

USIHC Trainer Level 1 Certification

Qualifying Exam for FEIF Matrix Trainer Level 1

Description of Testing Areas

Theory Exams

Oral Exam

Description: Questions will be asked from a list that is divided into different content areas. Examinees will be asked one question from each content area. Please see our Study Guide for information on which content areas will be present on the oral exam and relevant resources for studying.

Written Exam

Description: Short answer essay questions will be asked from a list that is divided into different content areas. Examinees will be asked one question from each content area. Please see our Study Guide for information on which content areas are on the written exam as well as relevant resources for studying.

Horsemanship Exams

Longeing Exam

Description: Examinees will demonstrate a training session with their horse on the longe. The examinee will set up the session to mirror a normal constructive training session with a warm up, working section, and cool down. The examinee will demonstrate how to train the gaits on the lunge line, as well as transitions between gaits. A methodical approach that shows correct and systematic training will be rewarded. The session should have a positive impact on the horse's lateral and longitudinal suppleness, and relaxation and focus should improve throughout the presented session.

Ponying Exam

Description: Examinees will demonstrate ponying off of a ridden horse both in an arena as well as outside on a track or straight road. They will be asked to demonstrate mounting and dismounting, switching sides of the ponied horse, various figures as well as transitions within and between gaits and will show walk, trot/tolt and canter. Examinees will be judged on correct positioning of the ponied horse, speed and direction control of ridden and ponied horse, as well as use of aids and harmony.

In Hand Exam

Description: Examinee will demonstrate working a horse in hand with a bridle, both with the reins up on the neck of the horse as well as down and held under the chin. Emphasis will be on correct and systematic application of aids, and good horsemanship and communication in order to correctly execute the required elements. Additionally when the reins are over the horse's neck the examinee will be judged on correct bending, flexion and balance in the exercises.

Obstacle Course Exam

Description: Examinees will demonstrate working through an obstacle course first in-hand using a traditional rope halter and lead. Then they will navigate the same course under-saddle. Participants will be judged on the quality of the execution of each element. Good horsemanship in respect to how the participant handles their horse's reactions will be rewarded. A training strategy that introduces and guides the horse through the obstacles that is tactful and systematically builds the horse's relaxation and confidence will receive the highest marks.

Dressage Exam

Description: Examinee will show a comprehensive dressage test in which they will demonstrate a variety of figures and seats in walk, trot, tolt and canter. They will also show the dressage exercises of shoulder-in, stretching down and forward, leg yield, turn on the forehand, lengthening of the stride, and backing up. They will also demonstrate proper mounting and dismounting as well as the exercise kiss-the-stirrup in the saddle. Dressage test will be provided to examinees with registration.

Gait Exam

Description: Examinees will demonstrate the four basic gaits (walk, tolt, trot, canter) in an order of their choice. They will also demonstrate some transitions between walk and tolt, as well as speed variations in tolt and canter. Examinees will be judged on their ability to execute the gaits, and will be expected to demonstrate a balanced and correct seat, correct and appropriate aids, a soft and harmonious connection between horse and rider and correct and quiet execution of the exercises. The gaits should show the rider's ability to maintain the gait in an acceptable beat and an appropriate outline. The horse should be willing and relaxed in all gaits. Minor faults in beat or balance influence the marks only slightly as long as the rider's aids are correct. The height and width of the horse's movements do not influence the marks, unless short or small steps seem to be the result of riding or training error, or are so extreme as to be considered a fault.

Horse Assessment Exam

Description: Examinees will be presented one horse that they will evaluate for body condition, appearance under saddle and training level when ridden. They will then be asked to make recommendations as to appropriate feeding, shoeing (if applicable), conditioning and training in order for the horse to be healthy and the rider to progress forward in their goals. They may also offer potential problem solving recommendations as suitable. Examinees will be judged by the thoroughness and correctness of their analysis as well as the professionalism and respect shown to horse and rider when trying the horse and making recommendations.

Teaching Exams

Ridden Presentation

Description: Examinees will perform a demonstration typical for an expo or other informational setting that touches on the unique qualities of the Icelandic Horse including their gaits, temperament and history. The information on the gaits should include a definition of each gait, how and when we ride it, and why we value all gaits. Gaits shown should be the four basic gaits. Pace does not need to be shown but needs to be addressed. The information on the temperament and history should clearly describe what makes the Icelandic Horse unique in respects to their character and how their history has shaped their behaviour. The presentation should also include an explanation of how the climate and landscape of Iceland have influenced the appearance and temperament. An emphasis should be

placed on why the characteristics of the Icelandic Horse make them a valued riding horse for potential American customers.

Oral Presentation

Description: Examinee will give a public lecture on a pre-approved horsemanship topic chosen by the examinee. The examinee will select the topic, which must be approved by the judging panel. The presentation will be judged on accuracy and depth of information as well as the teaching skills necessary to give an informative and engaging presentation.

Group Lesson Exam

Description: The examinee will teach a section of a group lesson for two to three students. The section and content of the lesson will be selected at random from a list of common novice level topics made by the judges. Examinees will be judged as to the fulfilment of the lesson content, communication style, positioning and use of voice in the arena, safety practices and structure as well as appropriateness of the selected exercises. While the students will not be complete beginners they will also be no more experienced than a novice level rider.

Private Lesson Exam

Description: Examinees will teach a private lesson to a student on that student's horse. As part of this test section the examinee will develop a lesson plan tailored to the rider's riding level as well as what they have seen in a short provided video. The examinee will be judged as to their lesson content, communication style, positioning and use of voice in the arena. They will be graded further as to their safety practices and structure and the appropriateness of the selected teaching material.