PATH Intl. On-Site ESMHL Practical Horsemanship Skills Test
Criteria for participants

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 exit/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 towards 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 skills of leading
       • Candidate is not too far in front or behind horse
   4.4 Demonstrate correct position of leader at halt, walk and turn
   4.5 Demonstrate proper hand placement on lead rope, not grabbing buckle of lead rope or halter
   4.6 Rhythm of active walk is maintained throughout testing and in serpentine
   4.7 Demonstrate smooth, timely transitions
   4.8 Demonstrate wide, smooth turns
   4.9 Leader does not contribute to horse stress level (throwing head up, pulling up)
   4.10 Leader promotes straightness of horse
       • Horses’ head is not bent or being pulled toward the leader
   4.11 Demonstrate correct position leading over cavaletti
   4.12 Organization, effective use of aids and body position shown during ¼ turn in box

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