



# Amateur Tests Syllabus



**Association of Irish Riding Establishments**  
**Beech House**  
**Millennium Park**  
**Naas**  
**Co. Kildare**

**045-854518**      **087-9500732**  
**info@aire.ie**      **www.aire.ie**

Safety and courtesy toward other people and consideration for the well being of the horse must be taught and examined at all levels. Signed blank certificates are available at €1 each from the office and will be forwarded to the school on request, prior to the test. These should be completed and awarded to candidates immediately after successfully completing the tests. It must be remembered at all times that these amateur tests should be conducted in an atmosphere of fun and encouragement and children should not be presented for the tests unless they are adequately prepared.

## **Tom Holden – Holden’s Safety & Training**

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**Tom Holden. B.Comm, M.B.S. C.M. I.O.S.H. HSI Level 1 Coach  
F.E.I Course Designer (International)**

**041 98 29093      086 2588348**

**E-mail [tom.holden2@gmail.com](mailto:tom.holden2@gmail.com)**

## **A.I.R.E Guidelines for Centres**

A.I.R.E is committed to providing a safe and happy environment for all its clients. The roles and functions of AIRE include promoting the sport of amateur horse riding, representing, developing and encouraging a high standard of quality and service in the management and operation of Riding Establishments. AIRE members offer a wide choice of riding facilities catering for every rider, whether novice or experienced and regardless of age. To this end AIRE have introduced a series of progressive amateur tests designed for once weekly riders attending AIRE approved schools.

These tests consist of 4 'Foundation' levels, ABCD, progressing to level 1 and finishing with level 6. Candidates will be examined at their usual Riding Centre by an Instructor on the AIRE list who does not normally teach at that yard.

# **Exam Centre Notes**

## **Location:**

AIRE tests may only be conducted at Establishments which are currently approved by AIRE and ideally should be at the centre at which the candidate normally rides.

## **Horses and Equipment:**

The Centre should provide suitable facilities and where possible horses and equipment with which the candidate is already familiar. It should be possible to complete the test without the candidates changing horses.

## **Turnout:**

Tack should be clean and well turned out. Candidates clothing must be safe, practical and tidy. Jodhpurs are not required in the lower tests. They are desirable by the time candidates reach level D. Riding Jackets are not obligatory. Whips may be carried as required. Spurs may not be worn until level 6 and must be removed if the examiner feels it necessary. Body Protectors must be worn for cross-country and are highly recommended for jumping. Helmets of a suitable standard as per Guide Lines must be worn. The Centres must insure that all the above requirements are fulfilled.

## **Results**

Examiners should be very encouraging; looking for what the candidate can do rather than what they cannot. Allowances must be made for physical problems as well as “exam nerves”. Results should be given out individually, with advice on what areas need working on before attempting the next test. Should a candidate fail, they must be dealt with tactfully and sympathetically told exactly why they could not be passed. They should be given every encouragement to try again after a suitable period of training. Results should be recorded by the proprietor.

## **The Instruction**

The instructor should minimize the risk of failure by preparing candidates thoroughly as it is unfair to candidates, the examiners and the reputation of both the centre and the instructor to put forward candidates who are unlikely to pass. Instructors should be supportive towards candidates, especially those suffering from ‘exam nerves’. They should ensure facilities; equipment and horses are ready in good time on the day of the test. The instructor should inform the examiner of any factors that should be taken into consideration concerning either the candidates or the horses being used, prior to the test.

## **Safety**

All tests are run by the centre and should be run in accordance with the conditions of the centre’s insurance, as A.I.R.E. is not in any way responsible for any accident or injury that may occur during the course of these tests. Examiners must conduct these tests in a safe manner and

must only ask candidates to perform tasks as laid out in the syllabus for that test.

## **Minimum Age**

The minimum age at which a candidate may attempt a test is 6 years.

The tests may be taken by adults and a candidate may take up to Foundation Level C at one attempt if the Instructor is happy that their experience and knowledge is sufficient.

No restriction should be placed on the number of tests taken by a candidate in a year. It should be at the advice and discretion of the instructor that a candidate is presented for the tests.

## **Sections**

All levels are divided into Equitation and Stable Management. From level 1 onwards there is an optional jumping section, which if omitted or failed will not preclude the candidate from receiving a certificate which in this case will be marked Equitation and Stable Management only (to exclude Jumping). A candidate must have passed the

jumping section at the previous levels before attempting the jumping section at the next level.

## **Examiners**

Examiners to have achieved level BHSAI.

## **Test Times**

The time allowed for tests is dependent on several factors such as number of examiners, number of candidates etc. As a guideline, up to and including level 3, 6 – 8 candidates should be examined in approximately one hour 15 minutes.

For levels 4, 5 and 6, 6 - 8 candidates should be examined in approximately one and half to two hours.

This should allow sufficient time for results and advice to be given.

## **Reference Books:**

The Manual of Horsemanship: The Official Manual of the Pony Club (British Horse Society) by Barbara Cooper (Editor)

## **Fees**

Centres should charge candidates a realistic fee which should cover both the cost of the examiner and use of the

centre's horses, facilities certificates etc. Fees should be pre-paid so that last minute cancellations do not result in the centre running a test at a loss.

## **Foundation A**

### **Equitation**

- 1) Be able to receive a leg-up and land quietly in the saddle
- 2) Hold reins correctly; lengthening and shortening for control
- 3) Know simple aids
- 4) Walk and halt in closed order
- 5) Simple rein change
- 6) Introduce Trot
- 7) Dismount correctly
- 8) Name two sides of pony
- 9) Know the value of reward to your pony and leader

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### **Stable Management**

- 1) Approach and handle a pony safely and have an awareness of use of voice



- 2) An awareness of the basic grooming kit
- 3) Uses of head collar
- 4) What is tack
- 5) Know 3 parts of saddle and 2 parts of  
bridle
- 6) Name any 3 points of pony
- 7) Know what not to wear, i.e. jewellery,  
scarf etc

## **Foundation B**

### **Equitation**

- 1) Basic school movements in closed order  
and individually
- 2) Show correct position in halt, walk and  
rising trot
- 3) Trot sitting for brief periods
- 4) Walk and Trot over one pole on the  
ground
- 5) Halt
- 6) Safe, fun exercises

## Stable Management

- 1) Correctly fitted hat, safe visible clothing, shoes etc
- 2) Know how to dress for different conditions i.e. gloves, waterproofs etc
- 3) Know how to carry a saddle and bridle correctly
- 4) Know the complete grooming kit
- 5) Demonstrate correct use of 3 items of grooming kit
- 6) Know any 7 points of a pony

## Foundation C

### Equitation

- 1) Have awareness of importance of warming up before exercise and cooling down afterwards
- 2) Mount independently or with block
- 3) Walk and trot in closed order, walk without stirrups for brief periods
- 4) Walk with a long rein, letting pony stretch and relax
- 5) Know how to adjust stirrup irons and loosen girth
- 6) Know benefits of trotting in light or forward seat
- 7) Trot over 3 trotting poles
- 8) Introduce canter

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### Stable Management

- 1) Know how to put on a head collar

- 2) Know how to lead and turn correctly
- 3) Know all the basic point of a pony
- 4) 3 Colours and simple markings
- 5) Knowledge of mucking out equipment

## **Foundation D**

### **Equitation**

- 1) Know the sequence of steps in walk, trot and canter
- 2) Walk and trot, rising and sitting and canter with correct position
- 3) Trot without stirrups demonstrating balance
- 4) Canter large circles, demonstrating control
- 5) Know about and recognize diagonals'
- 6) Introduce placing pole and simple crosspole

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### **Stable Management**

- 1) Introduce 3 types of bedding (i.e. paper, straw, shavings)

- 2) Advantages and disadvantages of each above
- 3) Objectives of grooming i.e. promote good health, build relationship with pony, improve appearance etc.
- 4) 7 colours and 3 breeds
- 5) Know all parts of saddle and bridle
- 6) Demonstrate correct use of grooming kit
- 7) Pick out horses feet

## Level 1

### Equitation

- 1) Adjust stirrups and girth independently
- 2) Know how to carry and change hands with a short whip
- 3) Make good even transitions in all 3 paces
- 4) Canter without stirrups for brief period
- 5) Know the five phases of jumping and jump 2 small fences safely
- 6) Be capable of counting strides between 2 poles in canter

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### Stable Management

- 1) Mucking out and bedding down
- 2) Use of stable equipment
- 3) Parts of foot and know when pony needs shoeing

- 4) Name 3 types of rugs and their uses
- 5) Signs of good health
- 6) Signs of ill health
- 7) Remove and put on stable rug

## Level 2

### Equitation

- 1) Know correct attire for pursuits such as hunting, dressage, show-jumping and cross country
- 2) Recognize the correct lead in canter on both reins
- 3) Be able to change diagonal and understand reasons for doing so
- 4) Make turns and circles and know aids for these movements
- 5) Jump a single fence into a small double on both reins

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### Stable Management

- 1) Demonstrate how to clean saddle and bridle
- 2) Recognize tack in good/poor condition
- 3) Care of horse after untacking
- 4) Demonstrate skipping out and setting fair
- 5) Care of grass kept pony on winter mornings
- 6) Knowledge of grooming equipment and importance of clean utensils
- 7) Know how to safely let a pony into a field
- 8) How to catch pony from field

### **Level 3**

#### **Equitation**

- 1) Ride simple school movements to include loops and figure of eight
- 2) Ride a straight line and demonstrate a square halt
- 3) Canter without stirrup irons in a balanced position
- 4) Work over ground poles at trot in a balanced jumping position



- 5) Canter a small course of 4-5 single fence up to 2' max
- 6) Ride at walk on a long rein and loose rein and know the difference

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### Stable Management

- 1) Rules of watering, i.e. always have clean, fresh water available, clean water regularly, different troughs in stable/field etc
- 2) Demonstrate how to carry a bucket/bale of hay/heavy weights
- 3) Care of mane and tail
- 4) Know how to correctly put on a tail bandage
- 5) Knowledge of types of feed used in your centre
- 6) Know how to hold a quiet horse for shoeing or vet
- 7) Telling a horses mood

### Level 4

### Equitation

- 1) Lead up horse in hand

- 2) Ride school figures in walk, trot and canter
  - 3) Ride in open order, showing transitions from walk to trot and walk to halt
  - 4) Know how to ride under control in an open space
  - 5) Know how to jump natural fence i.e. small ditch, coffin, logs, banks etc
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### Stable Management

- 1) Paddock Maintenance i.e. fencing, weeding, watering, removal of dung
- 2) Know the value of hard feed used in your yard
- 3) Know how to fit saddle and bridle correctly
- 4) Understand how ill fitting tack could cause injury and how to prevent this according to work being done
- 5) Know symptoms of \*Laminitis \*Colic and \*Sweet Itch

6) Know Farrier Tools

**Level 5**

**Equitation**

- 1) Ride without stirrups in walk, trot and canter, keeping balanced position throughout
  - 2) Ride a 3 loop serpentine in trot
  - 3) Work the horse as an individual
  - 4) Ride a course of 4-5 fences to include a related distance up to 2'6" max
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**Stable Management**

- 1) Know importance of a good stable routine, i.e. feeding, exercise, turning out and setting fair
- 2) Discuss worms and the importance of worming
- 3) Know 3 minor ailments and treatment of them
- 4) Name 5 poisonous plants
- 5) Know equipment used for lunging



## Level 6

### Equitation

- 1) Be capable of riding a well schooled horse at preliminary dressage level
  - 2) Be capable of jumping course of fences at 2'6" height to include double and related distance
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### Stable Management

- 1) Correctly put on and remove outdoor rugs
- 2) Fit cavesson, flash and drop noseband
- 3) Identify and know advantages of running martingale and breast plate
- 4) Put on overreach and brushing boots
- 5) Know basic Veterinary Care; tubbing, cold hosing, poulticing etc
- 6) Put on stable bandage and know advantages /reasons for doing so

# TotalCare

## Your Financial Protection Plan

Critical illness, injury or unexpected death is not something we like to think about. While none of us can predict the future we can plan for the financial impact of such events. New Ireland's **TotalCare** plan allows you to create a personal protection plan to suit your needs.

### Life Cover Benefit

- Pays out a lump sum benefit on death or diagnoses of a terminal illness.

### Specified Injury Benefit

- Pays out a lump sum payment if you suffer one of a list of fractures or dislocations covered by New Ireland. The list includes the most common types of fractures or dislocations, which are likely to result in you being unable to work for a period of time.

### Accident Benefit

- Pays out up to half your weekly earnings as a weekly income (max €300 per week), if you are unable to work for more than two weeks due to any accident.

### Hospital Cash Benefit

- Pays out up to €200 per day if you are in hospital for more than 3 days or if you spend a continuous 24 hours in intensive care.

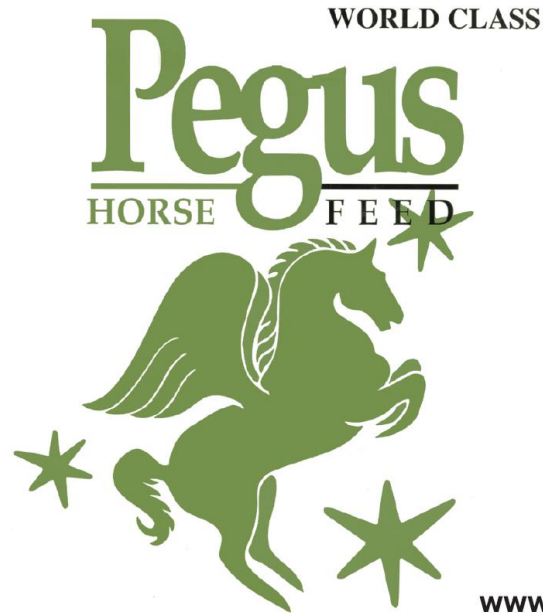
### Specified Critical Illness Benefit

- Pays out a lump sum benefit upon diagnosis of one of a number of specified illnesses that New Ireland covers, such as Cancer, Heart Attack and Stroke.

**For more information contact:**  
**David Maher, Wexford Financial Services (086)1700120**  
Or [info@wexfsl.com](mailto:info@wexfsl.com)



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**John Thompson's & Sons (NI)**, 35-39 York Road, Belfast, BT15 3GW Contact: Raymond Bready 028 9035 1321

**Equiform Direct**, Straffan, Co. Kildare Contact: 01 6277093



For more information on all of our Products and Stockist please contact us:

[david@pegus.ie](mailto:david@pegus.ie)

+353 86 3000 500

# EQUINE DENTISTRY

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**MICK DILLION EqDT, BSc.Eq.**  
*Equine Dental Technician*

Main St. Liscarroll, Co. Cork

**Tel: 087 - 2477633**

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