Professional Pathway Toolkit

Your next step in Equine Assisted Services

Use this workbook to explore the roles that interest you, recognise what you already bring and identify what you need to learn or check. By the end, you will have a practical plan for your next step.

Complete this first page when you begin Core Principles. Explore the remaining pages during your studies and finish your plan after the final module. There is no score and no single correct career choice. You may keep your answers private and share relevant sections if you would like support.

Core Principles is a foundation programme. Completing it does not qualify you to provide Equine Assisted Services independently or replace qualifications required for a particular role.

1 My starting point

Name: _____ Date: _____

What brought me to Equine Assisted Services

_____

_____

What education and professional qualifications do I hold?

_____

_____

What experience do I have with people and with equines?

_____

_____

How would I like to become involved?

_____

_____

What do I want to clarify during this course?

_____

_____

2 Explore roles with participants and equines

Tick the roles you would like to explore. These are descriptions of functions, not a universal list of job titles or qualifications. Responsibilities and entry requirements depend on the service, organisation and country.

Working with participants

☐ Equine Assisted Therapy practitioner

Provides therapy within an appropriate professional qualification and scope of practice. Requires relevant professional preparation and specialist competence for the service offered.

☐ Equine Assisted Learning practitioner

Plans and facilitates educational or personal development activities. Needs preparation in facilitation, participant needs, safety, equine welfare and professional boundaries.

☐ Adapted riding instructor or para-equestrian coach

Teaches riding or supports recreational or sporting development. Needs the relevant instructional or coaching competence and preparation for the participants involved.

☐ Session assistant

Supports participants and prepares equipment under the session leader's direction. Duties may include walking beside a mounted participant. Needs role-specific training and supervision.

Working with equines

☐ Equine handler

Leads or handles an equine during sessions, observes its responses and works with the session team. Needs competent handling skills and training for the specific EAS setting.

☐ Equine care and stable management

Provides daily care and organises feeding, turnout, accommodation and care routines. Needs practical equine care skills and the ability to recognise and report concerns.

☐ Equine selection and training

Assesses suitability and prepares equines for particular EAS activities, reviewing their responses over time. Needs appropriate training expertise and welfare knowledge.

☐ Equine specialist during sessions

Focuses on equine behaviour and welfare during interactions and helps the team adapt activities. This person may or may not lead the equine; role titles and training requirements vary.

3 Explore organisation and support roles

☐ Programme administration

Manages registrations, records, documents, invoicing and routine communication. Needs administrative and digital skills, careful information handling and an understanding of EAS.

☐ Programme coordination

Organises schedules, activities and communication between participants and the team. Needs planning, communication and coordination skills.

☐ Volunteer coordination

Organises volunteer recruitment, rotas, induction, training arrangements and ongoing support. Needs people management and organisational skills.

☐ Centre management

Leads the centre, including staffing, budgets, operations and organisational development. Needs management competence and a clear understanding of responsibilities.

☐ Fundraising and partnerships

Develops grants, donations, fundraising activities and relationships with donors and partners. Needs relationship-building, proposal-writing and fundraising skills; this is distinct from routine administration.

☐ Marketing and communications

Supports the website, social media, promotion and public communication. Needs communication skills and the ability to describe EAS accurately.

☐ Facilities and equipment maintenance

Maintains premises, fencing, access routes and equipment. Needs relevant practical skills and procedures for identifying and reporting hazards.

Other contributors may include veterinarians, farriers or hoof-care professionals, accountants, IT specialists, educators, mentors and researchers. They may work with a centre externally.

One person may fulfil several functions when appropriately competent. A volunteer can undertake a defined role; “volunteer” describes the arrangement, not the person’s duties. Each organisation also needs to assign responsibilities for participant safeguarding, safety and equine welfare clearly.

List one or two roles I want to explore further

_____

_____

4 What fits me

Compare your selected roles. Give examples of your experience where possible. Interest in a role, practical competence and permission to practise are separate considerations.

Role 1: _____ Role 2: _____

Reflection question	Role 1	Role 2
What attracts me to this work?		
What relevant experience or qualifications do I already have?		
What do I need to learn or try?		
Which entry or local professional requirements do I need to check?		
How does this role fit my time, location and resources?		

My two priorities for further learning or experience

_____

_____

_____

5 Understand the terminology

Names differ between countries and organisations. Use these descriptions for orientation and check what a particular provider means, who delivers the service and which qualifications are required.

Equine Assisted Services or EAS

An umbrella term for services involving equines, including therapy, learning and adapted equestrian activities.

Equine Assisted Therapy or EAT

A therapy delivered by a health care specialist. Check the discipline, professional qualifications and therapeutic goals.

Equine Assisted Learning or EAL

Activities involving equines with educational or developmental goals. Check the practitioner's preparation, the intended outcomes and the participants served.

Hippotherapy

A term used differently across countries. In some professional frameworks, it refers specifically to the clinical application of equine movement within rehabilitation. Check its meaning in the service or course you are considering.

Adapted riding and para-equestrian

Adapted riding makes riding instruction and participation accessible to individual needs. Para-equestrian refers to equestrian sport for riders with eligible impairments, with discipline-specific rules. Neither term alone describes a healthcare service.

Try it with a real example

Find one service or course that interests you and record the following. If information is missing, write the question you would ask.

Name or website and country

_____

Who it is for and what it aims to achieve

_____

Who delivers it and which qualifications are required

_____

What I still need to ask

_____

6 Explore your next learning step

Choose further education according to your background and intended role. Levels 3, 4 and 5 are not a compulsory sequence. Review the full current entry requirements before applying.

Level 3 Principles to Practice in EAS

For learners aged 16 and above seeking preparation for support, facilitation and centre-based roles. The pathway combines Core Principles with practical learning and assessment. Core Principles graduates can progress to the second part without repeating the foundation course. It does not qualify learners as therapists or riding instructors.

View the Level 3 programme and requirements

Level 4 Equine Assisted Learning Practitioner

For learners seeking preparation to plan and facilitate Equine Assisted Learning. The current programme requires applicants to be at least 20, hold an accepted professional qualification, complete Core Principles, demonstrate safe basic equine handling and be prepared for practical video submissions. Check the accepted qualifications and full entry process.

View the Level 4 programme and requirements

Level 5 Equine Assisted Therapy Clinical Specialist

For qualified therapists seeking specialist development within their existing clinical profession. Entry requires an accepted professional qualification, completion of Core Principles, safe basic equine handling and readiness for practical video submissions. Check the complete entry requirements for your profession.

View the Level 5 programme and requirements

Other useful next steps

You may first need observation, supervised experience, equine skills development, mentoring or advice about requirements in your country. For administration, fundraising, communications or maintenance, consider how your existing professional skills could contribute and what EAS-specific induction you need.

Which learning or experience option fits my goal and why

_____

_____

What I need to confirm before committing

_____

_____

Programme information checked on 7 October 2026. Follow the links for current requirements, fees and dates.

7 My next step

Turn your reflections into one realistic action. You do not need to plan your whole career now. Choose a step that will help you gain experience, develop competence or make a better-informed decision.

The role or area I want to explore

_____

_____

What I can bring

_____

_____

What I still need to learn or verify

_____

_____

My first specific action

_____

_____

Who I will contact

_____

My target date

_____

The question I still need to clarify

_____

_____

Examples of a first step

Fundraising: contact an EAS centre to understand its needs and discuss whether your grant-writing experience could help.
Equine handling: ask a centre about observing sessions and the training required before joining as a handler.

8 Review your decision and get support

Return to your first page after completing the course. Review what has changed and whether your next step fits your background and current competence.

What has changed in my understanding or interests

_____

_____

_____

My final check

☐ I understand what my selected role involves.

☐ I can describe the relevant skills and qualifications I already have.

☐ I know what I need to develop or verify.

☐ I have identified an action, a contact and a target date.

If I am still undecided, what options am I comparing

_____

_____

What is preventing me from choosing my next step

_____

_____

Your Clear Next Step Guarantee

If you complete all five modules and this Professional Pathway Toolkit within six months of enrolment and still cannot identify a professionally responsible next step that fits your background, you can request a private 30-minute Pathway Review with Vera at no additional cost.

Reply to your course welcome email to request support. Explain what remains unclear and share the relevant parts of this workbook so that the conversation can focus on your questions.

The review supports your educational decision. It does not guarantee admission to a qualification, employment, income or authorisation to provide Equine Assisted Services independently. Consult the current programme page for the published guarantee terms.

View the Core Principles programme and guarantee

Date completed: _____ Date to review my plan: _____