

NZTR Apprentice/ Probationer Guidelines 2022

December 2021 - Draft for Consultation

Introduction

These guidelines have been created for external consultation following internal consultation with NZTR education and training staff, who have seen a need to tighten up the current licencing processes pertaining to a Class C Probationer and a Class B Apprentice Jockey.

NZTR wishes to invest in the future of our industry and minimise any health and safety or welfare issues that may arise in the apprenticeship period. It is believed if we increase our licencing protocols we will enhance the professionalism within the industry, welfare of the horses and retain our participants.

Utilizing the All Blacks mantra of better men make better All blacks, “Better Apprentices, make better Jockeys”

Following practice criteria and guidelines from overseas racing jurisdictions as well as historical data that has been collected in our domestic industry, we propose the following changes to our licencing guidelines.

1. Probationer:

A Probationer is an individual who has been granted a Class C licence from NZTR and has been accepted following the conditions set out below.

The probationary period is to be a minimum of 5 months and no more than 12 months (this period may be extended in the case of injury, sickness or any other reason deemed relevant by NZTR Licensing) inclusive, and is put in place for the purpose of training to become an Apprentice Jockey, engaging in training and achieving minimum competencies. The probationary period also ensures that both the Probationer and employer are happy to sign into a 4-year apprenticeship together.

There may be exception to the duration of the probation period in circumstances where a Probationer has had previous experience as a rider overseas, or is deemed on application by the NZTR Regional Licensing Panel (refer section 8 for detail) to be wholly competent. In such exceptional cases, the minimum period of the probation must still be no less than 3 months.

An employer/ trainer must apply for and be accepted as an approved apprentice employer for each future Probationer / Apprentice Jockey.

2. Expectations of a Probationer and an Approved Employer

Before being granted a Class C Probationer licence, a candidate must first meet the following criteria:

- Hold a Class B Miscellaneous Licence (track work rider fast) for a period of no less than 3 months.
- Must have a clear criminal record.
- Attend an apprenticeship information session at a regional centre with their employer.
- Employer understands what is needed to become an Approved Employer of apprentices.
- Holds and provides to NZTR an offer of employment for at least 40 hours per week by a licenced trainer who must in the process be deemed by NZTR to be an Approved Employer and complies with the regulations and obligations of an Approved Employer.
- Shows a willingness to learn and is respectful of industry stakeholders and officials.
- Is or is within the maximum weight category of 53kgs. If heavier than this, a realistic plan is put in place to reach the desired weight within the timeframe of their probation period.
- Completes a riding assessment in front of the regional NZTR Riding Mentor.
- Completes an assessment on the riding simulator to the satisfaction of the regional Riding Mentor.
- Can pass a basic fitness test with a 70% pass rate (refer section 5 for detail).
- Can communicate effectively in English. If the candidates English is not comprehensible, an English language literacy and learning plan is presented to the Regional Licencing Panel at interview time.
- Has completed or is signed up and undertaking the Level 2 Introduction into Equine Skills qualification.
- Must be declared medically fit to ride in races by a General Practitioner and approved by the NZTR Medical Advisor.
- Must have completed a cognitive baseline test.
- Must complete a mental health assessment.

All factors above must be considered by the Regional Licencing Panel, which must make a licencing recommendation to NZTR's Licencing department.

3 Once granted a Probationer licence.

A Probationer must comply with the following guidelines to gain a Class B Apprentice Jockey licence:

- Ride in at least 25 heats at official trials meetings to the satisfaction of the regional NZTR Riding Mentor. These 25 trial rides must be in fields of 6 or more horses, and on a variety of horses.
- Trial rides will be graded by the NZTR Riding Mentors using a competency scale. Probationers must show tactical and technical riding skills and decision making, as well as report accurately back to the trainer on the horses performance.
- Engage in receiving tuition and advice with the NZTR Riding Mentor at official trials, engagement will be recorded by the NZTR Riding Mentor.
- Be actively riding "work" on a weekly basis for trainers that includes riding in company and accurately keeping pace.
- Show a motivation to learn.

- Have at least 90% attendance at the Apprentice Academy scheduled sessions and engage with the NZTR Riding Mentor should a class be missed.
- Complete the Level 2 intro into Level 2 Introduction into Equine Skills qualification.
- Has attended at least 5 buddy days with the NZTR Riding Mentor and an appointed senior Jockey at official race meetings (refer section 7 for detail)
- Meet the weight requirements set out by NZTR for Class B Apprentice Jockeys of 53kgs.
- Must have a valid visa (if an international apprentice)
- Must be at least 15 years and 3 months of age.
- Must have a clear criminal record.
- Must have passed a RIB Rules of Racing test
- Must have participated with their employer in a satisfactory interview with the National Apprentice Licencing Panel (refer section 8 for detail).
- Has a clear understanding of English and can communicate effectively.
- Can pass basic fitness test with at least 10% overall improvement on their previous score if previous score was 70%. (refer section 5 for detail)
- Must have been declared medically fit to ride in races by a General Practitioner within the previous 12 months and approved by the NZTR Medical Advisor.
- Is willing to be signed up to the NZA Jockey qualification and complete the work required to gain this qualification.
- For foreign applicants, an IELTS score of 5.5 or more is required. If this is not achieved, NZTR may agree a language development plan to be put in place, as a condition of your apprenticeship. The cost of which is not the responsibility of NZTR.

4. [Acceptance by NZTR to the Apprentice jockey program.](#)

- Have achieved all the above elements set out in 1.3 during their probationary period.
- Have participated in the National Apprentice Licensing Panel interview to the satisfaction of the panel and produced all the necessary documentation.
- The employer has been granted an approved apprentice employer status for this apprentice.
- A copy of the NZTR apprentice agreement (with minimum 40 hours per week), signed by both prospective Apprentice Jockey and prospective Approved Employer has been submitted to NZTR

All factors above (Sections 3 & 4) must be considered by the National Apprentice Licensing Panel, which must make a licensing recommendation to NZTR's Licensing department.

On being granted a Class B Apprentice Jockey licence from NZTR the following will apply for the first 12 race day rides and the Apprentice be deemed competent before the restrictions are lifted.

- Apprentices are to have no more than 3 rides at a single race meeting.
- Apprentices should only be riding experienced race day horses, i.e. not first starters or horses with known behavioural issues.
- Apprentices should not ride in races with a distance of more than 2000m.
- Apprentices should not ride in races where their claim does not count (i.e. Group, Listed, High Weight, or other races in which allowances may not be claimed).

5. NZTR Strength and Fitness test for Class C Probationers

Participants must achieve a minimum of 70% overall to pass. Maximum duration is 30 minutes.

Upper Body

Adopt a press up position on the ground and hold this for as long as possible. Keep a 90-degree bend in the elbow with elbows close to side. Maintain this static position up to a maximum of 90 seconds. Percentage score based on the time correctly maintaining the exercise.

Pres Press up - Position and Hold

Time (seconds)	Percentage Score %
25	25
45	50
60	75
90	100

Lower Body

Standing on two wobble cushions (one under each foot) adopt the pushing position. Your knees will need to be bent so that your thigh is horizontal to the ground. You will need to maintain this static position up to a maximum of 4 minutes.

Squats

Time (seconds)	Percentage Score %
60	25
120	50
180	75
240	100

Core

Start on elbows and knees, locking hands together. Straighten legs and raise your body, supported by the balls of feet, with feet hip-distance apart. Face the floor, don't arch your back. Maintain this static position up to a maximum of 4 minutes. Percentage based on the time you correctly maintain the exercise.

Plank

Time (seconds)	Percentage Score %
60	25
120	50
180	75
240	100

Leg raises to metronome (set at 50bpm)

Lie on back with arms over shoulders holding onto something solid. Follow the metronome beep, raise feet so that they are pointing to the sky (keeping ankles together and legs straight) and return them to the start position on the next beep. One beep is up and one beep down. Continue this exercise up to a maximum of 4 minutes.

Leg raises

Time (seconds)	Percentage Score %
60	25
120	50
180	75
240	100

Fitness Bleep Test

This is a multi-stage Fitness Test (bleep test) and will take place over 15m. The distance will be marked out on the room floor or outside area. **This test is worth x2 of the other tests.** Maximum percentage for Level 16 and this will decrease by 10% for each level scored below.

Time (seconds)	Percentage Score %
Level 9	70
Level 10	80
Level 11	90
Level 12+	100

Ride a finish on a spring horse

You will be required to ride a finish on a simulator for up to a maximum of 4 minutes. You will be required ride a finish and follow instructions given to you by the NZTR riding mentor. When you are unable to carry on riding a finish or it is felt by your assessor that your ability is being compromised by your lack of fitness or ability to balance you will stop being timed and the assessment will be over.

Time (seconds)	Percentage Score %
60 seconds	25
120 seconds	50
180 seconds	75
240 seconds	100

6. NZTR on and off horse assessment for Class C Probationers

On horse riding assessment

- Shows competency riding 4 horses, 2 in pace work and 2 in fast work.
- Is aware of health and safety requirements of riding track work and track by laws.
- Abides by track by laws and H&S requirements when riding track work.
- Is dressed in appropriate gear to ride track work.
- Rides the horse in a sympathetic manner while maintaining a balanced position in the saddle at all times.
- Is able to ride the horse at different specified paces.
- Pulls the horse up slowly and exits the track according to track by laws.
- Reports to the trainer on how the horse felt in their work.

Off horse riding assessment

- Arrives for the appointment on time and dressed appropriately to ride the spring horse.
- Can gather up the reins.
- Can change reins.
- Can pull the whip through competently on both sides.
- Can push the horse forward in a balanced rhythm while maintaining a balanced position at all times.

7. Buddy days at the races

Buddy days at the races consist of a licenced probationer spending at least 1 hour before the races and further time throughout the race meeting, with the regional riding mentor and an appointed senior jockey. The time spent will consist of walking the track, going through the steps of weighing out and visiting the officials on race day along with any other pertinent areas of education for an apprentice jockey.

8. Regional Licensing Panels & National Apprentice Licensing Panel

The need for consistency and transparency in our licencing requirements has come to attention of the team at NZTR. To make improvements we will be implementing a system of a National Apprentice Licencing Panel for approval of a Class B Apprentice Jockey licence.

The National Apprentice Licencing Panel will meet regionally twice per year in advance of Apprentice Jockey intake dates of February and July.

Regional information centres and personnel.

The three main racing centres of Matamata, Awapuni and Riccarton shall be the facilitators of licencing requirements for NZTR.

The regional probationer and apprentice programme personnel (together referred to as Regional Licensing Panels) are as follows:

- **Matamata:** NZTR riding mentor (Noel Harris), RIU representative and NZTR training advisor (Amber Sims)
- **Awapuni:** NZTR riding mentor (Kim Clapperton), RIU representative and NZTR training advisor (Amber Sims)
- **Riccarton:** NZTR riding mentor (David Walsh), RIU representative and NZTR training advisor (Amy Johnson)

Each Regional Licensing Panel will assess and approve, defer or decline applications for riders in their region to commence as a Probationer.

National Apprentice Licencing Panel (members to be confirmed)

NZTR riding mentor, RIU representative, NZTR licencing representative, NZTR training and education team leader.

Key attributes that the national licencing panel will use to convey their decision on a class B apprentice Jockey licence being granted:

- Employer presents a plan on paper of how they will support the apprentice in the 4 years of their apprenticeship. Must include plans to provide and secure rides with projected numbers for the seasons ahead as well as mentoring opportunities and support of the apprentice's development to an elite athlete.
- Employer shows that they have the attributes to be an approved employer of apprentices as per the approved employer policy.
- Signed employment contract is presented to the panel which clearly states, pay, holidays, position description, hours of work, provision of food and accommodation and pathways for conflict resolution.
- Probationer outlines their commitment to their career, their employer and NZTR.
- Both employer and the Class C licence holder understand their apprentice guidelines.
- Commitment to work with the NZTR training team.

9. Approved Employer status

The link to the approved employer status is paramount for the success of apprentice training. Employers are the most important influencer on the Apprentice's career due to the amount of time they spend with the Apprentice and the direct influence they have over the opportunities they are afforded.

The current arrangement for Approved Employers is once it is gained it remains with the employer until such time as they cease training, without expiry or a review/ entitlement process.

The following changes are proposed:

- The approved Apprentice Employer status ceases if the employer does not have an apprentice.

- The Approved Employer status will be reviewed for each status holder at time of licencing (July) and may be suspended or relinquished if conditions surrounding the approved employer status are not upheld.
- Employers must be granted or hold or have previously held an Approved Employer status when employing a Class C Probationer.
- Employers must be willing to attend 2 mandatory professional development sessions per racing calendar year that are to be held regionally. Topics will include mentoring the athlete, dealing with conflict, employment relations etc.
- A copy of their workplace health and safety plan is submitted.
- Apprentice employment contract is presented to the National Apprentice Licensing Panel which clearly states, pay, holidays, position description, hours of work, provision of food and accommodation, commitment to pay for travel costs to races out of the regional training area, gear needed by the apprentice, pathways for conflict resolution and other relevant matters.
- A history of employment disputes, lack of opportunity in training, health and safety issues that arise and compliance with the NZTR Rules of Racing will be kept on all Approved Employers and referred to at time of application.
- Employers must attend an interview with the National Apprentice Licensing Panel together with their probationer and provide all information that is requested by the panel.

10. Anomalies

It is recognised by the training team that there will be a period at the start of implementing these guidelines where Probationers who are licenced may not be ready for the 2022 intake of newly licenced Apprentice Jockeys.

Should a Class C Probationer leave their employer during their probationary period due to valid circumstances after they have done the minimum period of 6 months and start a probationary period with another approved employer then the minimum duration of the new probationary period will be decided by the NZTR Licencing department (should be a minimum of 3 months with new employer irrespective of previous time served).

Foreign apprentices who are transferring their apprenticeship to NZTR for any duration must have an IELTS score of 5.5 on entry to New Zealand or a sufficient plan in place to achieve this within a reasonable timeframe.