



Guidance – Professional Behaviours

For Apprentices

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF FARRIERS

This guidance should be read in conjunction with

- The latest copy of the FRC's '*Farrier & Apprentice Code of Professional Conduct*' guide.
- Relevant sections of the RCVS's '*Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons*' guidance.

Introduction

1. The Worshipful Company of Farriers (WCF) sets the standards and requirements for all stages of farrier education and training. This document sets out the professional behaviors required of apprentices who aim to achieve the UK primary farrier qualification in the Farrier Apprenticeship Standard - ST0172. It is:
 - a guide for apprentices on what they need to learn during their time in training
 - a basis for farrier training colleges to develop their curricula
 - a blueprint for assessments at training colleges
 - a framework that can be used to regulate training colleges
2. Apprentices will need ongoing practical experience to develop and consolidate their skills and capabilities during training. They must make the care of the equine their first concern, applying their knowledge and skills in a competent, ethical and professional manner and taking responsibility for their own actions in complex and uncertain situations.
3. It is important to remember that apprentices will work under educational and practical supervision and in a multidisciplinary team. Apprentices will need to demonstrate that they are refining their behavioural skills and that they are able to take responsibility appropriately whilst recognising and working within the limits of their competence.
4. Training Colleges must be able to provide evidence to show that an apprentice's learning is directed towards meeting the professional behaviours set out in this guidance.
5. Assessment of these behaviours may be incorporated into WCF formal written and practical examinations, workplace-based assessments, presentations or coursework.

Professional Values and Behaviours

6. Apprentices are required to demonstrate appropriate generic personal and professional values and behaviours.
 - **Professional and ethical responsibilities**
7. Apprentices must behave according to ethical and professional principles. They should:
 - a) Demonstrate compassionate professional behaviour and professional responsibilities in making sure the fundamental needs of the equine are addressed
 - b) Summarise the current ethical dilemmas in hoofcare practice; the ethical issues that can arise in everyday farriery decision-making; and apply ethical reasoning to situations which may be encountered in the first few years after qualifying
 - c) Maintain confidentiality and respect horse owner privacy
 - d) Act with integrity, be polite, considerate, trustworthy and honest
 - e) Manage their time and prioritise effectively
 - f) Recognise and acknowledge their own personal and professional limits and seek help from colleagues and supervisors when necessary, including when they feel that equine safety may be compromised
 - g) Recognise the potential impact of their attitudes, values, beliefs, perceptions and personal biases (which may be unconscious) on individuals and groups and identify personal strategies to address this
 - h) Demonstrate the principles of equine-centred care and include horse owners and other advocates in decisions about their hoofcare needs
 - i) Explain and demonstrate the importance of providing information about options for investigations, treatment and care in a way that enables horse owners to make decisions about their own equine's care
 - j) Act with an inclusive approach towards horse owners and colleagues
 - k) Be open and honest in their interactions with horse owners, colleagues and employers when things go wrong
 - l) Raise and escalate concerns through informal communication with colleagues and relevant bodies about:
 - a. equine safety and quality of care
 - b. bullying, harassment and undermining
 - m) Work effectively and appropriately as a mentor and trainer for other learners in a multi-professional team
 - n) Respect horse owner wishes about whether they wish to participate in learner education
 - o) Engage in their induction and orientation activities, learn from experience and feedback, and respond constructively to the outcomes of performance reviews and assessments
 - p) Explain and demonstrate the importance of engagement with CPD after the apprenticeship is achieved, including maintaining a professional development portfolio which includes evidence of reflection, achievements, learning needs and feedback from horse owners and colleagues

8. Apprentices must demonstrate awareness of the importance of their personal physical and mental wellbeing and incorporate compassionate self-care into their personal and professional life. They must demonstrate awareness of the need to:
- a) Self-monitor, self-care and seek appropriate advice and support, including by being registered with a GP, being up-to-date with their tetanus vaccination schedule and engaging with healthcare providers to maintain their own physical and mental health
 - b) Manage the personal and emotional challenges of coping with work and workload, lone-working, uncertainty and change
 - c) Develop a range of coping strategies, such as reflection, debriefing, handing over to another learner, peer support and asking for help, to recover from challenges and set-backs

- **Legal responsibilities**

9. Apprentices must demonstrate knowledge of the principles of the legal framework in which farriery is practised in the jurisdiction in which they are practising, and have awareness of where further information on relevant legislation can be found.

- **Dealing with complexity and uncertainty**

10. The nature of hoof injury or disease is complex and therefore the care of many equines can be complicated and uncertain. Apprentices must have an awareness of recognising complexity and uncertainty. And, through the process of seeking support and help from trainers, learn to develop confidence in managing these situations and responding to change. They must be able to:
- a) Demonstrate their contribution to effective interdisciplinary team working with veterinary surgeons and with other professionals for the provision of safe and high-quality care
 - b) Work effectively with colleagues in ways that best serve the interests of the horse. This includes:
 - safely passing on information using clear and appropriate spoken, written and electronic communication
 - at handover, and when handing over, to maintain continuity of care
 - when referring to colleagues for investigations or advice
 - when things go wrong, for example when errors happen
 - questioning colleagues during handover where appropriate
 - working collaboratively and supportively with colleagues to share experiences and challenges that encourage learning
 - responding appropriately to requests from colleagues to attend horse owners
 - applying flexibility, adaptability and a problem-solving approach to shared decision making with colleagues.
 - c) Recognise and show respect for the roles and expertise of other farriers in the context of working and learning as a multi-professional team.

Professional Skills

- **Communication and interpersonal skills**

11. Apprentices must be able to communicate effectively, openly and honestly with horse owners. They must be able to:
 - a) Communicate clearly, sensitively and effectively with horse owners, and colleagues by:
 - listening, sharing and responding
 - demonstrating empathy and compassion
 - demonstrating effective verbal and non-verbal interpersonal skills
 - making adjustments to their communication approach if needed, for example for people who communicate differently due to a disability or who speak a different first language
 - seeking support from colleagues for assistance with communication if needed.
 - b) Communicate by spoken, written and electronic methods clearly, sensitively and effectively with horse owners and colleagues from other professions. This includes, but is not limited to, the following situations:
 - where there is conflict or disagreement
 - when sharing news about an equine's condition that may be emotionally challenging for the horse owner and those close to them
 - when sharing news about an equine's death
 - when communicating with people who lack insight into an equine's illness or are ambivalent about treatment
 - when communicating with children and young people
 - when communicating with people who have impaired hearing, language, speech or sight
 - when the horse owner lacks capacity to reach or communicate a decision on the equine's care needs
 - when making referrals to colleagues and other professions
12. Apprentices must be able to carry out an effective consultation with a horse owner. They must be able to:
 - a) Elicit and accurately record farrier instructions for their own professional notes as well as an equine's clinical record
 - b) Encourage horse owners' questions, discuss their understanding of the condition and treatment options, and take into account their ideas, concerns, expectations, values and preferences
 - c) Acknowledge and discuss information horse owners have gathered about their conditions and symptoms, taking a collaborative approach
 - d) Provide explanation, advice and support that matches horse owners' level of understanding and needs, making reasonable adjustments to facilitate horse owners' understanding if necessary
 - e) Work with horse owners, to agree how they want to be involved in decision making about their care and treatment

- **Identification and veterinary management**

13. Both veterinary surgeons and farriers are involved in the treatment of horses' feet. While veterinary surgeons are exempt from the restrictions in the Farriers Registration Acts 1975 and 1977, farriers are not exempt from the restrictions in the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, and may not carry out procedures deemed to be acts of veterinary surgery.

14. There is no clear demarcation line between veterinary surgeons and farriers in the exercise of their professional responsibilities, so that much depends on individuals and the relationship between them. Decisions as to whether a particular procedure should be performed by one or the other are a matter for consultation and cooperation. Veterinary surgeons should make every effort personally to discuss cases with farriers and vice versa.
15. Farriery consists of trimming and balancing the equine hoof prior to and for the fitting of conventional or surgical shoes, and where a veterinary surgeon requires particular work from a farrier, this should be specified in personal contact between them.
16. A farrier must not normally penetrate sensitive structures, cause unnatural stress to the animal, make a diagnosis or administer drugs. If they feel that either the veterinary surgeon is treating the animal incorrectly, or that a further condition is present requiring treatment, they should notify the veterinary surgeon or advise the owner to call in the veterinary surgeon. If a veterinary surgeon considers that a farrier's work is inadequate he should contact the farrier directly. Neither should make detrimental comments about the work of the other unless in the course of a formal complaint to their regulatory bodies: the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and the Farriers Registration Council.
17. Apprentices must be able to perform the core set of practical skills and procedures safely and effectively (as set out in the Farrier Apprenticeship Standard - ST0172) by the time they qualify, and identify, according to their level of skill and experience, the procedures for which they need supervision to ensure equine safety.
18. Apprentices must be able to work collaboratively with horse owners and Veterinary Surgeons to make hoofcare judgements and decisions based on a holistic assessment of the equine and their needs, priorities and concerns. By the time they qualify, apprentices must understand how to:
 - a) Propose an assessment of an equine's presentation, integrating biological, psychological and social factors, agree this with colleagues and use it to direct and prioritise care
 - b) Propose a holistic summary, including a prioritised differential problem list
 - c) Propose options for investigation, taking into account potential risks, benefits, cost effectiveness and possible side effects and agree in collaboration with colleagues if necessary, which investigations to select
 - d) Interpret the results of investigations and identification procedures, in collaboration with colleagues if necessary
 - e) Negotiate any differences in judgements that may arise between farriers and vets and be prepared to explain their reasoning to others
 - f) Take account of horse owners' concerns, beliefs, choices and preferences, and respect the rights of horse owners to reach decisions
 - g) Seek informed consent for any recommended or preferred options for treatment and care
 - h) Propose a plan of management including prevention, treatment or continuing care, according to established principles and best evidence, in collaboration with other equine professionals if necessary
 - i) Recognise the potential consequences of over-identification and over-treatment

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