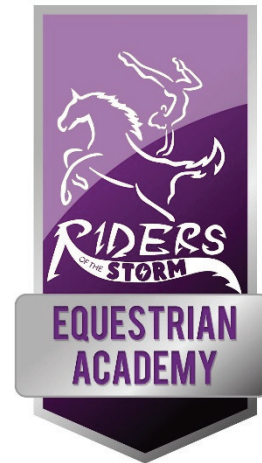


Riders of the Storm

Client Code of Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement

At **Riders of the Storm**, the safety of our riders, vaulters, visitors, horses, and staff is our highest priority. Horses are large, powerful animals and, despite careful training and supervision, working around them always carries an inherent level of risk.



This Code of Conduct explains the behaviour expected of all participants and outlines the risks associated with equestrian activities. By signing this document, riders/vaulters and parents/guardians confirm they understand these risks and agree to follow all instructions given by **Riders of the Storm**, including any coach, instructor or authorised representative acting on its behalf.

1. General Conduct Around Horses

All riders, vaulters and visitors must behave calmly and responsibly at all times when on the premises or around horses.

For everyone's safety:

- Horses must **not be approached, touched, fed, untied, moved, or handled** without permission from an instructor.
- **Running, shouting, sudden movements, rough behaviour or use of loud devices** around horses is not permitted.
- Riders and vaulters must follow all instructions from coaches/instructors immediately.
- Children must remain under the supervision of their parent/guardian unless directly supervised by an instructor.
- Dogs must only be brought onto site with prior permission and must remain under control at all times.
- Smoking, alcohol, or attending under the influence of drugs/alcohol is strictly prohibited.

Risk

Horses may react suddenly by moving, kicking, biting, stepping sideways, pulling away, or becoming startled by noise or movement.

Mitigation

Clients must remain calm, attentive, and follow instructions at all times to reduce the likelihood of startling a horse or placing themselves in an unsafe position.

2. Safe Handling of Horses

Horse handling will only be carried out under supervision, or independently once competence has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of an instructor.

When handling horses:

- Horses must be approached calmly and where the horse can see you.
- Safe distances must be maintained around all horses.
- Horses must be led correctly using approved equipment.
- Riders/vaulters must not stand directly behind any horse.
- Grooming, tacking up, untacking, or leading must only be undertaken when instructed and in the approved manner.

Risk

Incorrect handling may cause the horse to panic, pull away, tread on someone, kick, or injure itself or others.

Mitigation

Only trained or supervised handling is permitted, and all participants must use the correct methods demonstrated by instructors.

3. Riding, Vaulting and Hacking Conduct

Participants must ride or vault only within the limits set by the instructor.

This means:

- Mounting, dismounting, vaulting movements, and exercises may only be carried out when instructed.
- Riders/vaulters must not attempt skills beyond their current level.
- During hacking or movement between sites, riders must remain under instruction and follow route and pace directions.
- Riders must maintain safe spacing between horses.
- No horse may be ridden or exercised without instructor approval.

Risk

Falls, collisions, loss of balance, or loss of control may result in injury to rider, horse, or others.

Mitigation

Activities are supervised and matched to rider ability, and participants must comply with instructions regarding pace, positioning and exercises.

4. Clothing and Safety Equipment

All riders must wear suitable clothing and approved equipment.

For riding and hacking:

- A correctly fitted riding helmet meeting current recognised safety standards must be worn at all times when mounted.
- Suitable footwear with a small heel must be worn.
- Body protectors are strongly recommended where appropriate.

For vaulting:

- Close-fitting clothing suitable for safe movement must be worn.
- Hair must be securely tied back.
- Jewellery must not be worn.
- Additional protective equipment may be required where appropriate.

Where Riders of the Storm provides equipment, clients must use it correctly and report any issues immediately. Where clients provide their own equipment, they are responsible for ensuring it is suitable, safe, correctly fitted, and in good condition.

Risk

Poorly fitted or unsuitable equipment increases the risk of falls, entanglement, or injury.

Mitigation

All participants must wear and use approved clothing and equipment appropriate to the activity.

5. Horse Welfare Responsibilities

The welfare of the horse is central to all activities.

All participants must:

- Treat horses with kindness and respect at all times.
- Never strike, frighten, or deliberately distress a horse.
- Report any concerns about the horse's behaviour, condition, or tack immediately.
- Use equipment only as instructed.
- Respect that an instructor may stop any activity if they believe it is unsafe or not in the horse's best interests.

Risk

Poor handling, misuse of tack, or inappropriate behaviour can harm the horse and create unsafe situations.

Mitigation

Clients must follow welfare-focused instructions and use only approved methods of interaction.

6. Personal Responsibility and Communication

All riders/vaulters and parents/guardians are responsible for informing Riders of the Storm of anything relevant to safe participation, including:

- medical conditions,
- injuries,
- disabilities,
- medication affecting ability,
- behavioural concerns,
- changes to emergency contact details.

Participants must advise instructors immediately if they feel unwell, frightened, or unable to continue.

Risk

Unreported medical or behavioural issues may increase the chance of accident or injury.

Mitigation

Open communication enables activities to be adapted safely.

7. Understanding of Risk

Horse riding, vaulting, hacking, and horse handling are activities involving **inherent risk**.

Even with trained horses, qualified supervision, and safety procedures in place, risks include but are not limited to:

- falls from height,
- slips, trips and impact injuries,
- kicks, bites, or crushing injuries,
- injury caused by sudden horse movement,
- injury resulting from equipment failure,
- injury occurring during handling, riding, vaulting, or hacking.

While **Riders of the Storm** takes all reasonable steps to reduce these risks, it is not possible to eliminate them entirely.

Participation is conditional on clients understanding and accepting these risks and following all instructions given.

8. Acknowledgement and Agreement

I confirm that I have read and understood this **Client Code of Conduct and Risk Acknowledgement**.

I understand that equestrian activities involve inherent risks and that my safety, the safety of others, and the welfare of the horse depend on following the rules and instructions of **Riders of the Storm**, including all instructors and authorised representatives acting on its behalf.

I agree to comply with the requirements in this document and understand that failure to do so may result in participation being stopped for safety reasons.