

Professional Standards and Approval Policy

v0.5 | Awaiting Approval

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Professional Standards & Approval Policy

Document Metadata

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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the standards and approval process for individuals wishing to operate as WES Professionals. It provides a transparent and supportive framework to ensure that those teaching under the WES name demonstrate high standards of knowledge, safety, ethics, and community leadership.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All individuals approved to operate as WES Professionals (clinicians, coaches, trainers, instructors)
- Prospective applicants seeking WES Professional status
- The Education Officer and Council responsible for approval and oversight

It includes:

- Pathways to approval
- Professional conduct expectations
- Communication and engagement
- Review, removal, or suspension of status

3. Definitions

- **WES Professional:** An individual formally approved to deliver training or clinics under the WES name
- **Education Officer:** The Council-appointed individual responsible for managing the professional cohort
- **Assessment Pathway:** A structured process for new applicants involving observed teaching and technical review
- **Recognition Pathway:** A process for experienced equestrian professionals (e.g. UKCC, BHS) to demonstrate transferable credentials
- **CPD:** Continuing professional development

4. Policy Statement

WES Professionals are the Society's public face — delivering clinics, mentoring riders, and representing our values. They must demonstrate professionalism, horsemanship, and a commitment to safe, inclusive, and ethical practice.

Professional approval is not permanent or automatic. It is based on active engagement, positive conduct, and contribution to the Society's community goals.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Education Officer	Manages the approval process and standards; chairs Pro meetings
Chairperson	Supports decisions on removal or disciplinary action if required
Secretary	Maintains professional records and supports review cycles
WES Professionals	Deliver sessions safely, uphold standards, and engage positively
Council	Approves formal changes to the programme or status decisions

6. Policy Detail / Procedures

Detail within this section is based on the WES Professionals documentation available on the WES website for reference.

6.1 Eligibility and Application

Applicants must:

- Be at least 21 years old
- Be a current member of WES
- Have suitable experience as a rider and/or instructor
- Submit an application form with references and relevant experience

Applicants choose one of two routes:

- **Assessment Pathway:**
 - Observation of teaching (live or video)
 - Review of training plans or lesson structure
 - Informal interview or discussion
- **Recognition Pathway:**
 - Submit current credentials (e.g. UKCC, BHS, AQHA)
 - Provide client testimonials or clinic history
 - May be asked to submit video or portfolio of work

The Education Officer reviews applications and makes a recommendation to the Chair and Secretary. Final sign-off is by Council.

6.2 Professional Standards

WES Professionals are expected to:

- Prioritise horse and rider welfare at all times
- Deliver clinics that are respectful, inclusive, and safe
- Maintain high standards of communication, preparation, and conduct
- Avoid gossip, exclusionary behaviour, or conduct that damages WES's reputation
- Model calm, constructive leadership — especially at events or on public platforms
- Engage with policy updates, communications, and training initiatives

Any breach of the **Code of Conduct**, **Safeguarding Policy**, or this policy may result in suspension or removal of status.

6.3 Communication and Community

WES Professionals are part of an active community. Expectations include:

- Participation in the **WES Professionals WhatsApp group**
- Attendance at regular Zoom meetings (5–6 per year)
- Contribution to at least one regional or national activity per year (clinic, show support, online resource)
- Engagement with the Education Officer as required

6.4 CPD and Development

Professionals are encouraged to pursue development via:

- Observation and peer review
- Online learning
- Attendance at WES events
- Annual CPD events (hosted by WES or partners)

While CPD is not mandatory, engagement will be reviewed as part of continued approval.

6.5 Suspension or Removal

WES reserves the right to suspend or revoke Professional status for:

- Repeated failure to engage or deliver
- Breach of policy or code of conduct
- Safety concerns or complaints
- Bringing the Society into disrepute

Concerns will be reviewed by the Education Officer, who may recommend:

- Informal resolution
- Temporary suspension
- Referral to the Chair and Disciplinary Procedure

6.6 Review Cycle

All WES Professionals will undergo a **light-touch review every 3 years**, confirming:

- Continued activity
- Willingness to contribute
- Understanding of policies and expectations
- Confirmation of insurance and safeguarding if required

7. Related Policies and References

- Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Animal Welfare Policy
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Professional Application Form
- WES Professional WhatsApp and Zoom Meeting Schedule
- Website Professional Profiles

8. Compliance and Breach Handling

Breach of this policy or failure to maintain acceptable standards may result in:

- Warning or coaching
- Suspension from professional listing
- Referral via the Disciplinary Procedure
- Removal from the Professional cohort by Council decision

9. Review and Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Changes Made
0.1	23/07/2025	DG	Initial policy draft
0.5	08/10/2025	DG	Updated post Chairman's review

10. Approval Record

Approved By	Date	Notes
Full Council	[To complete]	Approved for implementation