

## **GUIDANCE FOR USE OF EQUINES IN RDA SESSIONS**



Equines play a vital role at RDA and must be handled with awareness and consideration at all times. This awareness and consideration must also extend to the decisions that need to be made when an equine is used in an RDA session.

There are various factors that affect how many sessions and for how long an equine can work per day, in what type of session and what kind of participant they can carry. These include:

- Age
- Fitness
- Condition
- Weight
- Surface
- Weather
- Temperament

When pairing up a participant with an equine, you must also look at the participant themselves. Factors that should be considered are:

- Horse/rider combination
- Carrying capacity of equine (see calculator [Health & Welfare \(myrda.org.uk\)](https://myrda.org.uk/Health%20&%20Welfare))
- Height
- Type of disability
- Riding ability
- Support needed for mounting & dismounting
- Sidewalkers

Due to the individual needs of each participant and equine it is impossible to give a definitive statement concerning number of sessions allowed per day/week. At RDA National Championships equines are permitted to do three classes per day and we advise that warm-up time is factored into this workload.

At the RDA National Training Centre, equines are given a week off at Easter, during the summer and at Christmas. This includes any hacking, groundwork or other activities.

Groups must be constantly vigilant when monitoring the situation for the safety and welfare of both participant and equine. If you would like advice on this matter please contact your Regional Vet, Regional Equine Advisor, National Equine Lead Doug Smith, or National Office Equine Co-Ordinator Emma Bayliss.