**RDA Advanced Coach Assessment/s**

The RDA Advanced Coach Certification is the highest coaching certification offered through the RDA. Coaches gaining this certification will be expected to act as ambassadors for the association and the following standards of behaviour are expected as hall marks of the Advanced Coach running through all areas of competency:

* High performing, although not necessarily working with high performance riders
* Aware of their areas and environments of expertise within RDA
* Show self-awareness through balanced self-reflection
* Ambassador for the RDA in all their behaviours
* Driven to develop themselves and resourceful and creative at finding ways to do this
* Supports others around them to find their potential

**1.0 Assessment overview**

This document is to identify the assessment requirements for the RDA Advanced Coach Certfication. This includes:

* Assessment criteria for each of the summative assessments
* Guidance on assessment process and details including; timings, facilities, equipment and resources required for each of the summative assessments
* Grading for each assessment is either Competent or Requires Action.

The requirements to achieve the RDA Advanced Coach certification include the following assessments:

**1.1 Pre-requisites to assessment:**

* *RDA Level 3 Showjumping* – details of this qualification and how it can be accessed can be found on the RDA website.
* *Experience as an RDA Coach Certificate holder* – Coaches wishing to take the Advanced Coach Certificate should hold the RDA Coach Certificate (or equivalent) and have at least two years of regular experience of coaching within an RDA setting. Coaches will need to have a regular coaching role to achieve the *Coach Workbook* which forms part of the certification.
* *Attendance at the Advanced Coach Learning modules*. The learning modules include; Advanced Coach workshop, Advanced Coach the Coach workshop and Advanced Coach Biomechanics workshop.

**1.2 Formative Assessment:**

* *Coach Workbook*. This is a working document that demonstrates the ability to plan longer term with an RDA participant as well as logging personal development and progress through the following tasks; coaching philosophy, discussion of the correct way of going of the horse, shadowing an expert coach, alternative uses of equines, mentoring and assisting the development of other coaches (5a, b), managing participant behaviour and interactions, action planning and linked sessions for a specified participant, CPD log. This will be signed off during training by an appropriately appointed internal assessor eg. Princess Royal Coach Academy mentor.

**1.3 Summative Assessment:**

* *Coach the Coach* – This assessment will take place online and involves a detailed presentation by the coach to detail their experience of coaching another coach or group of coaches in a formal learning programme or via mentoring. The presentation will be followed by a professional discussion.
* *Practical coaching sessions* – Two practical coaching sessions will take place, one session with a therapy rider and one session with a competitive/recreational rider. These coaching sessions will take place with riders and horses unknown to the coach. Each session will involve up to 40mins of coaching.
* *Biomechanics* – This assessment will involve a pre and post-coaching discussion with an assessor. The pre-coaching discussion will focus on the biomechanical assessment and analysis of the rider and any associated implications for coaching. The post coach discussion will focus on future plans for training, equine matching and use of other professionals and resources.
* *Equine Assessment* – This assessment will involve the presentation of an unknown equine which the coach will assess and then complete a professional discussion around conformation, strengths, disadvantages and suitability for RDA work. This assessment will involve 30mins for assessment of the equine, followed by 40 mins of professional discussion around the equine assessed and general equine awareness.

**1.4 Chronological Assessment process:**

The assessment process should be progressed in the following order

1. Submission of Coach Workbook Four weeks prior to summative assessment.
2. Complete Coach the Coach presentation and professional discussion online.
3. Attend summative assessment day and assessment of: Practical Coaching assessment, Biomechanics assessment, Equine assessment

Once all assessments are complete and competency is recognised in each assessment, the coach will have achieved the RDA Advanced Coach Certificate. Up to two resit opportunities are allowed for each individual assessment. If any individual assessment is not deemed competent, only that assessment will require a re-sit.

**2.0 Coach Logbook Assessment:**

**2.1 Assessment process**

The completion of the logbook and signing off tasks as complete and to standard, is internally completed through RDA ‘mentors’ appointed through the Princess Royal Coach Academy. The logbook should be completed and signed off, prior to attending any of the summative assessments. The completed logbook needs to be submitted to RDA Coaching Department, four weeks (20 working days) prior to the summative assessment.

**3.0 Coach the Coach Assessment**

**3.1 Assessment process**

This assessment will take place online and involves a detailed presentation by the coach to detail their experience of coaching another coach or group of coaches in a formal learning programme or via mentoring. The presentation will be followed by a professional discussion. The **presentation should take 15 mins followed by a 20 minute professional discussion.** This assessment will be recorded for quality assurance process.

The coach will be asked in advance to prepare and deliver a 15 minute presentation of a real life experience of developing another coach/es through either:

* A workshop/course/seminar (this can be theoretical or practical and either on-line or face to face) within an RDA context
* A mentoring relationship over two or more sessions with an RDA coach

The presentation should identify:

1. The group/individual worked with and coaching topics covered
2. The *learning outcomes* identified upfront or the goals of the mentee/coach
3. The use of *adult learning principles* or other *underpinning theory* to optimise learning, for a mentoring situation this will include the application of a mentoring model to structure the session.
4. How the coach developer accounted for previous *experience* and any *specific learning needs* of the group or individual.
5. How they established a *supportive learning environment* and any models or concepts used to do this.
6. Reflections on the *skills* *and knowledge* used to effectively support learning (questioning, listening, reviewing, generating feedback, summarising). Giving specific examples where possible.
7. Give example/s of how *challenging feedback* was managed (raising awareness/changing behaviour)
8. Outline methods used to check for learning
9. Identify the learning taken from the experience and potential actions for personal development as a coach of coaches.

**3.2 Assessment criteria**

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| Assessment Criteria |
| Is able to set clear learning outcomes and/or negotiate learning goals |
| Is able to structure learning with clearly identified content and topics relevant to learners experience and context. |
| Is able to apply Adult Learning Principles (or other learning theory) to structure learning episodes. |
| Consideration given to learning needs and previous experience of coaches |
| Shows knowledge of how to create and maintain a supportive learning environment |
| Is able to check for learning using a variety of methods |
| Is able to explain how to manage difficult feedback to coaches |
| Demonstrates an ability to reflect on self; skills/knowledge/Behaviours (strengths and areas for development) |
| Is able to explain how AV aids support learning |
| Demonstrates an ability to use effective questioning to support and stretch learners |

**4.0 Practical Coaching Sessions Assessment**

**4.1 Assessment process**

Two practical coaching sessions will take place, one session with a therapy rider and one session with an independent competitive/recreational rider. These coaching sessions will take place with riders and horses unknown to the coach. Each session will involve up to **40mins of coaching** followed by a short, **15 minute** professional review session to generate reflections from the coach and to explore relevant performance factors related to the assessment criteria.

**4.2** **Assessment criteria and paperwork**

Coaching Session: **Competitive/recreation rider**

| Assessment Criteria: Coaching Session: **Competitive/recreation rider** |
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| Pre-session checks |
| * The coach is confident in discussing risk management for the session and demonstrates strategies to monitor and review safety through the session and manages a safe environment throughout. This includes mounting and dismounting. |
| * The coach has agreed goals with the rider. * Identified a plan that incorporates agreed goals for provides appropriate progression through exercises and timings relevant to rider and equine. * Through the session the coach is able to respond and evolve the plans according to progress. |
| * The coach clarifies the rider profile with the rider. |
| Coaching Skills |
| *Individual needs are met:*   * The session is focussed around the wants and needs of the rider * A flexible approach is shown to meet any changing needs of the rider as the session progresses. |
| *Positive and motivational learning environment:*   * Coach generates authentic praise and reinforcement. * Enables the rider choice, where appropriate. * Draws the rider into evaluating positive performances |
| *Participant Empowerment:*   * The coach finds different ways to empower the rider and has the skills to empower as well as an awareness of *when* to empower. |
| *Coaching Style*:   * The coach shows an ability to adapt their coaching style according to the rider’s needs and the situation. |
| Rapport with rider and volunteers |
| *Language and Communication:*   * The coach uses a good range of communication methods in working with participants, volunteers, parents/carers, including   + Clear language appropriate to rider   + Positive body language and if needed non-verbal communication   + Good listening and summarising |
| *Volunteer Involvement and value:*   * The coach involves volunteers and support staff shows positive regard |
| Session Flow and content |
| *Session structure:*   * Coach has structured the session to ensure appropriate time and activity given to warm-up, main session and warm-down and review. * The session shows good progression/regression relevant to the needs and wants of the rider and horse combination |
| Technical work and consideration for the equine |
| *Rider position:*   * The coach demonstrates good observational skills of the rider, their position and security. * Where necessary adaptions and feedback is generated to support a secure, effective position. |
| *Scale of Training*:   * Work through the coaching session shows regard for the scale of training and progresses accordingly \* |
| *Paces:*   * Coach the rider at all three paces and has different exercises to improve rider and equine way of going |
| *Lateral Work:*   * Correct/relevant aids for lateral work * Able to set up and evaluate the quality of the lateral movement \* |
| *Consideration for the equine:*   * Appropriate level of exercise asked of the equine * Consideration given to the impact of the rider on the equine. |
| Evaluating progress and achievement |
| * The coach is able to reflect accurately on the coaching session, identifying positives and areas they might adapt in hindsight. |
| * The coach is able to reflect on their own coaching in a balanced way (positives and areas for development) |

\*Criteria likely to warrant a question in the professional discussion

**Therapy participant:**

| Assessment Criteria |
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| Pre-session checks |
| * The coach is confident in discussing risk management for the session and demonstrates strategies to monitor and review safety through the session and manages a safe environment throughout. This includes mounting and dismounting. |
| * The coach has agreed goals with the participant and/or parent/carer/volunteer * Identified a plan that incorporates agreed goals and provides appropriate progression through exercises and timings relevant to participant and equine. * Through the session the coach is able to respond and evolve the plans according to progress. |
| * The coach clarifies the participant profile with the participant and/or parent/carer/volunteer |
| Coaching Skills |
| *Individual needs are met:*   * The session is focussed around the wants and needs of the participant * A flexible approach is shown to meet any changing needs of the participant as the session progresses. |
| *Positive and motivational learning environment:*   * Coach generates authentic praise and reinforcement. * Enables the participant choice, where appropriate. * Draws the participant/parent/carer/volunteer into evaluating positive performances. |
| *Participant Empowerment:*   * The coach finds different ways to empower the participant and others in the session. |
| *Coaching Style*:   * The coach shows an ability to adapt their coaching style according to the participant’s and other’s needs and the situation. |
| Rapport with rider and volunteers |
| *Language and Communication:*   * The coach uses a good range of communication methods in working with participants, volunteers, parents/carers, including   + Clear language appropriate to rider   + Positive body language and if needed non-verbal communication   + Good listening and summarising |
| *Volunteer Involvement and value:*   * The coach involves volunteers and support staff and shows positive regard and ability to integrate them in the session. |
| Technical work and consideration for the equine |
| *Rider position:*   * The coach demonstrates good observational skills of the rider, their position and security. * Where necessary adaptions and feedback is generated to support a secure, effective position. |
| *Paces:*   * Coach the rider at a relevant pace and has different exercises to improve rider and equine way of going |
| *Alternative activity with the equine:*   * Where necessary the coach uses the equine for non-ridden activity through the session.\* |
| *Consideration for the equine:*   * Appropriate level of exercise asked of the equine * Consideration given to the impact of the rider on the equine. |
| Evaluating progress and achievement |
| * The coach is able to reflect accurately on the coaching session, identifying positives and areas they might adapt in hindsight. |
| * The coach is able to reflect on their own coaching in a balanced way (positives and areas for development) |

\*Criteria likely to warrant a question in the professional discussion

**5.0 Equine Assessment**

**5.1 Assessment process.**

An equine will be presented and the coach will be asked to assess the horse with a view to placing it in a RDA group. A static and dynamic conformation assessment will be made and an assistant will be available to hold and trot up the horse. The coach will be given the opportunity to ride or lunge the horse as part of the assessment. **30 minutes** is allocated to the evaluation of the horse. Following the assessment there will be a series of questions related to the analysis of the horse and broader equine areas for professional discussion. Up to **40 minutes** will be given to the professional discussion.

The coach will be given the following brief when presented with the horse:

You have been gifted a horse and are going to assess it with a view to placing it in a group in your region.

For this section you will analyse static and dynamic conformation. An assistant will be available to hold and trot up the horse following your instructions. You will be expected to observe the horse from all angles, up close and from a distance. Possible areas for discussion include conformational strengths and weaknesses, condition, muscle development, straightness of movement, soundness, injuries and blemishes, and potential performance capability.

You may also choose to lunge or ride the horse briefly.

Up to **30 minutes** is allocated to the evaluation of the horse.

You can use aspects of the standard RDA Horse assessment form or bring your own template to take notes on.

You will then discuss your assessment and describe which types of groups this horse might be suitable/unsuitable for, with reference to groups you know.

**5.2** **Assessment criteria and paperwork**

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| Assessment Criteria |
| Environment and Risk Assessment |
| Able to assess the environment to check for and minimise hazards and to keep the equine, self and others safe in the environment through dynamic risk assessment and management. |
| Type and conformation |
| Shows knowledge of; equine conformation, movement, and temperament in relation to their suitability and usefulness for RDA.  Shows a logical and clear approach to equine assessment  Able to justify and give a robust analysis of equine assessment for RDA activity. |
| Tack fitting and special equipment |
| Is able to confidently fit a variety of tack and knows when and how best to use special equipment.  Is able to show knowledge of what tack should be used for the different disciplines across RDA. |
| Training & work plan |
| The coach can give a detailed plan for a series of training sessions to improve the equine’s way of going in a variety of scenarios including exercises that can be done within the riding group. |
| Horse allocation |
| Explain and evaluate how different breeds and types of equines can help improve riders. |
| Alternative uses of the Equine |
| Discuss a broad knowledge of alternative uses for equines within a group.  Explain alternative uses of equines and have a plan in place for certain riders to access therapy that might not be riding (Equine Assisted Learning, vaulting, driving, ground work, hippotherapy). |
| Equine Wellbeing |
| Can describe a clear and detailed plan of an equine work routine to avoid physical and mental stress, tiredness and boredom.  Can identify causes of physical and mental stress and recognise an equine’s limits.  Demonstrates a knowledge of action to be taken prior to and when stress might be detected. |
| Physical, mental and emotional needs of the equines |
| Is able to explain the five freedoms in relation to the physical, mental and emotional needs of equines.  Is able to discuss the five freedoms in relation to the welfare and management needs of equines within the RDA. |
| The coach can discuss administration of basic first aid and shows a good knowledge of when to call a vet.  Is able to discuss a humane plan for end of life for equines that they are responsible for.  Demonstrates a knowledge of different methods and choices to be made.  Demonstrates knowledge of key contacts important in facilitating the plan and how to facilitate the plan. |

**6.0 Biomechanics Assessment**

**6.1 Assessment Process**

This assessment will be linked to the coaching sessions at the summative assessment. For each of the coaching sessions there will be a pre-coaching, 15 mins discussion with the assessor around rider analysis and evaluation and the implications this will have for coaching. Following the coaching sessions there will be a further 15mins discussion with the assessor around biomechanical evaluations made during coaching.

**6.2 Assessment Criteria**

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| Assessment Criteria |
| The coach is able to show an understanding of key features of frequently seen medical conditions in RDA through the correct assessment and analysis of two riders:   * Evaluate mobility, posture and balance and relevance to riding * Evaluate communication and cognition |
| The coach shows an awareness of the difference between congenital and acquired medical conditions and the implications this has for biomechanical functioning. |
| The coach is able to discuss the value and application of a mechanical horse and its potential benefit to the rider/participant:   * Discuss effective techniques to help a rider achieve/maintain a balanced position /provide therapy |
| Identify areas where help would be sought from another professional to maximise rider development. |
| Able to discuss the implications of horse biomechanics on rider/participant |
| Able to identify a potential plan for the rider/participant if their condition deteriorates |