Animal studies – equine studies

Option E4 – horse conformation and selection

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# Option E4 – horse conformation and selection

Students develop skills and knowledge needed to assess the conformation of horses. Students will be able to identify desirable traits in selecting horses. An objective assessment of a horse’s conformation, identifying unsoundness and blemishes as well as undesirable vices and habits, will allow students to make an informed assessment of the suitability of a horse for a selected performance discipline.

## Duration of learning

The practical nature of Animal studies requires the concepts students learn throughout the learning sequence to be supported by repeated opportunities to apply the skills under supervised conditions.

This learning sequence is designed to be completed over a period of 20 hours and can be adapted to suit each school context.

It is suitable to be integrated with Equine studies Option E3 – introduction to riding.

This unit was written to be delivered concurrently with Equine studies Option E3 – introduction to riding to meet indicative delivery hours.

## Outcomes

A student:

* **AS-2** evaluates breeds and individual animals in relation to meeting industry requirements
* **AS-6** effectively communicates using a variety of techniques
* **AS-E-11** evaluates the behaviour of a horse
* **AS-E-12** develops, refines and performs a holistic management program with the correct equipment
* **AS-E-13** describes the basic anatomy and the movement of the horse

[Animal studies course document](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/department-approved-courses/animal-studies) © NSW Department of Education for and on behalf of the Crown in the State of New South Wales, 2021.

## Rationale

This course is intended for students seeking to further their knowledge and skills in particular animal industries that are relevant to their local context or interest.

The Animal studies course provides the opportunity to extend and develop student interest beyond the scope of curriculum options from the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

This will consequently allow specialisation, which will promote the safe participation of students in the industry, add deep knowledge and understanding and develop advanced skills in the management and handling of the selected species.

Provision of courses for Stage 5 must meet the needs of a diverse range of student needs including students with disability, high potential and gifted students, and students from diverse cultural backgrounds, to maximise their post-school opportunities.

## Aim

The course aims to develop:

* an understanding and knowledge of the specific animal industry
* skills and knowledge in the management of a species to meet industry goals
* an appreciation and awareness of safe work practices and management when using animals
* an empathy and appreciation for the animal’s wellbeing.

## Purpose and audience

This teaching resource is for teachers delivering or planning to deliver the course. The learning sequence demonstrates how a combination of outcomes can be used to develop teaching and learning activities. It also suggests a range of resources to support teachers when planning and teaching the course.

## When and how to use this document

Use this resource when designing learning activities that align with the course outcomes and content. The activities and resources can be used directly or may be adapted based on teacher judgment and knowledge of their students. Core and options topics may be taught concurrently or consecutively. Consult the [Animal studies course document](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/department-approved-courses/animal-studies) for further details on the timing of core and options.

Schools in NSW that use animals for educational purposes must satisfy the requirements of the *Animal Research Act 1985* (NSW) and the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. The legislation is interpreted for schools on the [Animals in Schools website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/animals-in-schools) and applies to all vertebrate animals.

# Learning sequences

This sample learning sequence has been prepared by the NSW Department of Education. It has been developed as a guide for teachers to assist in the development of a teaching and learning program contextualised to an individual school's needs. The scope and depth of the content covered should relate to the school's context, expertise of the teachers delivering the course and the prior knowledge of the students. Plan learning activities that are inclusive and accommodate the needs of all students in your classroom from the beginning. Some students may require more specific adjustments to allow them to participate on the same basis. Space is provided for adjustments and enhancements that are made to the learning sequence during its implementation, in order to meet the individual needs of students and to allow for differentiation of the Animal studies course. For further advice, see [Additional information](#_Additional_information) later in this document.

## Week 1

Table 1 – equine studies – Option E4 – horse conformation and selection week 1 learning sequence

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcomes and content | Teaching and learning | Evidence of learning | Adjustments and registration |
| **Outcomes****AS-E-12****Content**Students:* identify performance selection characteristics for breeds and types of horses for different disciplines.
 | **Teacher**WHS induction: refer to [Horses – introduction](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/animals-in-schools/animals-in-schools-species/horses/horses-introduction) documentation on the [Animals in Schools website](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/animals-in-schools).Demonstrate and discuss safe work procedures for working with horses in the range of school settings including confined and open spaces, safe processes and the need for personal protective equipment (PPE). Ask students to identify environmental factors that may lead to horse behaviour changes and risk. Encourage students to explain the changes they observed at the time.Use questioning to determine prior knowledge and understanding of school procedures. Use the [Horse suitability assessment tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/department-approved-courses/animal-studies#:~:text=Animal%20studies%20is%20a%20specialist,relevant%20to%20their%20local%20context.) as a resource for example of how to assess horse behaviour.**Student**Participate in WHS induction for working with horses in a school setting. Respond to questions and contribute to discussions.**Teacher**Once complete, mark as a class, discussing key points for each category.Lead students through guided walk around the teaching and learning environment. Identify areas of risk and the expectation around them. Demonstrate the safe movement around horses.**Student**Participate in guided walk around teaching and learning environment. Practice safe movement around horses.**Teacher**Provide students with a list of breeds of different horses. Explain that students will organise them into categories based on their suitability to different disciplines. Use horses available and on site as a physical example to discuss the characteristics of different horse breeds.**Student**Categorise horse breeds into discipline suitability. | Completion of WHS induction and continued use of safe practices when working with horses. Students can demonstrate and reiterate appropriate safe processes and need for PPE.Students discuss circumstances that could lead to changes in horse behaviour and management of the increased risk.Students categorise horse breeds into discipline suitability using existing understanding or new information from the activity. |  |

## **Weeks 2–4**

Table 2 – equine studies – Option E4 – horse conformation and selection weeks 2–4 learning sequence

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcomes and content | Teaching and learning | Evidence of learning | Adjustments and registration |
| **Outcomes****AS-2, AS-6****Content**Students:* objectively assess a horse's conformation and describes it using the correct terminology
* recognise desirable traits when selecting a horse, including
* identifying important selection characteristics
* prioritising and analysing criteria for a particular use
* identifying and describing unsoundness and blemishes of the horse’s body and their causes.
 | **Teacher**Define conformation and ensure consistent understanding of the concept amongst students.Provide students with a diagram of a horse, and guide students through labelling the anatomy of the horse.Use the [SEEC](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/teaching-and-learning-resources/literacy/teaching-strategies/stage-5/reading/stage-5-vocabulary-in-context#Download2) strategy to explicitly teach specific terminology associated with the conformation faults in horses including: conformation, unsoundness, blemishes, gait, defects, faults and vices. Guide students through completing a visual vocabulary.Use the images in [Introduction to Equine Conformation [PDF 1.4 KB]](https://equinologyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Equine-Conformation-Combined.pdf), [Horse Conformation (7:45)](https://vimeo.com/539002697) and available horses onsite, to aid in demonstrating faults and management.**Show students desirable characteristics of the horse for different disciplines (racing, agricultural work, equestrian, companionship or support) with horses onsite or using images and the video** [Good Performance Horse Conformation (15:05)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8cSY-SHBpA) **to lead discussion on desirable traits.****Student**Use a horse diagram to correctly label the anatomy of the horse. Refer to this diagram throughout the observation of horses.Observe horses. Identify and describe the desirable characteristics of each for a specific discipline.**Teacher**Demonstrate how to recognise common faults and blemishes in horses.**Student**Observe horses and using correct terminology and anatomy, describe common faults and blemishes they can see.**Teacher**Demonstrate the correct technique for identifying conformation faults on horses using liquid chalk.**Student**Observe a range of horses. Identify conformation faults and using liquid chalk, draw them on the horse. | Students develop a visual vocabulary of the following: conformation, unsoundness, blemishes, gait, defects and vices.Students use correct terminology when correctly identifying desired characteristics, faults and blemishes for different horses.Students correctly draw conformation faults on a range of different horses. |  |

## Weeks 5 and 6

Table 3 – equine studies – Option E4 – horse conformation and selection weeks 5 and 6 learning sequence

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcomes and content | Teaching and learning | Evidence of learning | Adjustments and registration |
| **Outcomes****AS-E-13****Content**Students:* identify the essential elements of a horse’s gait and movement, including
* describing the natural gait of a horse
* describing defects of the movement of the horse.
 | **Teacher**Demonstrate observation methods to students, such as viewing angles to identify correct footfalls for the walk, trot and canter of a horse.Revise correct gait footfalls for horses from previous learnings with students.Use questioning and discussion to reinforce identification and implications of various faults.Facilitate observation of horses on multiple surfaces, such as:* a raked arena to observe the footprints made by a horse.
* A firm surface with the horse at a trot to allow students to listen to the rhythm of the trot and identify any patterns that can be heard.

**Should available horses be without any defects, source and use video and or images to enhance student understanding.****Student****Observe a range of horses moving in walk and trot and identifies foot placement in each stride verbally and on worksheet.** | Students correctly describe the gait of a range of horses and demonstrate understanding of possible implications through discussions and questioning.Students o**bserve a range of horses moving in walk and trot and correctly identify foot placement in each stride.** |  |

## Weeks 7 and 8

Table 4 – equine studies – Option E4 – horse conformation and selection weeks 7 and 8 learning sequence

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcomes and content | Teaching and learning | Evidence of learning | Adjustments and registration |
| **Outcomes****AS-6, AS-E-11****Content****Students:*** identify and describe vices and habits of a horse, for example
* **windsucking**
* **biting**
* **weaving**
* **fence walking.**
 | **Teacher****Explain the term *vice* and give several examples for students to gain understanding. Promote class discussion on recognising vices and their management to introduce research task.****Student****Complete research activity – identify a range of horse vices and describe their impacts on the horse.****Participate in a** [gallery walk](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/555?clearCache=efdd30e-466f-cb1d-e05a-4c378313697f)**, presenting research findings to the class.****Contribute to each of presentations during the gallery walk by including a** [PMI](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/551?clearCache=28a15251-607b-dcc5-9d28-ac74f57195dc) **on each of their peer's work.** | Students identify a range of tasks with a description of impact and management. |  |

# Additional information

This resource has been designed to support schools with successful implementation of new curriculum, specifically the NSW Department of Education approved elective course, Animal Studies © NSW Department of Education for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2021.

The resource is produced to assist schools with promoting and implementing the course for the first time. As the course may be taught by teachers from a range of key learning areas, the resource is designed to support teachers from a variety of KLA expertise.

**Resource evaluation and support**: all curriculum resources are prepared through a rigorous process. Resources are periodically reviewed as part of our ongoing evaluation plan to ensure currency, relevance and effectiveness. For additional support or advice contact the Teaching and Learning Curriculum team by emailing secondaryteachingandlearning@det.nsw.edu.au.

**Differentiation:** further advice to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, EALD students, students with a disability and/or additional needs and High Potential and gifted students can be found on the [Planning, programming and assessing 7–12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12) webpage. This includes the [Inclusion and differentiation advice 7–10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12/inclusion-and-differentiation-advice-7-10) webpage.

**Assessment**: further advice to support formative assessment is available on the [Planning, programming and assessing 7–12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12) webpage. This includes the [Classroom assessment advice 7-10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12/classroom-assessment-advice-7-10-). For summative assessment tasks, the [Assessment task advice 7–10](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/planning-programming-and-assessing-k-12/planning-programming-and-assessing-7-12/assessment-task-advice-7-10) webpage is available.

**Consulted with**: Curriculum and Reform, Inclusive Education, Multicultural Education, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships, Animal Welfare Coordinator, and subject matter experts.

**Alignment to system priorities and/or needs**: [School Excellence Policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2016-0468), [School Success Model](https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/school-success-model/school-success-model-explained).

**Alignment to the School Excellence Framework**: this resource supports the [School Excellence Framework](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2016-0468) elements of curriculum (curriculum provision) and effective classroom practice (lesson planning, explicit teaching).

**Alignment to Australian Professional Teaching Standards**: this resource supports teachers to address [Australian Professional Teaching Standards](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/teacher-accreditation/meeting-requirements/the-standards/proficient-teacher) 2.1.2, 2.3.2, 3.2.2, 7.2.2.

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**Evidence base**:

‘The long-term vision is for a curriculum that supports teachers to nurture wonder, ignite passion and provide every young person with knowledge, skills and attributes that will help prepare them for a lifetime of learning, meaningful adult employment and effective future citizenship’ (NESA 2020:xi).

The development of the course and the course document as part of department approved electives aims to respond to the goals articulated in NESA’s curriculum review. Consistent messages from the review include:

* ‘flexibility’ was the word most used by teachers to describe the systemic change they want
* teachers need more time to teach important knowledge and skills
* students want authentic learning with real-world application.

This teaching resource provides teachers with some examples of explicit and authentic learning experiences. The option to adjust these learning sequences leads to ‘increased local decision making in relation to the curriculum’ as this ‘is associated with higher levels of student performance’ (NESA 2020:52).

The suggested strategies for teaching and learning align with the principles of explicit teaching. ‘The evidence shows that students who experience explicit teaching practices perform better than students who do not. Explicit teaching reduces the cognitive burden of learning new and complex concepts and skills, and helps students develop deep understanding’ (CESE 2020a:11).

# References

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