



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



PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Application 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 CERTIFICATION BOOKLET**
- **THE PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING CRITERIA BOOKLET**
- **THE PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BOOKLET**

NOTE: THESE BOOKLETS ARE UPDATED ANNUALLY AT THE FIRST OF THE YEAR. PRIOR TO SUBMITTING A PORTFOLIO, PLEASE VISIT THE ESMHL CERTIFICATION WEBPAGE TO CONFIRM YOU ARE REFERENCING THE MOST RECENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PAPERWORK.



MISSION

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

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The PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Application Process

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.

VOCATIONAL PROFILE OF AN EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING

A PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning (ESMHL) ensures the safety and well-being of the equine participating in equine-facilitated mental health and learning sessions. She/he serves as the equine expert during equine/human interactions. The ESMHL works with mental health or education providers delivering services, incorporating equines in their practice, within the scope of their profession. An ESMHL must be knowledgeable in horsemanship and understands how to collaborate with a mental health therapist and/or educator to best meet the client's needs and keep the lesson safe. ESMHLs also have a general knowledge of mental health and education processes.

ESMHLs have a thorough understanding of the ways equine behavior affect human responses and evaluate the role of the equine during the mental health or education sessions they supervise. The ESMHL maintains responsibility for the equine, assesses the equine's response to any interactions, and prohibits or stops any activity that compromises the well-being of the equine. She/he ensures that equine interactions within the session are safe.

STEPS TO CERTIFICATION:

Step 1: Application Phase

Complete an on-site equine specialist in mental health and learning workshop and horsemanship skills test* at a PATH Intl. Premier Accredited Center.

Criteria to register for an on-site equine specialist in mental health and learning workshop and horsemanship skills test:

- 1) 21 years of age or older
- 2) Current PATH Intl. member
- 3) Current adult & child CPR and first aid certifications

* Completion of only the workshop and skills test does NOT result in certification being awarded. Read on for additional steps in the certification process.

Step 2: Portfolio Submission

Following completion of an on-site equine specialist in mental health and learning workshop and horsemanship skills test, candidates may submit their certification application and portfolio to PATH Intl. (See PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Certification Booklet for more details.)

Step 3: Online Exams

Complete the online PATH Intl. Standards Course and equine specialist in mental health and learning exams. Exam enrollment occurs after receipt of complete portfolio by PATH Intl. Successful completion of the exams is required for certification to be awarded.

Step 4: Certification issued by PATH Intl.

Candidates will receive confirmation from PATH Intl. via mail that Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning certification has been awarded.

Application Phase

- Be 21 years of age or older
- Be a PATH Intl. Individual Member
- Obtain adult & child CPR and first aid certifications
(100% online courses will not be accepted. Most blended/hybrid courses are accepted)
- Submit accommodation request (if applicable)
 - Attend a PATH Intl. on-site Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning workshop (valid for two years)
- Complete the Horsemanship Skills Test (score valid for one year)

Portfolio Submission Due 1 YEAR from date of Horsemanship Skills Test

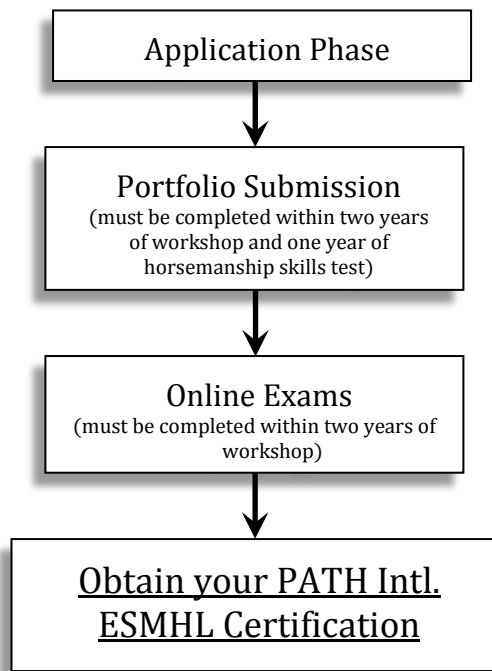
- Submit Portfolio with:
 - 1) Proof of current PATH Intl. Membership
 - 2) Proof of current adult & child CPR and first aid certifications
 - 3) Copy of PATH Intl. on-site ESMHL workshop certificate of completion (max of two years old)
 - 4) Copy of PATH Intl. Horsemanship Skills Test certificate (max of one year old)
 - 5) Signed PATH Intl. Code of Ethics
 - 6) References from a mental health or learning professional and an equine professional
 - 7) Documentation of 20 hours of education in equine behavior and management
 - 8) Documentation of 60 hours of experience in equine-facilitated mental health or learning (or both)
- Upon confirmation portfolio has been accepted:**
 - Complete the online standards course and exam
 - Complete the equine specialist in mental health and learning exam

NOTE: This diagram is intended to be a general checklist/overview of the application and certification process. Please thoroughly review the equine specialist in mental health and learning application and certification booklets for details on each component within the process.

**PATH Intl.
ESMHL status**

Renew Annually





APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- Visit the PATH Intl. events calendar to locate a PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Workshop to attend. Register directly with the host site for all workshops and skills tests. Registration fees are determined solely by the host site; please contact the host site for pricing information.
- A candidate may attend the workshop and immediately proceed to the PATH Intl. Equine Specialist Horsemanship Skills Test at the conclusion of the workshop. Please review the equine specialist criteria and the skills test requirements carefully in order to properly prepare to test. (See the PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Certification Booklet and PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Criteria Booklet for more details.)
- If you have already attended the workshop and only need to complete the equine specialist horsemanship skills test, please notify the host site.

ATTENDING A PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST IN MENTAL HEALTH AND LEARNING WORKSHOP

Equine specialist workshops are three days long and are offered at a variety of different PATH Intl. Premier

Accredited Centers. You may have to travel to attend a workshop and to take the on-site PATH Intl. Equine Specialist Horsemanship Skills test. All workshops will be listed in *PATH Intl. eNews* and on the events calendar on the PATH Intl. website. Check the calendar frequently for updates. Anyone who wishes to become involved in mental health or learning programs can attend a PATH Intl. Equine Specialist workshop.

All workshop and skills test fees are paid directly to the host site. PATH Intl. does not handle or provide refunds. Please make sure you are aware of the host site's refund policy prior to registering.

Proof of successful completion of both the workshop and skills test is required for a PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning certification. Completion of the workshop and skills test does NOT result in certification being awarded. Additional steps are required to fulfill the certification program requirements.

The objective of the equine specialist workshop is for participants to develop an understanding of the importance of a trusting relationship and open communication between professionals. The workshop:

- Provides specialized training for experienced equestrians, instructors or mental health professionals and educators who are interested in equine-facilitated mental health and education programs. The workshop will not count toward a certification for anyone except an equine specialist.
- Is taught by a mental health professional and an equine specialist, using a combination of lectures, demonstrations, role-plays and hands-on exercises with equines.
- Focuses on the specific role of the equine handler (equine specialist) when assisting or collaborating with the mental health counselor or educator in designing safe, mutually respectful and effective activities to enhance participant outcomes, determining specific equine handling methods as well as understanding students with mental health and/or learning issues.
- Teaches participants how to create and maintain a therapeutic and educational environment, including a review of current PATH Intl. standards as they relate to equine-facilitated psychotherapy programs.
- Includes demonstrations and exercises to increase awareness of equine behavior and how the behavior might enhance or endanger those in a therapy session.
- Emphasizes keeping the equines and all participants in the session safe at all times.

- Gives particular attention to assessing the equine's response to student behaviors and needs.
- Facilitates the collaboration between the mental health professional/educator and the equine specialist.
- Gives participants the opportunity to look at treatment plans with a health professional and develop lesson plans based on client goals.

PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning workshop learning goals are to be able to:

- Create a therapeutic environment
- Understand equine care and management and ethical treatment of the equine-facilitated mental health and/or learning equine
- Understand how to maintain the association's code of ethics and standards, including the ethical treatment of the equine
- Design appropriate exercises based on the IEP (individual education plan) or mental health treatment plan
- Collaborate with other members of the team (mental health or education professional and the equine) to meet treatment goals or the individual education plan goals.

TOPICS COVERED AT THE WORKSHOP

Day 1:

Welcome
 PATH Intl. information
 Mental health team
 HIPAA and confidentiality
 Relationship exercise
 Equine behavior and management
 Death of a program animal
 Abuse of animals and aggression

Day 2:

Partner vs. tool
 Riding lesson vs. meeting therapy goal or education plan
 Equine behavior and ethical treatment of equines
 Ethical parameters
 Design lesson plans
 Group work
 Reporting and discussion

Day 3:

Define partnership
 Collaboration
 Exercise role-play
 Processing and final reflection
 Criteria for skills test

ACCOMMODATIONS

An accommodation is an adjustment or an adaptation of a component or components of the ESMHL certification process in order to meet the special needs of a candidate.

Reasonable accommodations may be granted to qualified individuals with known disabilities, unless doing so would result in a fundamental change to the certification criteria, create an undue hardship or cause a direct threat to health or safety.

Requests for an accommodation to any part of the process must be made in writing by the candidate and submitted to PATH Intl. All requests for accommodation must be accompanied by a letter from a physician (with letterhead and physician's handwritten signature) verifying the diagnosis and defining the candidate's limitations to help PATH Intl. determine appropriate, reasonable accommodations on an individual basis. Please visit our website at <http://www.pathintl.org/40-resources/certification/936-accommodations> to obtain the Reasonable Accommodation Policies and Procedures instructional booklet for the necessary forms.

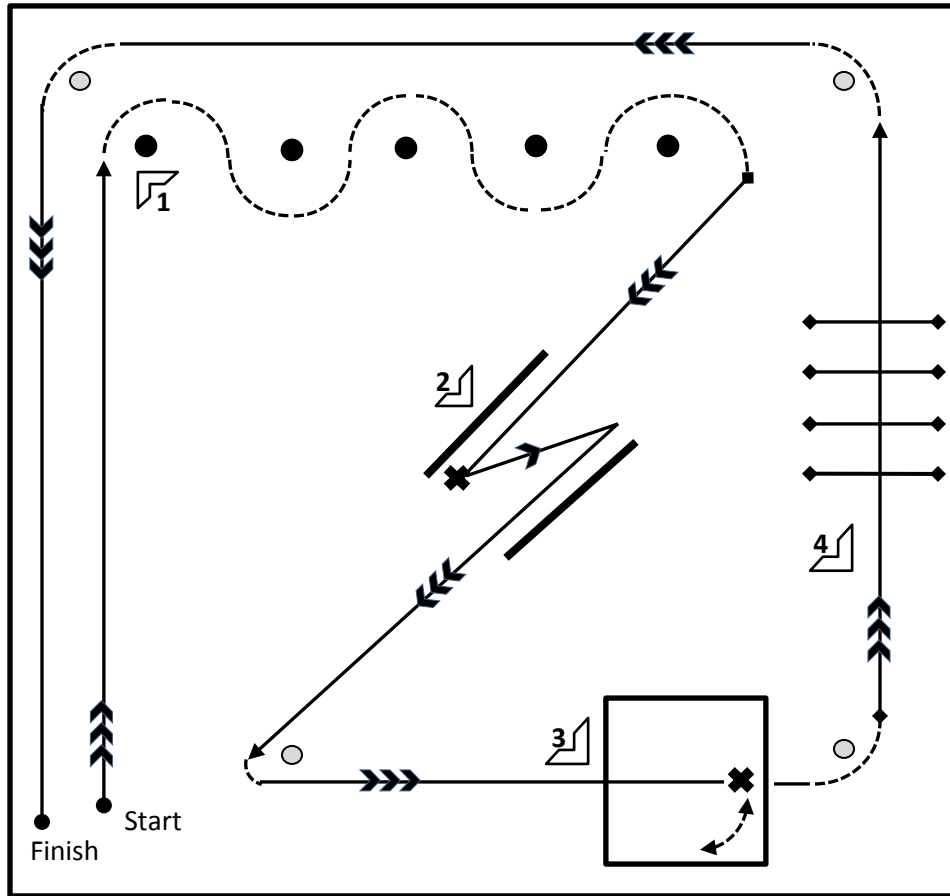
Accommodation requests will be reviewed by PATH Intl. on an individual basis to determine appropriate, reasonable accommodations. Please allow up to 60 days to receive accommodation request results in all cases.*

For more information please contact PATH Intl.

**PATH Intl. and affiliated centers are not responsible for refunding candidate registration fees or travel expenses in the event that an accommodation request is submitted with insufficient processing time.*

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

Please refer to the ESMHL horsemanship criteria on page 8 to gain a full understanding of what is evaluated for this test.



Note: This pattern will be completed leading an equine 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 equine
- 1.2 Demonstrate appropriate method of approach
- 1.3 Quiet, effective, timely approach especially if horse has rear end facing person

2. Haltering

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

3. Exiting and Entering Stall/Paddock

- 3.1 Demonstrate spacing for both leader and equine during exit/enter of stall or paddock
 - Open stall or paddock door completely when exiting/entering
- 3.2 Demonstrate appropriate release of equine
- 3.3 Demonstrate method of maintaining visual observation of equine while exiting stall
- 3.4 Close gate to paddock or stall door only if center/situation requires it
- 3.5 Leader leaves stall before or with the equine
- 3.6 Turn equine toward the front of stall/paddock prior to release
- 3.7 Security while releasing the equine, 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 equine)
- 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 equine when backing up

- Equine'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 and downward transitions
- 5.2 Demonstrate tone of voice that influences equine
- 5.3 Demonstrate ability to read equine's mood and respond
- 5.4 Demonstrate body language according to equine 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
- 5.7 Demonstrate use of touch aid when appropriate
- 5.8 Demonstration of praise/appreciation for work done by equine

6. Safety

- 6.1 Close 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 equine
- 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 put on backwards or incorrectly positioned on equine
- 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 equine from blind spot

PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

The following are suggested materials for certification preparation:

PATH Intl. Standards for Certification and Accreditation manual (current edition). Hard copies and CDs are available from PATH Intl. (800) 369-7433 or www.pathintl.org. The manual is also available for download in the Members Only section of the PATH Intl. website.

Equine Specialist Workshop Student Manual. This manual is given to every candidate who attends the workshop

PATH Intl. Instructor Educational Guide, 2nd Edition. Available from PATH Intl. (800) 369-7433 or www.pathintl.org.

CHA Composite Horsemanship Manual. Available from CHA (800) 399-0138 or www.cha-ahse.org.

101 Arena Exercises, Cherry Hill. Available from Story Communications, Inc. (800) 441-5700.

Animals in Translation: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behavior, Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson. Available at www.amazon.com.

The Body Language of Horses, Bonnie Ledbetter and Tom Ainslie. Available at www.amazon.com.

Understanding Horses, Garda Langley. Available at www.amazon.com.

PATH INTL. EQUINE SPECIALIST RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

There are many opportunities for an individual to learn about equine behavior and management techniques. In the myriad of names, books, clinics and workshops available, each individual needs to use his or her judgment in determining which person or system works best for a given situation. Take the opportunity to read, listen and observe others around you and this will expand your knowledge. There are many individuals, systems and programs out there that may be helpful resources. The following is a list of resources that the PATH Intl. Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning Certification Subcommittee recommends:

Adventures in Awareness (Barb Rector)

Ann Alden

Clinton Anderson

Frank Bell

Dr. Deb Bennett

Buck Brannaman

Joseph Callan

Craig Cameron

Carol Coppinger

Chris Cox

Tom Curtain (Ray Hunt)

E3A

EAGALA

EGEA

EPONA

Julie Goodnight

Maurette Hanson

Mandy Hogan

HorseMpower, Inc.

Chris Irwin

Marcy Laver

David Lichman

John and Josh Lyons

Wendy Murdock

Lynn Palm

Pat and Linda Parelli

Carol Parker, Green Chimneys

Gawani Pony Boy

Mark Rashid

Dennis Reese

Monty Roberts

Karen Rolf

Nita Jo Rush

Marilyn Sokolof, PhD, "Unbridled Therapy"

Memree Stuart

Linda Tellington-Jones

Donna West

Linda Wysocki