners to demonstrate practical skills on a live equine. The welfare of the equine, whether an actual patient or acting as one for the purpose of the assessment, must be prioritised at all times.

A handler must assist the learner during sessions. The learner is responsible for leading the session and directing the handler.

The learner is able to make clinical notes as they go during the Summative Practical Assessments, however the learner is NOT allowed to bring any pre-prepared notes in with them.

The Summative Practical Assessments must be delivered-face-to-face.

The Assessor can assess learners to a MAXIMUM ratio of 1:3 where reasonably practicable (1 x Assessor to 3 x learners).

Summative Practical Assessments must be video recorded, stored securely on a suitable platform and made available for internal and external moderation.

To confirm the identity of the learner, the video must be introduced by the learner to confirm their name, date of assessment, Assessor and centre name.

b) Professional Interviews

Each Professional Interview must follow a Summative Practical Assessment and be conducted within 72 hours of the Summative Practical Assessment taking place. This timing ensures that learners can recall details of their performance while also allowing sufficient time for reflection, enabling them to effectively express their insights.

Each Professional Interview is expected to take approximately 20 minutes. Professional Interviews may be conducted either face-to-face or remotely via live video link.

The Professional Interview is to confirm underpinning knowledge relating to each of the Practical Assessments.

During the Professional Interview, the Assessor will record summary notes on the Professional Interview Record. For quality assurance, the interview must be digitally recorded (e.g., audio or video) and stored on a secure platform accessible to the internal moderator (IQA) and the external moderator (EQA), while ensuring compliance with data protection and privacy requirements.

To verify the learner's identity, the video must include an introduction by the learner, stating their name, assessment date, Assessor, and centre name.

The tutor must ensure that across Component 3, the learner has adequately demonstrated competence in all Assessment Criteria for Unit 10.

3.5 CRAVES Requirements

Assessors must ensure that all evidence within the learner's portfolio judged to meet GA's 'CRAVES' requirements is:

- **current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment
- **reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **authentic:** the work is the candidate's own work
- **valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level

- **evaluated:** where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner
- **sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy.

3.6 Internal Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

Internal Moderators (also known as Internal Quality Assurers or IQAs) ensure that Assessors are assessing to the same standards, i.e. consistently and reliably, and that assessment decisions are correct. IQA activities will include:

- ensuring Assessors are suitably experienced and qualified in line with the qualification requirements
- sampling assessments and assessment decisions
- ensuring that assessment decisions meet the GA 'CRAVES' requirements (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- conducting standardisation and moderation of assessment decisions
- providing Assessors with clear and constructive feedback
- supporting Assessors and providing training and development where appropriate
- ensuring any stimulus or materials used for the purposes of assessment are fit for purpose.

Sampling of assessment will be planned and carried out in line with a clear IQA and moderation strategy, which incorporates the number of learners, number of Assessors, and the experience and competency of Assessors.

Centre IQAs may wish to refer to the guidance documents provided by GA to approved centres (available on the Ark) in order to formulate an appropriate Sampling Strategy. An overview is provided in Appendix 1 of this document.

3.7 External Moderation and Quality Assurance Arrangements

All GA Approved Centres are entitled to two EQA visits per year. Additional visits can be requested, for which there may be an additional charge.

EQA activities will focus on the centre's continuing adherence to and maintenance of the GA *Centre Approval Criteria* and the criteria and requirements for the specific qualifications for which it holds approval. These include:

- checking that the management of the centre and the management arrangements relating to the qualification are sufficient
- checking that resources to support the delivery of the qualifications, including physical resources and staffing, are in place and sufficient
- ensuring that the centre has appropriate policies and procedures in place relevant to the organisation and to the delivery and quality assurance of the qualifications

- the use of assessment materials and the arrangements in place to ensure that evidence for assessment is 'CRAVES' (Current, Reliable, Authentic, Valid, Evaluated and Sufficient)
- sampling assessment decisions against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of Assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of candidates
- the internal moderation and quality assurance arrangements
- sampling internal moderation records against the qualification requirements across the range of levels, number of Assessors and assessment sites, according to the number of candidates
- administrative arrangements
- ensuring that any actions from moderation and wider quality assurance activity have been carried out by the centre
- confirming any claims for RPL, reasonable adjustments or special considerations

Through discussions with centre staff, examining learner's work, moderation of assessment, talking to learners and reviewing documentation and systems, the GA EQA will provide the centre with full support, advice and guidance as necessary.

3.8 Venue and Equipment Requirements

When training premises are used in the delivery of teaching and assessment of this qualification, centres should, wherever possible, provide suitable access in line with Disability Discrimination, Diversity & Equality law and regulations and any other regulations which apply.

Centres must ensure that all products and equipment used in the delivery and assessment of this qualification must be authorised by GA and confirmed as fit for purpose and compliant with current Health and Safety legislation and any other relevant regulations. This will be considered at approval and during the on-going monitoring of centres.

Where specific products and equipment are required for the delivery and assessment of a GA qualification, the suitability of the products and equipment at the centre will be considered during the centre and qualification approval process and at External Quality Assurance Visits.

For this qualification, suitable venue and equipment should include:

- Swimming pool (straight or circular)
- Underwater treadmill
- Salt oxygen therapy room
- Spa
- A range of bridles and headcollars
- Full equine first aid kit
- Range of water testing equipment
- Prep area for fitting equipment onto the horses
- Wifi/4G, suitable video/audio recording equipment

- Appropriate fire extinguishers
- Appropriate kitchen and toilet facilities, plus office or seating area for learners to write up notes

3.9 Teaching and Learning Resources

GA does not prescribe the use of set course books, workbooks or other materials but expects that centres providing such courses should use relevant and up-to-date, high-quality teaching and learning materials which allow candidates to adequately prepare for assessment.

All delivery and assessment resources should be inclusive of the principles of equality and diversity and the safeguarding of candidates.

GA provides additional resources for this qualification on the relevant qualification page of the website: www.gatehouseawards.org

Please note, any references to books, journals, websites or other third-party materials and publications made in this Qualification Specification are made in good faith only and GA does not accept responsibility for the content of such materials or any opinions expressed within them.

3.10 Marking, Re-Submission of Work and Re-Sit Summative Assessments

The use of artificial intelligence ('AI') to mark learner work is strictly prohibited.

The decision regarding whether to permit a candidate to resubmit work and/or attempt an assessment again will be based on an evaluation of how closely their previous attempts met the passing criteria. This evaluation will consider the extent to which the candidate's work demonstrated progress towards meeting the required standards.

If a learner must retake any formal assessment, the centre is expected to offer additional training or support to address areas needing improvement. It is essential that the centre maintains regular contact hours with learners to identify any challenges and implement necessary support or access arrangements.

Any re-submissions of work or re-sits of practical assessments must be completed within the qualification registration period.

Re-submissions of work or re-sits of practical assessments must be assessed with the same rigour and adherence to the qualification standards.

If a candidate does not pass after three attempts, the centre must assess whether, despite supportive measures and multiple attempts, the candidate's progress is not indicative that they will meet the qualification requirements. They may be issued with a final 'Fail' grade or withdraw from the programme.

The centre must ensure that their policies and procedures regarding candidate dismissal or failure are communicated clearly to candidates to maintain fairness and transparency.

3.11 Results

Centres may make claims for certification via the Ark when learners complete and the Assessor and Internal Moderator have confirmed achievement. Such claims for certification are subject to successful external moderation (EQA). Following the External Moderator's confirmation of a learner's achievement, GA will authorise claims for the certification of learners, details of which will be visible to the centre in the centre's Ark account. Certificates are usually issued within 10 working days of the award of the qualification.

3.12 Certificates

The qualification certificate will indicate both the title and the level at which the qualification is achieved.

Certificates will only be issued to learners who have achieved sufficient credits and met the rules of combination for the qualification they are registered for. If a learner has not achieved sufficient credits or failed to meet the rules of combination, the qualification certificate will not be issued.

Replacement certificates are available upon request.

Amendments to certificates are available upon request but may require the centre to provide evidence of the need for any amendment (e.g. learner proof of identification) and will involve the return of the original certificate. Replacements and amendments may incur an additional charge.

3.13 Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Direct Claims Status is not available for this qualification.

3.14 Appeals and Enquiries

GA has an appeals procedure in accordance with the arrangements for regulated qualifications.

General enquiries can be made at any time and should be directed to a GA Centre Administrator.

3.15 Ongoing Support

There are a number of documents on the GA website that centres and candidates may find useful: www.gatehouseawards.org

The website is updated regularly with news, information about all GA qualifications, sample materials, updates on regulations and other important notices.

Within the centre, a named Examinations Officer is responsible for ensuring that all information and documents provided to centre staff and candidates are correct and up to date.

GA must be kept up to date with contact details of all changes of personnel so centres can be provided with the best level of support and guidance.

At the time of approval, centres are assigned a designated Centre Administrator who is their primary point of contact for all aspects of service or support.

Learners should always speak to a member of staff at the centre for information relating to GA and our qualifications prior to approaching GA directly.

Contact details for GA can be found on the GA website www.gatehouseawards.org.

Section 4: Unit Specifications

4.1 GA Level 4 Diploma in Applied Equine Hydrotherapy (610/5026/X)

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
1	Introduction to Equine Hydrotherapy	7	3	A/651/4000
<p>This unit introduces the learner to the foundational principles and practical knowledge required for safe and effective equine hydrotherapy. Learners will begin by exploring the core concepts of hydrotherapy, including its definition, therapeutic benefits, and its role within equine care. Building on this, the unit emphasises safe practices for all hydrotherapy equipment, covering standard operating procedures, safety protocols, and essential maintenance.</p> <p>Learners will also examine the appropriate indications and contraindications for equipment use, ensuring they can make informed decisions that maximise therapeutic benefits while protecting equine welfare. Additionally, the unit highlights the distinctions between hydrotherapy applications for rehabilitation and performance enhancement, allowing practitioners to tailor treatment plans to meet specific needs in recovery or athletic conditioning.</p> <p>By the end of this unit, learners will have a well-rounded understanding of hydrotherapy's role in equine care, with the skills and knowledge needed to practise safely and professionally.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand what is meant by 'hydrotherapy'.	1.1 Define 'hydrotherapy'.
	1.2 Explain the intended effects of hydrotherapy treatment.
2. Understand safe practices relating to hydrotherapy equipment.	2.1 Explain the intended function of the equipment.
	2.2 Explain the properties of water relevant to equine hydrotherapy.
	2.3 Explain how the hydrotherapist can utilise the properties of water to benefit the patient during hydrotherapy treatment.
	2.4 Explain how properties of water could be detrimental to a patient receiving hydrotherapy treatment.
	2.5 Critically compare the benefits and limitations of each piece of equipment.
	2.6 Critically compare safety features of equine hydrotherapy equipment.
3. Know when use of equipment is indicated and contraindicated.	3.1 Describe the terms 'indication' and 'contraindication'.
	3.2 Analyse when equipment is 'indicated' and 'contraindicated'.
	3.3 Explain the difference between a precaution and contraindication.
	3.4 Explain recommended and discouraged practices for an equine hydrotherapy session.
4. Know the differences between practice for	4.1 Evaluate the settings in which hydrotherapy is used for equine performance enhancement.

rehabilitation and practice for performance.	4.2. Evaluate the settings in which hydrotherapy is used for equine rehabilitation.
	4.3. Evaluate the monitoring and measuring techniques used in practice for rehabilitation versus practice for performance.
	4.4. Analyse the aims and objectives expected in both practice for performance and practice for rehabilitation.

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
2	Equine Hydrotherapy Water and Equipment Management	11	4	D/651/4001
<p>This unit provides the learner with the essential knowledge for effective water management in equine hydrotherapy. Learners will explore the importance of responsible water use and regular testing to maintain a safe therapeutic environment.</p> <p>Learners will develop their understanding of the operation, maintenance, and safe handling of equipment and water-processing systems, including the management of chemicals for water treatment. This unit also requires the learner to address troubleshooting common equipment issues and the importance of accurate record-keeping for water and equipment management.</p> <p>By the end of this unit, learners will be equipped with the skills necessary for safe, efficient, and accountable hydrotherapy practice.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Assessment Guidance: Learning Outcome 4 of this unit must be evidenced in the learner's <i>Clinical Skills Log</i>.</p> <p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Know the significance of responsible water management.	1.1 Explain the legal obligations relating to water management.
	1.2 Describe the professional obligations related to water management.
2. Know the importance of water testing.	2.1 Evaluate methods used to test water.
	2.2 Justify the frequency of water testing.
	2.3 Explain why water testing is necessary for safe and effective practice.
3. Understand how to operate and maintain plant and equipment.	3.1 Define the purpose of essential plant.
	3.2 Explain the maintenance requirements for plant and equipment.
	3.3 Explain the importance of regular maintenance of plant and equipment.
4. Be able to operate equipment and water processing safely.	4.1 Assess the equipment for faults and defects.
	4.2 Communicate the results to other staff clearly and effectively.
	4.3 Prepare equipment for use.
	4.4 Demonstrate appropriate water management testing techniques.
	4.5 Demonstrate how to correct water levels if the test suggests it is not appropriate for use.

	4.6 Demonstrate cleaning down and safety checking of all equipment.
5. Understand how to manage chemicals used for water treatment.	5.1 Examine commonly used chemicals in water treatment.
	5.2 Describe the purpose of commonly used chemicals in water treatment.
	5.3 Evaluate the specific risks when using chemicals for water treatment.
	5.4 Explain appropriate safety measures when using chemicals for water treatment.
	5.5 Evaluate infection control and cleaning processes for an equine hydrotherapy clinic.
	5.6 Explain how water will be treated if the reading is not acceptable for use with horses.
6. Know possible problems that may arise with equipment.	6.1 Identify common mechanical faults that may occur with equipment.
	6.2 Discuss safe protocols for a range of emergencies.
	6.3 Explain the importance of equipment induction and training when working with new equipment.
7. Know the importance of water and equipment management and record-keeping.	7.1 Discuss the importance of appropriate water and equipment management records.
	7.2 Explain the importance of regular water and equipment maintenance.
	7.3 Discuss the implications of poor water management on equipment.

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
3	Clinical Risk Assessment, Health Monitoring and First Aid	7	3	F/651/4002
<p>This unit equips learners with the essential skills for managing clinical risk in equine hydrotherapy. Learners will develop their understanding of the responsibilities involved in Clinical Risk Assessment (CRA) and develop the ability to conduct these assessments to ensure safe practice.</p> <p>Learners will develop their skills in monitoring a horse's health in a clinical setting and develop their understanding of applying the principles of equine first aid in hydrotherapy contexts.</p> <p>Learners will also develop practical skills in performing health monitoring, first aid, and health assessments. This unit requires the learner to consider various types of equine emergencies relevant to clinical practice, enabling them to assess and respond effectively.</p> <p>By the end of this unit, learners will be well-prepared for safe and responsive equine care in clinical hydrotherapy.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Assessment Guidance: Learning Outcome 2, Criteria 2.1, 2.2 and 2.4, and Learning Outcome 5 of this unit must be evidenced in the learner's <i>Clinical Skills Log</i>.</p> <p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand Clinical Risk Assessment (CRA) in clinical hydrotherapy practice.	1.1 Assess the two key methods of risk assessment for ensuring safe practice.
	1.2 Explain the process of Risk Rating a horse in a clinical setting.
2. Be able to perform Clinical Risk Assessments (CRA) to ensure safe practice.	2.1 Perform the Risk Rating of a horse in a clinical situation.
	2.2 Demonstrate the use of a bridle in a clinical setting.
	2.3 Conduct a Clinical Risk Assessment for hydrotherapy practice.
	2.4 Demonstrate safety checks of the equipment before use.
3. Understand how to monitor a horse's health status in a clinical environment.	3.1 Describe various health monitoring strategies for horses.
	3.2 Explain the health monitoring strategies used in equine hydrotherapy practice.
4. Understand the key principles of equine first aid as they relate to clinical hydrotherapy practice.	4.1 Evaluate the key objectives and guidelines of equine first aid.
	4.2 Assess legal and ethical limitations on therapists in an equine clinical emergency.
5. Be able to perform health monitoring, first aid, and assessments for horses in a clinical setting.	5.1 Perform behaviour observations in a clinical environment.
	5.2 Conduct health checks in a clinical environment.
	5.3 Demonstrate the correct application of a hoof poultice and a distal limb bandage.

6. Understand the categories of equine emergencies relevant to clinical practice.	6.1 Describe the various emergency categories that may arise in clinical hydrotherapy practice.
	6.2 Assess emergency water exit procedures in hydrotherapy practice.
7. Understand how to assess and respond to equine clinical emergencies.	7.1 Develop a clinical procedure for handling three different emergencies.
	7.2 Describe the contents of an equine first aid kit appropriate for clinical practice.

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
4	Equine Functional Anatomy and Biomechanics	30	6	H/651/4003
<p>This unit provides the learner with a comprehensive understanding of equine anatomy and biomechanics essential for hydrotherapy practice.</p> <p>Learners will explore the functional anatomy of the equine nervous and muscular systems, gaining insight into how these systems interact. The unit requires the learner to identify the major skeletal muscles, bones, and joints, as well as the functional anatomy of the skeletal and joint systems.</p> <p>Additionally, learners will develop their understanding of the integrated anatomy of the equine respiratory and cardiovascular systems. Finally, the unit examines equine biomechanics, focusing on balance and movement.</p> <p>By the end of this unit, learners will have a solid understanding of equine anatomy and biomechanics, crucial for informed hydrotherapy practice.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand the functional anatomy of the equine nervous system.	1.1 Explain the functions of the primary peripheral nerves in the horse.
	1.2 Explain the integrated function of the proprioceptive system.
2. Understand the functional anatomy of the equine muscular system.	2.1 Explain the four main types of movement.
	2.2 Explain the major skeletal muscles in the horse.
3. Understand how to locate and assess major skeletal muscles.	3.1 Describe the application of therapeutic palpation techniques.
	3.2 Explain how to assess the major skeletal muscles.
4. Understand the functional anatomy of the equine skeletal and joint systems.	4.1 Explain the role of the skeleton and joints in equine movement.
	4.2 Explain the functional design of the equine skeleton and ligaments as they relate to balance and movement.
5. Understand how to identify and locate major bones and joints.	5.1 Describe the anatomical position and relationships of the major skeletal structures in the equine body.
	5.2 Describe the anatomical position and relationships of the major joints in the equine body.
6. Understand the integrated functional anatomy of the equine respiratory and cardiovascular systems.	6.1 Explain how the equine respiratory and cardiovascular systems are integrated.
7. Understand equine biomechanics as they relate to balance and movement.	7.1 Explain the biomechanical design of equine balanced stance and movement.

	7.2 Explain various equine gait patterns.
	7.3 Explain the impact of abnormal gait or lameness on equine balance, abilities, and movement.

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
5	Equine Pain and Behaviour	7	3	J/651/4004
<p>This unit focuses on the relationship between pain and behaviour in equines, providing essential insights for effective hydrotherapy practice.</p> <p>Learners will explore how pain influences equine behaviour and the implications for treatment.</p> <p>Learners will develop their understanding of common pharmaceuticals used in equine care, focussing on pain relief medications and sedatives, and their applications and effects. Additionally, learners will gain an understanding of various electrotherapies and their role in pain management.</p> <p>By the end of the unit, learners will be equipped with the knowledge and understanding of pain-related behaviours and treatment options, enabling them to enhance the welfare of horses undergoing hydrotherapy.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand the relationship between pain and behaviour.	1.1 Discuss normal horse behaviour.
	1.2 Discuss abnormal horse behaviour.
	1.3 Summarise the concept of pain.
	1.4 Evaluate the impact of pain on behaviour.
	1.5 Explain the methods and rationale for assessing pain.
	1.6 Evaluate different pain scales and their applications.
2. Understand pain relief medications and sedatives, their uses and applications	2.1 Explain what is meant by 'inflammation'.
	2.2 Categorise types of pain relief medications and sedatives according to their purpose.
	2.3 Explain the different ways in which pain relief medications are administered.
	2.4 Explain safe practices and appropriate use of rehabilitation equipment when used in conjunction with sedative medications.
3. Understand how electrotherapies are used for pain management.	3.1 Summarise the term 'mechanism of action'.
	3.2 Explain the indications and contraindications for pain-relieving electrotherapies.

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
6	Equine Assessment and Clinical Reasoning	7	3	K/651/4005
<p>This unit provides the learner with a comprehensive overview of the equine assessment process in clinical hydrotherapy. Learners will explore the various components involved in assessing horses for hydrotherapy, emphasising the importance of clinical reasoning throughout the assessment process.</p> <p>The unit also highlights the significance of re-assessments and outcome measures in evaluating treatment effectiveness. Additionally, learners will develop their understanding of the critical role of effective communication among the therapist, the horse, and the owner, ensuring collaborative care.</p> <p>By the end of the unit, learners will be well-prepared to conduct thorough assessments and foster strong communication in clinical hydrotherapy practice.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand the equine assessment process for clinical hydrotherapy.	1.1 Discuss the different components involved in an assessment for clinical hydrotherapy.
	1.2 Explain the history component in a subjective assessment.
	1.3 Describe the observation component in equine assessment.
	1.4 Detail the hands-on examination in the objective part of the equine assessment.
	1.5 Develop a problem list based on the historical data for specific cases.
	1.6 Formulate SMART goals from the problem list for specific cases.
2. Understand the role of clinical reasoning in the assessment process for equine hydrotherapy.	2.1 Analyse clinical reasoning relevant to hydrotherapy practice.
	2.2 Evaluate a clinical reasoned pathway as part of the assessment process in hydrotherapy.
3. Understand the role of re-assessments and outcome measures in equine hydrotherapy.	3.1 Analyse the application of equine outcome measures prior to implementing the treatment plan.
	3.2 Evaluate the use of equine outcome measures once the treatment plan has started.
	3.3 Discuss the purpose of re-assessment in equine clinical hydrotherapy.
	3.4 Compare the accuracy, reliability, and validity in equine clinical assessment processes.
4. Understand the importance of effective communication between	4.1 Assess strategies for effective communication with the horse in clinical practice.

<p>the therapist, the horse, and the owner in clinical hydrotherapy.</p>	<p>4.2 Assess strategies for effective communication with the owner in clinical practice.</p>
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	Mandatory Unit	GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
7	Treatment Pathways and Common Conditions	11	3	L/651/4006
<p>This unit focuses on establishing effective treatment pathways in equine hydrotherapy. Learners will develop their understanding of the initial goals and expectations of others, as well as how and when to monitor progress throughout treatment.</p> <p>Learners will develop their understanding of the creation of treatment pathways that align with the therapist's scope of practice., Learners will explore the impact of pathophysiology on musculoskeletal, orthopaedic, and neurological conditions, along with the healing process and common muscular injuries in horses.</p> <p>Learners will also develop their skills in clinically reasoning treatment pathways, enabling them to communicate effectively with owners and colleagues.</p> <p>By the end of the unit, learners will be equipped to design and implement tailored treatment plans that optimise equine recovery and well-being.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand initial goals and expectations and assess how and when to monitor progress.	1.1 Analyse the importance of managing expectations of owners, trainers, and riders.
	1.2 Evaluate the appropriate frequency for re-assessing goals and objectives.
	1.3 Assess subjective and objective monitoring tools and techniques.
	1.4 Explain the methods by which success can be measured.
2. Understand how to create treatment pathways while staying within own scope of practice	2.1 Define the term 'scope of practice'.
	2.2 Analyse the key elements and implications of professional negligence in equine hydrotherapy practice.
	2.3 Evaluate a range of treatment pathways for common equine conditions.
	2.4 Assess alternatives to address setbacks or limiting factors.
3. Understand the impact of the pathophysiology on musculoskeletal, orthopaedic, and neurological conditions	3.1 Describe the pathophysiology of common equine orthopaedic conditions.
	3.2 Evaluate the pathophysiology of common equine musculoskeletal conditions.
	3.3 Describe the pathophysiology of common equine neurological conditions.
4. Understand the healing process and common muscular injuries in horses.	4.1 Analyse the equine healing process.
	4.2 Evaluate common equine muscle injuries encountered in clinical hydrotherapy.
5. Understand how to clinically reason treatment	5.1 Explain the short-term treatment pathway.

pathways to owners and colleague.	5.2 Describe the long-term treatment pathway.
	5.3 Explain how the treatments could be made easier and harder.
	5.4 Discuss indicators that the horse may be struggling with the chosen plan.
	5.5 Discuss how to communicate the plan with both owners and other professionals.

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
8	Hydrotherapy for Performance	7	3	M/651/4007
<p>In this unit, the learner will develop their understanding of the demands of various equine disciplines and sports, providing essential insights for tailored training and performance enhancement. Learners will examine how specific equipment can be modified to facilitate training progression and improve athletic outcomes.</p> <p>Learners will also cover the responses of key physiological systems to exercise, helping learners to develop their understanding of how these adaptations influence equine performance.</p> <p>By the end of the units, learners will be equipped with the knowledge to optimise training approaches and support the well-being of horses across different disciplines.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand the demands of various equine disciplines and sports.	1.1 Assess the fitness requirements for various equine sports.
	1.2 Analyse core training principles.
	1.3 Evaluate risk factors associated with two equine sports.
	1.4 Compare injury patterns in two different equine sports.
2. Explain how equipment can be modified to enhance training progression.	2.1 Analyse how the modality can be adjusted to accommodate increasing fitness levels.
	2.2 Evaluate the risks associated with overworking a horse.
	2.3 Explain the integration of intensity, frequency, and duration in session planning.
	2.4 Formulate protocols tailored to the fitness requirements of specific equine sports.
3. Understand how key physiological systems respond to exercise.	3.1 Evaluate how physiological systems adapt at the elite level.
	3.2 Analyse the signs of fatigue in horses.
	3.3 Explain the performance changes that riders, trainers, or owners might observe.

	Mandatory Unit	GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
9	Professionalism, Ethics and Legalities	7	2	R/651/4008
<p>In this unit, the learner will examine the legal and ethical responsibilities of therapists in clinical hydrotherapy, emphasising their duty towards clients, colleagues, and horses. Learners will explore how ethical principles apply specifically to hydrotherapy practice, reinforcing the importance of integrity and professionalism.</p> <p>Learners will develop their understanding of how professional accountability contributes to maintaining high standards of care.</p> <p>Additionally, learners will understand the principles of obtaining informed consent for hydrotherapy treatment, ensuring that all parties are adequately informed and agree to the proposed interventions.</p> <p>By the end of the unit, learners will be well-prepared to navigate the ethical landscape of clinical hydrotherapy while upholding their professional responsibilities.</p>				
<p>Assessment Instructions, Guidance & Indicative Content</p>				
<p>Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.</p>				

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Understand the legal and ethical responsibilities of the therapist towards clients, colleagues, and horses.	1.1 Analyse the purpose of the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT).
	1.2 Evaluate the function of the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT).
	1.3 Explain the principles of Duty of Care as they relate to clinical hydrotherapy.
	1.4 Explain ethical issues that may emerge with clients, colleagues, and horses in clinical hydrotherapy.
	1.5 Explain UK legislation and assess its impact on clinical hydrotherapy practice.
2. Understand how ethical principles apply to clinical hydrotherapy.	2.1 Discuss professional ethics within equine clinical hydrotherapy.
	2.2 Evaluate ethical challenges encountered in equine hydrotherapy practice.
	2.3 Discuss the implementation of equine healthcare and well-being strategies through the application of ethical principles.
3. Understand the significance of professional accountability.	3.1 Explain the scope of practice for a therapist in clinical hydrotherapy.
	3.2 Analyse the purpose of professional regulation.
	3.3 Explain a code of conduct and relevant guidelines in equine hydrotherapy.
	3.4 Evaluate the standards of professional report writing in clinical hydrotherapy practice.
4. Understand the principles of obtaining consent for hydrotherapy treatment.	4.1 Explain the legal and professional requirements for obtaining consent to treat.
	4.2 Analyse barriers to achieving informed consent in hydrotherapy practice.

Mandatory Unit		GLH	Credits	Unit Reference
10	Equine Clinical Hydrotherapy	75	10	T/651/4009

In this unit, the learner will focus on the safe handling of horses and the effective operation of hydrotherapy equipment.

Learners will develop the skills necessary to handle a variety of horses safely while using all equipment involved in hydrotherapy sessions. Emphasis is placed on operating this equipment safely, effectively, and appropriately to maximise therapeutic benefits. Learners will explore the importance of professional communication and conduct, ensuring safety and professionalism in all interactions.

By the end of the unit, learners will be equipped with the competencies needed to provide safe and effective hydrotherapy while maintaining a professional environment.

Assessment Guidance & Indicative Content

Assessment of this unit must include the summative practical assessments and professional interviews

Four practical assessments and four professional interviews are required.

The learner must cover practice for rehabilitation and practice for performance as follows:

Rehabilitation Case	Performance Case
1 x Underwater Treadmill	1 x Underwater Treadmill
1 x Spa	1 x Salt Oxygen or Pool

Refer to Section 3.4 of the Qualification Specification for further details.

Additional Assessment Instructions, Guidance and Indicative Content is available to GA approved centres.

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
The learner will	The learner can
1. Be able to safely handle a variety of horses on all equipment.	1.1 Demonstrate the correct selection of appropriate equipment and fit to the horse.
	1.2 Demonstrate appropriate handling when loading on/off and for the duration where appropriate.
	1.3 Demonstrate removal of all tack from the horse following the session.
2. Be able to operate all equipment safely, effectively and appropriately.	2.1 Demonstrate starting the machine safely.
	2.2 Carry out the session, adjusting the machine accordingly.
	2.3 Demonstrate safe cessation of the session.
3. Understand how to always communicate and conduct own self professionally and safely.	3.1 Evaluate own communication strengths and areas for improvement.
	3.2 Evaluate own professional conduct strengths and areas for improvement.
	3.3 Discuss a plan for personal improvement.

Appendix 1: Internal Moderation and Quality Assurance Regulations and Guidance

3.1 Introduction to Internal Moderation

Internal Moderation is a centre's internal system that ensures learner evidence is complete and genuinely meets all the required criteria by which the learner is judged to have met in order to be awarded a qualification. The process involves regularly sampling and evaluating the centre's assessment practices and decisions, and it is the Internal Moderator's responsibility to act on their findings to ensure consistency and fairness.

Ensuring quality standards are maintained and are consistent within and across a centre's provision is the responsibility of the head of centre, who must ensure that suitable staff are in place to act as Internal Moderator(s) and provide full support and standards scrutiny of the centre's Assessment decisions.

3.2 Internal Moderation Processes

Internal Moderation involves three key processes: co-ordination of the assessment process, standardisation of assessment practice, and sampling of assessed work.

These processes are conducted by one Internal Moderator or, if there is more than one, a team of Internal Moderators who are under the direction of a Lead Internal Moderator.

Information about the experience and qualification requirements for Internal Moderators is provided in the *Qualification Specification*.

3.3. Co-ordination of the Assessment Process

Prior to delivery commencing, it is the Internal Moderator who will confirm that assessment tasks are appropriate. This may involve checking that proposed assessment activities, plans for practical assessments, or the briefs of any assignments or reports are fit for purpose. It may also include checking that internal tests or examination materials are fit for purpose.

In order to ensure that the planned assessment activities and materials are fit for purpose, the Internal Moderator will consider and judge whether the activities and materials provide inclusive opportunities for all learners to meet the assessment objectives and generate evidence which is current, reliable, authentic, valid, able to be evaluated and sufficient to meet the requirements of the qualification.

During delivery of assessment, Internal Moderators will work with the Assessment team, ensuring that assessment practices are being carried out correctly. This may involve observing assessment taking place.

3.4 Standardisation of Assessment

The standardisation process helps to ensure that all centre staff involved in the delivery, assessment and quality assurance are consistent and fair to all learners and interpret and follow the requirements of the qualification in the same way.

Internal Moderators are expected to ensure high levels of consistency across Assessors and centre delivery sites through sharing good practice and providing feedback and support, doing so accurately and in good time. The internal Moderator may highlight areas for further CPD or additional training as necessary.

3.5. Sampling Process

When planning and carrying out internal moderation activities, it is important that the Internal Moderator works to a sound sampling strategy to ensure that standardisation of assessment decisions can take place.

A centre's sampling strategy involves reviewing the quality of Assessor's judgements, which will include reviewing learner work.

The learner work may be sampled before the learner has completed the full qualification, for example by sampling one or two assignments, topic areas or units, as the learner completes them.

The Internal Moderator should check that planning and reviewing has taken place and feedback is given to learners by the Assessor. The Internal Moderator will also check and confirm the accuracy of the application of any mark schemes, guidance and overall assessment decisions.

The Internal Moderator will therefore be able to evaluate the quality and consistency of the Assessor's assessment decisions and be able to identify any problems at an early stage. It will highlight individual Assessor training and development needs, which in turn can inform the programme of CPD for the assessment team as a whole.

The Internal Moderator must plan their sampling activities as outlined below.

3.6 Establishing a Sampling Strategy

Sampling should enable the Internal Moderator to evaluate how Assessors have reached their decisions. They must be able to follow documentation which clearly shows that Assessors have checked that the evidence presented meets the rules of evidence.

Evidence must be confirmed by Assessors as '**CRAVES**'

- **Current:** the work is relevant at the time of the assessment

- **Reliable:** the work is consistent with that produced by other learners
- **Authentic:** the work is the learner's own work
- **Valid:** the work is relevant and appropriate to the subject being assessed and is at the required level
- **Evaluated:** Where the learner has not been assessed as competent, the deficiencies have been clearly and accurately identified via feedback to the learner resulting in improvements in knowledge or competency leading to the award
- **Sufficient:** the work covers the expected learning outcomes and any range statements as specified in the criteria or requirements in the assessment strategy.

3.7 Planning Sampling Activities

The Internal Moderator should consider the following when considering the volume of work that they should sample:

- the learners' ethnic origin, age and gender to ensure a representative range of learners are sampled
- the Assessors' experience and qualifications, workload and their occupational competence. For example, if Assessors are qualified and experienced it may not be necessary to look at everything in a learner's portfolio. If Assessors have less than 12 months' experience, are new to the centre or a particular qualification, or perhaps have not assessed for a length of time, the Internal Moderator will need to sample substantially more of their decisions for the first 6 - 12 months
- the full range of assessment methods used for any one qualification, for example observation, witness testimony, professional discussion, reflective accounts, questioning, assignments, products, RPL, simulation, etc and ensure a good, representative range of assessment evidence is sampled
- previous feedback to Assessors regarding good practice and/or involved highlighting development needs, for example If the Internal Moderator has a particular concern regarding the assessment decisions of a particular Assessor they should focus on increasing the volume of work from that Assessor to continue increased monitoring and evaluation of risk
- whether any changes have been implemented relating to the assessment of the qualification or its units, for example if there have been amendments to the qualification specification, or instances where industry practice or legislation has changed
- the range of locations where assessments have taken place
- the sampling process must not be determined by any rule of thumb such as '10%.'

3.8 Producing a Sampling Plan

The Internal Moderator must develop a sampling plan at the beginning of the learner's (or cohort's) programme and record, on the plan, which topic areas/assessment methods they plan to sample, and when.

Copies of sampling plans should be made available to other Internal Moderators and the assessment team, and sampling carried out according to the plan.

Where variations are made, these should be recorded on the plan.

3.9 Completing a Sample Record

The Internal Moderator should record the quality assurance sampling activities on a Sample Record. As a minimum, this record must indicate the Assessor's decision, the content of the sample, the Internal Moderator's decision and relevant feedback to the Assessor.

Where the Internal Moderator agrees with the assessment decisions, certification claims can go ahead.

Where the Internal Moderator does not agree with the assessment decisions, full feedback must be given to the Assessor, with action points agreed which relate to the Assessor's areas for improvement and instructions for how the learner can be supported to produce the required evidence of knowledge and skills.

Sampling must take place before any certification claims are made by the centre and all records, including those of standardisation meetings, feedback to Assessors and CPD activity should be made available to the GA-appointed External Moderator (also referred to as the EQA) upon request.

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