



PATH Intl.
**Equine Specialist in Mental Health
and Learning Criteria Booklet**



PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Criteria Booklet **Table of Contents**

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ADDITIONAL BOOKLETS REGARDING CERTIFICATION (VISIT www.pathintl.org TO DOWNLOAD)

- **THE PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING APPLICATION BOOKLET**
- **THE PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING CERTIFICATION BOOKLET**
- **THE PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BOOKLET**



MISSION

PATH Intl. promotes safety and optimal outcomes in equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs.

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PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Criteria

We are thrilled you are interested in pursuing the PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Certification! We look forward to helping you achieve your certification goals. It is critical that you review the following criteria in detail so that you may be successful in earning your ESMHL certification.

EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING CRITERIA

- ES em. 1.0** ***PATH Intl. Standards***
- ES em. 1.1 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards and their interpretation for horse care and maintenance (Program Standards)
- ES em. 1.2 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards and their interpretation regarding the use of safety equipment and adaptive equipment (Program Standards)
- ES em. 2.0** ***Breeds/Colors/Markings/Parts of the Horse***
- ES em. 2.1 Identify a horse by:
 A) age
 B) color and markings
 C) breed characteristics
 D) height and weight
- ES em.2.2 Know the parts of the horse
- ES em. 3.0** ***Horse Senses and Behavior***
- ES em. 3.1 Know the characteristics of the senses of the horse
- ES em. 3.2 Know the characteristics of horse behavior

- ES em. 3.3 Know how the senses of the horse and horse behavior affect the safety of the equine-facilitated mental health setting
- ES em. 3.4 Include herd behavior and dynamics
- ES em. 3.5 Identify stable vices including
 A) cribbing
 B) weaving
 C) biting and kicking
 D) wood chewing

- ES em. 4.0** ***Feeds and Feeding***
- ES em. 4.1 Know feed requirements of the horse including:
 A) hay
 B) salt and minerals
 C) grain
 D) feeding intervals
 E) water
- ES em 4.2 Recognize signs of poor quality feed
- ES em. 5.0** ***Stable Management***
- ES em. 5.1 Identify appropriate protection for horses including:
 A) fly masks and bonnets
 B) shelter
 C) fly repellents
- ES em. 5.2 Know horse manure handling methods for sanitary conditions of stall and turn out areas
- ES em. 5.3 Identify bedding materials
- ES em. 5.4 Identify potential stall hazards

ES em. 6.0**Health and Sickness**

- ES em. 6.1 Know and recognize the physical signs of good health and illness in equines
- A) colic
 - B) thrush
 - C) laminitis
 - D) weight loss
 - E) ulcers
- ES em. 6.2 Know and recognize when a horse is unsound
- A) Identify healthy footfalls at all three gaits
- ES em. 6.3 Recognize the difference between a blemish and an unsoundness
- ES em. 6.4 Identify normal ranges and how to take TPR (temperature, pulse, respiration)
- ES em. 6.5 Describe deworming, vaccination, hoof, and teeth care programs
- ES em. 6.6 Know first aid treatment for wounds
- ES em. 6.7 Recognize the signs of emotional health in equines
- ES em. 6.8 Recognize behavioral changes related to the client
- ES em. 7.0 Grooming
- ES em. 7.1 Identify and explain the use of grooming tools including:
- A) curry comb
 - B) mane or tail comb
 - C) hard brush or dandy
 - D) shedding blade
 - E) soft brush or body
 - F) sponges
 - G) hoof pick
 - H) sweat scraper
- ES em. 7.2 Know how to give a horse a bath
- ES em. 7.3 Know how to cool down a horse following a work session
- ES em. 7.4 Know how to clip a horse for maintenance including:
- A) bridle path
 - B) muzzle
 - C) fetlock

ES em. 8.0**Tack and Tacking**

- ES em. 8.1 Identify and know the purpose, use and function of:
- A) bits: snaffle
 - B) halters and leads
 - C) headstalls
 - D) safety helmets
 - E) surcingles
- ES em. 8.2 Know how to fit above tack to horse and rider

- ES em. 8.3 Know how to educate a team, including participants and volunteers, in the use of the equipment
- ES em. 8.4 Know and demonstrate equipment care and maintenance

ES em.9.0**Selection and Training**

- ES em. 9.1 Explain the characteristics of an EAAT horse
- ES em. 9.2 Know how to train a horse to accept:
- A) leading by someone who is learning to lead
 - B) two persons in the stall
 - C) hugging and awkward grooming
 - D) game equipment/props
 - E) yielding to touch
- ES em. 9.3 Recognize the need for a conditioning and maintenance program for therapeutic riding horses including:
- A) lungeing
 - B) ground schooling
 - C) record keeping
 - D) destressing techniques
- ES em. 9.4 Know how to determine when to stop a session for the benefit of the equine and participant safety.

Horsemanship Criteria

- ES h.1.0 Horsemanship Preparation and Safety
- ES h.1.1 Know and demonstrate the following:
- A) haltering and leading
 - B) tying and safety knot
 - C) grooming
 - D) proper barn attire
 - E) helmet fit
 - F) proper precautions for both equines and participants regarding catching and haltering in a stall, field or arena
 - G) how to determine when to stop a session for the benefit of the equine and participant safety
- ES h.1.2 Know how to lunge and free lunge
- ES h.1.3 Identify how to use proper tools for lungeing and free lungeing
- ES h.1.4 Know and identify gaits of the equine
- A) walk, free walk and working walk
 - B) trot or jog
 - C) canter or lope

- ES h. 2.0** *Activities*
- ES h. 2.1 Know and demonstrate design and set up of obstacle course
- ES h. 2.2 Know and demonstrate proper spacing of ground poles

Instruction Criteria

- ES i. 1.0 Horsemanship Preparation and Safety
- ES i. 1. Instruct the following:
- A) grooming
 - B) tying and safety knot
 - C) haltering and leading
 - D) proper attire
 - E) proper spacing when leading in a group
- ES i. 1.2 Orient student to facility, stable rules and safety rules
- ES i. 1.3 Select horse for a particular individual according to:
- A) behavior
 - B) movement
 - C) temperament
 - D) height
 - E) size
- ES i. 1.4 Instruct a group of two or more
- ES i. 1.5 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards

ES i 2.0 Exercises and Games

- ES i 2.1 Instruct students in unmounted exercises
- ES i. 2.2 Instruct participants through an obstacle course
- ES i. 2.3 Utilize appropriate games in the equine-facilitated mental health setting

ES i. 3.0 Ground and Stable lessons

- ES i. 3.1 Instruct ground stable management lessons that are within the knowledge requirements of the PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning certification as appropriate.

Teaching/Implementation/Training

Methodology Criteria

- ES tm. 1.0 PATH Intl. Standards and Information
- ES tm. 1.1 Know and implement PATH Intl. Standards and their interpretations regarding participant forms (Administrative Standards).
- ES tm. 1.2 Know available PATH Intl. services
- ES tm. 1.3 Locate information about PATH Intl. Standards and Accreditation process
- ES tm. 1.4 Know PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Certification Program
- ES tm. 1.5 Know and practice emergency procedures
- ES tm. 1.6 Know the location of the phone and emergency numbers

ES tm. 2.0 Record Keeping

- ES tm. 2.1 Verify that the participant forms are complete and updated
- ES tm. 2.2 Interpret participant forms and apply the information to the equine-facilitated mental health setting
- ES tm. 2.3 Write and maintain progress notes on participants
- ES tm. 2.4 Complete incident report as needed
- ES tm. 2.5 Comply with confidentiality requirements

ES tm 3.0 Lesson Plans

- ES tm. 3.1 Assess participant skills and determine goals and objectives
- ES tm. 3.2 Develop a lesson plan to achieve the goals and objectives
- ES tm. 3.3 Choose activities and skills suitable for the objective of the lesson

ES tm. 4.0 Teaching/Implementation/Training

- ES tm. 4.1 Know and demonstrate teaching skills applicable to the equine specialist to include:
- A) flexibility and adaptability in pursuit of objectives
 - B) teaches to level of students' ability
 - C) fair and consistent in applying standards of behavior
 - D) shows genuine interest in each student
 - E) progress toward goals
 - F) effective use of volunteers
 - G) appropriate games and exercises
 - H) appropriate specific praise
 - I) adapts and corrects equipment
 - J) provide: whats, hows, whys

Criteria Specific to the Field of Mental Health and Learning

ES tm. 4.2	<p>K) flexibility of teaching techniques L) rapport M) teaches at individual's level N) teaching therapeutic environment O) gives clear and concise instructions P) control of session</p> <p>Possess instructor attributes, to include: A) professionalism B) ethics C) organization D) respect for participants and equines E) patience F) self-confidence G) positive attitude H) cooperation I) knowledge of subject at equine specialist skill level J) recognition of when to stop a session to maintain the safety of all participants, including the treatment team K) ability to leave ego behind/be humble</p>	ES mhl 1.0 Mental Health and Learning ES mhl 1.1 PATH Intl. A) Know contents of glossary, psychosocial guideline checklist, DSM IV, EFP forms and other relevant materials in the <i>PATH Intl Standards for Certification and Accreditation</i> manual B) Know precautions and contraindications to equine-assisted activities and therapies and equine-facilitated mental health and learning C) Know definition, causes, characteristics and teaching management for participants involved D) Know the benefits and the realms of equine-assisted activities and therapies and equine-facilitated mental health and learning
ES tm.4.3	Meet annual continuing education requirements for the equine specialist (20 hours), current CPR and first aid, maintain PATH Intl. membership	ES mhl 1.2 EFMH Team ES mhl 1.3 Confidentiality A) State requirements for mental health professional or educator B) Mandated reporting (state requirements) C) Boundaries of confidentiality a. physical boundaries with program b. program personnel, maintaining boundaries c. dual relationships
ES tm. 5.0	Methods	
ES tm. 5.1	Know that participants learn in different ways	
ES tm. 5.2	Work in conjunction with an MHP or educator to facilitate session: A) develop rapport B) provide direction to volunteers C) assign appropriately matched volunteers D) provide feedback to team members and participate in session debriefing E) reward team members	ES mhl 1.4 HIPAA
ES tm.5.3	Identify dysfunctional behavior and recognize therapeutic or teachable moment	ES mhl 2.0 ES mhl Relationships 2.1 Demonstrate the ability to form relationships A) based on respect, caring concern, genuineness and empathy B) client with equine C) help client to generalize relationship with equine to relationships with people in conjunction with mental health professional or educator D) role model relationship with mental health professional or educator E) role model relationship with equine as partner
ES tm. 5.4	Know how to determine when to stop a session to maintain safety of participant and treatment team	

- F) demonstrate an understanding of self, what the ES brings to the relationship
 - a. positives, strengths, assets; what needs to be utilized
 - b. negatives, weaknesses, liabilities; what needs to be controlled
- G) Demonstrate responsibility for the therapeutic environment
 - a. emphasis on safety
 - b. clear, congruent communication
 - c. developing trust
 - d. using discretion and maintaining confidentiality

ES mhl 2.2

- Build relationships with appropriate boundaries
- A) collegial with mental health professional or educator, therapeutic/professional with client or student, or personal/collegial with equine
 - B) Demonstrate an understanding of the “systems” perspective – all members of team impact on each other – dynamic interaction through use of the Triangle or Diamond Models
 - C) Demonstrate an ability to observe and assess:
 - a. self
 - b. others (client, MHP or educator)
 - c. equine(s)
 - d. activities
 - e. environment
 - D) Demonstrate effective communication:
 - a. importance of body language for all, especially client and equine
 - b. need for congruence: body language, voice tone, message
 - c. address both cognitive and emotional domains.

ES mhl 2.3

- Assist others in building relationships in conjunction with MHP or educator
- A) client with equine
 - B) help client to generalize relationship with equine to relationships with people
 - C) role model relationship with equine as partner

ES mhl 3.0

ES mhl 3.1

Ethical Treatment of Equines

Application of ethical standards

- A) Knowledge of PATH Intl. standards w/regard to ethical treatment of the equine
- B) Evaluation of equine mental & physical condition
 - a. safety & ethical concerns and likely impact on participants
 - b. ethical & safety considerations for session impact on equine
 - c. documentation
 - d. team discussion
- C) Knowledge of how the barn environment impacts the education/therapy process
 - a. assess the setting
 - b. adjustments needed to assure physical & emotional safety for humans and equines to promote education and therapy

ES mhl 3.2

Death of a program Animal

- A) Develop a plan in conjunction with MHP or educator
 - a. Notifying client support group
 - b. How to prepare client
 - c. Closure, processing after

ES mhl 3.3

Animal abuse

- A) Demonstrate knowledge of risk management
 - a. student assessment
 - b. equine assessment
 - c. recording dynamics of human-equine interaction

ES mhl 3.4

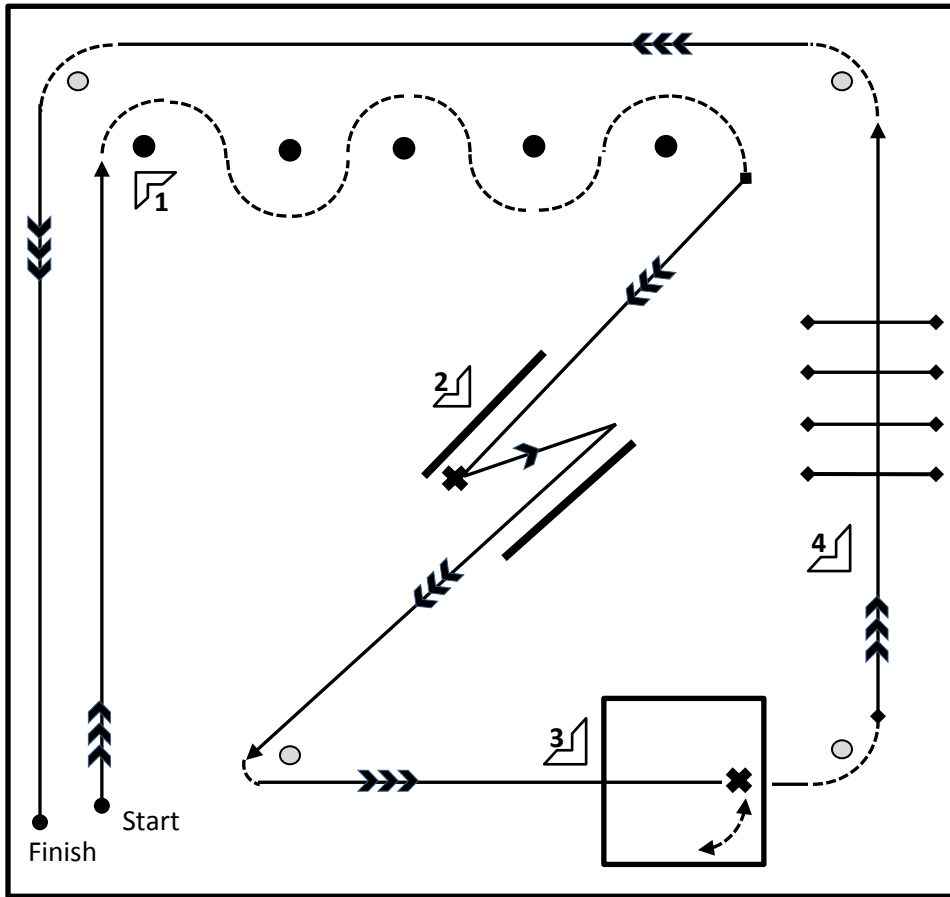
Partner vs. tool

- A) Demonstrate the ability to work with equines as sentient partners in the education and therapy process
- B) Demonstrate the knowledge that interactions with equines can assist participants in building and enhancing positive human relationships and an understanding of the activities that can facilitate this process
- C) Demonstrate a knowledge of the need to assess the likely impact of the participants’ mental & physical status on the reactions of the equine and make adjustments to keep the interactions safe for all (to include crisis prevention & management)
 - a. Incongruence, understanding the effects on the equine

ES mhl 3.5	<p>D) Demonstrate knowledge/understanding of an equine's emotional and physical needs particularly after a stressful situation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How to de-stress, strategies for de-stressing b. responsibility for keeping safe <p>Riding and horsemanship lesson vs. meeting therapeutic goals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) Knowledge that lessons will have basis in horsemanship but goal is therapeutic or educational in nature B) Issues raised may change lesson completely; emphasize flexibility; equine may react to client's energy or issues 	ES mhl 5.2	<p>notes/unusual incidents</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> F) Interpret horse, human interactions for MHP or educator G) Evaluate volunteers for program H) Train volunteers to work with EFMH/L population D) Support the MHP or educator <p>Identify time and method for processing in conjunction with MHP or educator, on site and off site</p>
ES mhl 4.0	<p>Design Activities According to PATH Intl. Standards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) In conjunction with a mental health professional or educator, learn how to design clinically sound and therapeutic equine activities B) In conjunction with and working with a mental health professional or educator, have a basic understanding of the language used for criteria in common diagnoses C) In conjunction with and working with a mental health professional or educator, understand the common side effects of medications used to treat psychological problems 	ES mhl 5.3	<p>Identify strategies for self-care</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) boundaries: personal and professional B) self-health and awareness C) manage personal issues D) debriefing after session <p>Identify and describe functioning as a team</p>
ES mhl 5.0	<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Identify roles and define responsibilities of ES and MHP or educator</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A) physical & emotional safety of students/clients, volunteers, faculty and equine B) screening and evaluation of students/clients for intake C) dealing with crises (students/clients, equine, volunteer) D) modeling of functional relationship regarding difference of opinion E) documentation, intake and progress 	ES mhl 5.4	<p>A) advocate for equine</p> <p>B) flexibility according to the conditions and variables of the day</p> <p>C) respect partners and roles</p>
ES mhl 5.1			

PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING
HORSEMANSHIP SKILLS TEST OBSTACLE COURSE

Please refer to the ESMHL Horsemanship Criteria on page 10 to gain a full understanding of what is evaluated for this test.



Note: This pattern will be completed leading a horse at the walk.

- 1**

 - Enter arena, close and secure gate
 - Proceed at a walk to cones
 - Serpentine the cones
 - Proceed right across the diagonal at a walk
- 2**

 - Stop in chute
 - Back three steps
 - Proceed at a walk across diagonal, turn left at cone, proceed into box
- 3**

 - Stop in box
 - 1/4 turn right, stop
 - 1/4 turn left, stop
- 4**

 - Proceed at a walk and turn left at cone
 - Proceed over cavaletti (leader may walk to the side of cavaletti)
 - Proceed at walk around cones, along the rail, back to gate
 - Exit gate

**PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL
HEALTH AND LEARNING HORSEMANSHIP
CRITERIA**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Verbal greeting is given to horse
- 1.2 Demonstrate appropriate method of approach
- 1.3 Demonstrate safe space position in stall/paddock
- 1.4 Quiet, effective, timely approach especially if horse has rear end facing person

2. Haltering

- 2.1 Demonstrate proper placement of halter on horse
 - Candidate does not stand in front of the horse, stands on the left side of the horse
 - Halter is placed on the horse correctly, not too tight or too loose
- 2.2 Demonstrate caution around horse's eyes and ears
- 2.3 Demonstrate safe method of securing the horse while in the stall/paddock
- 2.4 Safety

3. Exiting and Entering Stall/Paddock

- 3.1 Demonstrate spacing for both leader and horse during exit/enter of stall or paddock
 - Open stall or paddock door completely when exiting/entering
- 3.2 Demonstrate appropriate release of horse
- 3.3 Demonstrate method of maintaining visual observation of horse while exiting stall
- 3.4 Close gate to paddock or stall door only if center/situation requires it
- 3.5 The horse does not leave stall before the leader
- 3.6 Turn horse toward the front of stall/paddock prior to release
- 3.7 Security while releasing and haltering the horse, gate or stall door closed prior to release/catch

4. Leading

- 4.1 Demonstrate method of holding lead with both hands (unless praising or cueing horse)
- 4.2 Demonstrate method of holding lead in a folded or figure 8 manner
- 4.3 Demonstrate correct position of leader at halt, walk and turn
- 4.4 Demonstrate proper hand placement on lead rope, not grabbing buckle of lead rope or halter
- 4.5 Rhythm of active walk is maintained throughout testing and in serpentine
- 4.6 Demonstrate smooth, timely transitions
- 4.7 Demonstrate wide, smooth turns
- 4.8 Leader does not contribute to horse stress level (throwing head up, pulling up)

- 4.9 Leader promotes straightness of horse
 - Horse's head is not bent or being pulled toward the leader
- 4.10 Organization, effective use of aids and body position shown during ¼ turn in box
- 4.11 Demonstrate correct position leading over cavaletti

5. Aids

- 5.1 Demonstrate use of clear voice aids with different inflection for upward & downward transitions
- 5.2 Demonstrate tone of voice that influences horse
- 5.3 Demonstrate ability to read horse's mood & respond
- 5.4 Demonstrate body language according to horse behavior
- 5.5 Walk with eyes forward and head up except when going over poles or cavaletti
- 5.6 Demonstrate use of aids
 - Voice, body and energy sticks can be appropriate aids and must be used appropriately
- 5.7 Demonstrates use of touch aid when appropriate
- 5.8 Demonstration of praise/appreciation for work done by equine

6. Safety

- 6.1 Closes gate when entering working ring/arena
- 6.2 Overall safety
- 6.3 Planned carefully and safely conducted

7. Automatic Failures

- 7.1 Abrupt or rough handling of horse
- 7.2 Lead rope allowed to drag on the ground
- 7.3 Lead rope draped over shoulder
- 7.4 Lead rope tightly wrapped around hand
- 7.5 Halter is put on backwards or incorrectly positioned on horse
- 7.6 Failure to close gate when entering working ring/arena
- 7.7 Consistently dropping lead rope
- 7.8 Kneeling on the ground
- 7.9 Approaching horse from blind spot