
Overview

This standard covers the equine dental procedures described as Category 1 Procedures and includes the safe handling of horses, customer care, use of appropriate equipment, promotion of animal welfare and working within legal and professional responsibilities.

Under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, all diagnostic and treatment procedures in the horse's mouth are considered to be acts of veterinary surgery, with the exception of the manual removal of dental overgrowths with hand instruments. This means that most equine dental procedures are legally restricted to veterinary surgeons.

The Category 1 procedures are not deemed to be acts of veterinary surgery and are accessible to equine dental technicians following training. The Category 1 procedures form part of a grading system for equine dental procedures and have been accepted by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA), British Veterinary Association (BVA), British Veterinary Dental Association (BVDA) and the British Association of Equine Dental Technicians (BAEDT). The details of the Categories 1-3 equine dental procedures are shown in the glossary.

This standard is for equine dental technicians. Users of the standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies, and that they work within the limits of their authority, expertise, training, competence and experience.

LANEDC5

Carry out Category 1 equine dental procedures

Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
- P1 work in accordance with the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966) and the limits of your own authority, expertise, training, competence and experience.
 - P2 identify and address health and safety risks in relation to the work area and the work being carried out for yourself, others and the horse
 - P3 obtain an appropriate history with respect to general health, dental and oral disease and previous dental treatments
 - P4 ensure that equipment is prepared and assembled ready for use, including personal protective equipment
 - P5 ensure horse is appropriately handled to enable examination to take place
 - P6 recognise conditions, procedures/treatment and behaviours indicating chemical sedation is required
 - P7 communicate professionally with a veterinary surgeon to arrange provision of sedation if required
 - P8 conduct a physical assessment of the horse with respect to the external structures adjacent to the dentition
 - P9 perform a visual and manual/digital examination of the horse's mouth and record your findings
 - P10 explain, advise and agree a treatment plan with the owner/agent of the horse, including recognition of when treatment is not required
 - P11 undertake Category 1 equine dental procedures as appropriate for the horse and the agreed treatment plan:
 - P11.1 examination of teeth
 - P11.2 removal of sharp enamel points using manual rasps only
 - P11.3 removal of small dental overgrowths (maximum 4mm reductions) using manual rasps only
 - P11.4 rostral profiling of the first cheek teeth (maximum 4mm reductions), previously termed 'bit seat shaping'
 - P11.5 removal of loose deciduous caps
 - P11.6 removal of supragingival calculus
 - P12 identify and recognise which lesions require referral to a veterinary surgeon or an alternative accredited equine dental technician and make the appropriate recommendations
 - P13 ensure that the horse's welfare is maintained throughout and that your interaction with the horse does not adversely affect its behaviour
 - P14 ensure working methods promote health and safety and are consistent with relevant legislation and codes of practice
 - P15 maintain your own professional standards and ethics
 - P16 maintain appropriate levels of hygiene and bio-security throughout

LANEDC5

Carry out Category 1 equine dental procedures

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the requirements of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966) in relation to your role and the categories of equine dental procedures, to cover:
 - K1.1 Category 1
 - K1.2 Category 2
 - K1.3 Category 3
- K2 the main risks to health and safety in your work area and how to minimise risk to yourself, the horse and others
- K3 how to handle and control the horse, the range of different methods of handling and control and their correct use
- K4 equine behaviour to include signs of pain, distress, alarm and avoidance
- K5 how to recognise when sedation of the horse is required
- K6 anatomy and physiology relevant to the:
 - K6.1 oral cavity
 - K6.2 head
 - K6.3 respiratory tract
 - K6.4 digestive system
 - K6.5 nervous system
- K7 the equipment and materials required to carry out Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures, to include:
 - K7.1 correct use
 - K7.2 maintenance
 - K7.4 hygiene
 - K7.5 personal protective equipment
- K8 how to develop a treatment plan with the owner/agent of the horse, including recognition of when no treatment is required
- K9 the importance of gaining informed consent
- K10 the correct procedures to carry out visual and manual/digital examinations of the horse's mouth
- K11 how to carry out the following Category 1 Equine Dental Procedures:
 - K11.1 examination of teeth
 - K11.2 removal of sharp enamel points using manual rasps only
 - K11.3 removal of small dental overgrowths (maximum 4mm reductions) using manual rasps only
 - K11.4 rostral profiling of the first cheek teeth (maximum 4mm reductions), previously termed 'bit seat shaping'
 - K11.5 removal of loose deciduous caps
 - K11.6 removal of supragingival calculus
- K12 how to recognise the risk of iatrogenic injuries to a horse's mouth and how to reduce them
- K13 appropriate hygiene, bio-security and infection control measures
- K14 how to recognise the impact of your own behaviour on the horse and

LANEDC5

Carry out Category 1 equine dental procedures

- how to minimise any adverse effects on its behaviour
- K15 the principles and key points of relevant health and safety legislation
- K16 your professional responsibilities as an equine dental technician
- K17 your responsibilities for the health and welfare of animals under current legislation and codes of practice
- K18 the role and importance of veterinary referral and communication between the veterinary surgeon and equine dental technician
- K19 the importance of keeping your knowledge up to date on evidence based medicine and how to apply it
- K20 the role of professional organisations in support of your role as an equine dental technician and the requirements for continuing professional development
- K21 your legal and professional liability when working as an equine dental technician and the importance of appropriate insurance cover

LANEDC5

Carry out Category 1 equine dental procedures

Glossary

Horse

For the purpose of this standard the term horse includes donkey, ass, mule, hinny, pony and other equidae.

Animal welfare legislation

England and Wales - Animal Welfare Act 2006

Scotland - Animal Health and Welfare Act 2006

Northern Ireland - Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

Category 1, 2 and 3 Equine Dental Procedures

Category 1 Procedures

Those procedures which an individual can perform after recognised training without specific attainment of qualifications.

Examination of teeth;

Removal of sharp enamel points using manual rasps only;

Removal of small dental overgrowths (maximum 4mm reductions) using manual rasps only;

Rostral profiling of the first cheek teeth (maximum 4mm reductions), previously termed 'bit seat shaping';

Removal of loose deciduous caps; and

Removal of supragingival calculus.

Category 2 Procedures (Replaces category 2 as on 2004 draft)

Additional procedures suitable for delegation to an EDT who has trained and passed an examination approved by DEFRA:

Examination, evaluation and recording of dental abnormalities;

The removal of loose teeth or dental fragments with negligible periodontal attachments;

The removal of erupted, non-displaced wolf teeth in the upper or lower jaw under direct and continuous veterinary supervision;

Palliative rasping of fractured and adjacent teeth; and

The use of motorised dental instruments where these are used to reduce overgrowths and remove sharp enamel points only. Horses should be sedated unless it is deemed safe to undertake any proposed procedure without sedation, with full informed consent of the owner.

Category 3 procedures

All other procedures and any new procedures, which arise as a result of scientific and technical development, would by default fall into category 3, which are those procedures restricted to qualified veterinary surgeons and are not proposed for deregulation. It is therefore NOT legal for these to be performed by non-veterinarians.

LANEDC5

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Developed by	Lantra
Version number	1
Date approved	February 2013
Indicative review date	February 2018
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating organisation	Lantra
Original URN	LANEDC5
Relevant occupations	Equine Dental Technician; Equine Dentist; Horse Dentist
Suite	Equine Dental Care
Key words	Category 1; horse; teeth; rasp
