

PART B - THE RULES OF THE PONY CLUB

(Text in Bold Type denotes a change from the Rules as printed in the 2010 Year Book)

1. INTRODUCTION

I. Purpose

The Pony Club is a voluntary youth organisation for young people interested in ponies and riding. It is a Registered Charity, and is subject to Charity legislation and to regulation by the Charity Commission. The legal Objects of The Pony Club are set out in clause 3.1 of the Memorandum of Association (a copy of which may be obtained from The Pony Club Office upon payment of a fee). The purpose of The Pony Club is:

- to encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with ponies and riding.
- to give instruction in riding and horsemastership and to educate Members to look after and to take proper care of animals.
- to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty to create strength of character and self-discipline.

The Pony Club Office is at Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2RW from where The Pony Club is managed by a permanent staff responsible to the governing body - The Board of Trustees.

II. Health & Safety Policy

The Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health & Safety of its employees, of everyone who assists The Pony Club in whatever capacity, Members and their families and members of the public who may be affected by the activities of The Pony Club.

The Board of Trustees will ensure that management procedures and rules are in place to ensure that all Pony Club activities are run with due regard for the Health & Safety of all those people who may be affected by those activities and to ensure that all statutory duties are met.

Each employee, Area Representative, and Branch District Commissioner shall be given such information, instruction and training as is necessary for them to perform their duties in safety. When tasks require particular skills additional to those of The Pony Club staff and volunteers, a competent person or contractor with the necessary experience and training shall be employed.

Each employee and volunteer will be expected to co-operate with The Pony Club management or District Commissioner to ensure that all statutory duties are complied with and to ensure that all work activities are carried out safely. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care for his or her own Health and Safety, and for the safety of others who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions. Any person who is concerned about any issue relating to Health and Safety should raise the matter with their District Commissioner or manager at the earliest available opportunity.

Organisational Arrangements

1. The Chief Executive and the Pony Club Office shall on behalf of The Board of Trustees
 - 1.1. Ensure that Rules and procedures are published and updated regularly to cover all Pony Club activities;
 - 1.2. Ensure that adequate Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance cover, as determined by The Trustees of The Pony Club, is obtained;
 - 1.3. Ensure that adequate training and instruction is provided for Area Representatives, District Commissioners, volunteers and employees;
 - 1.4. Maintain a central record of the competent Instructors and their attendance at professional development training. Instructors may be deemed to be competent by virtue of qualification, achievement or experience in one or more field relevant to Pony Club activities;
 - 1.5. Ensure that all activities organised by the central organisation are run with due regard to the Health and Safety of everyone who may be affected by that activity;
 - 1.6. Ensure that adequate child protection procedures are notified to Area Representatives and Branch District Commissioners for implementation at all Pony Club activities;
 - 1.7. Maintain effective communications on Health and Safety issues with employees, Area Representatives and District Commissioners;
 - 1.8. Require accidents to be investigated to identify the causes so that actions may be taken to reduce the possibility of a recurrence.
2. The Branch District Commissioners shall operate their Branches in accordance with the Rules of the Pony Club and statutory requirements and with due regard for the health and safety of their Members, parents and guardians, volunteers and any other person who may be affected by the activities organised by the Branch.
3. Area Representatives are responsible for monitoring the health and safety performance of the Branches in their area.
4. Pony Club Linked Riding Centres are responsible for their own Health and Safety and Child Protection arrangements. These will be monitored by the Centre Membership Co-ordinator for their area.

Responsibilities of Employees, Officials, Volunteers, Instructors and Contractors.

All persons acting on behalf of The Pony Club or carrying **out** work for The Pony Club must:-

1. Take reasonable care for their own Health and Safety;
2. Consider the safety of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
3. Work within the limits of their own training and competence and the information and instructions they have received;

4. Refrain from intentionally misusing or recklessly interfering with any equipment provided for Health and Safety reasons;
5. Report any hazardous defects in plant and equipment or shortcomings in the existing safety arrangements to a Member of the Branch Committee, or their immediate Pony Club contact, as soon as practicable;
6. Report all accidents to a member of the Branch Committee, or their immediate Pony Club contact.

In all Pony Club activities, riders who suffer concussion, with or without loss of consciousness, will not be allowed to ride again that day. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure the Member's fitness to ride following concussion.

Health and Safety is to be given priority over any other Pony Club activity.

III. Other Legislation

It is also the policy of The Pony Club to take account of, and to implement as required, legislation on human rights, and legislation which impacts on voluntary youth organisations, and which regulates the care and supervision of young people.

In relation to Equity, The Pony Club

- a) aims to ensure that all people, irrespective of race, gender, ability, ethnic origin, social status or sexual orientation, have equal opportunities to take part in equestrianism at all levels and roles;
- b) seeks to educate and guide Pony Club Members, their employees and volunteers on the ownership, adoption and implementation of its Equity plan;
- c) intends to raise awareness of Equity through the implementation of this policy and the adoption of the Equity Action Plan; and, as a result of this process
- d) aims to monitor, review and evaluate progress in achieving the stated aims and objectives and to feed back to member bodies on progress made.

The Pony Club will ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures are fair and transparent, and meet the appropriate legal requirements.

2. DEFINITIONS

In these Rules:

“The Charity” means “The Pony Club” as constituted as a Registered Charity.

“The Pony Club Office” or “The Office” means the central **office** maintained by The Pony Club, which is also the registered address of The Pony Club.

“Board of Trustees”, “Board” or “Trustees”, means the governing body of The Pony Club.

“Equestrian Council” means the body responsible for the full range of equestrian activities of The Pony Club including all Branch and Centre matters.

“Equestrian Council Member” or “Member of Equestrian Council” means a person holding one of the following positions: - Chairman of The Pony Club, Vice-Chairman of The Pony Club, Area Representative or Nominated Member of Equestrian Council.

“Management Committee” means the executive body responsible for the day-to-day operation of The Pony Club.

“Area” means a geographic sub-division of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

“Branch” means an operating sub-division of The Pony Club, organising Pony Club activities at a local level.

“Branch District” or “District” means a geographic sub-division of an Area, forming the territory within which a Branch operates.

“Area Representative” means the person responsible for administering Pony Club activities within an Area.

“District Commissioner” means the person responsible for administering Pony Club activities within a Branch.

“Branch Operations Director” means a person appointed by the Equestrian Council to assist relationships and communication, when required, between Branches and Area Representatives, the Equestrian Council, and the Pony Club Office, and also to mediate in inter-Branch or intra-Branch disputes.

“The Pony Club Year” normally means the period from 1st January to the following 31st December.

“The Centre Membership Subscription Year” means the period of twelve months commencing from the first day of the month in which the Centre Member’s subscription was paid.

“Pony Club Linked Riding Centre” or “Centre” means a Riding Centre that has been approved to participate in the Centre Membership scheme.

“Regional Centre Co-ordinator” means the person responsible for inspecting Centres within a geographical region and for advising on Centre Membership issues within that region.

“Branch Member” means a Member of a Branch.

“Centre Member” means a Member of the Centre Membership scheme.

“Health and Safety Policy” means the Policy as stated in the introduction to these Rules.

“Parents” shall include individuals with parental responsibility.

“Year Book” means the annual publication giving information about The Pony Club.

“Web Site” means the web site of The Pony Club, available at www.pcuk.org

“Rules” and “Rules of The Pony Club” mean the Rules of The Pony Club, as published in the Year Book, and displayed on the Web Site. The Rules are determined by the Board of Trustees (in equestrian matters acting through its sub-committee, the Equestrian Council) in the spirit and best interests of The Pony Club and its objectives. The Rules may be added to, cancelled in whole or in part or altered, as the Board deems necessary. The Board may also make temporary Rules for a limited period. Changes or additions to the Rules will be published in the next issue of The Bulletin. Any query about the operation of the rules or request for clarification should be referred to the Board.

“The Bulletin” means the periodic newsletter sent to all District Commissioners by The Pony Club Office.

“Pony” means either a pony or a horse, except where the terminology is clearly specific to a pony.

“Championship” means The Pony Club Inter-Branch Championship.

“BETA” means the British Equestrian Trade Association.

“BHS” means the British Horse Society.

“he” means either he or she.

“his” means either his or her.

3. STRUCTURE

1. The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the ultimate authority of The Pony Club and is responsible for the general administration and management of the affairs of The Pony Club. The Pony Club is a charitable company limited by guarantee. A copy of the governing instrument of The Pony Club, its Memorandum and Articles of Association, is available on request from The Pony Club Office, upon payment of a fee. The Board is situated at the registered office of The Pony Club and that address will be The Pony Club Office.

The Board may delegate its authority to subsidiary bodies, officials and employees. A register shall be maintained of all delegations and authority limits.

Reporting to the Board will be the Equestrian Council, the Audit Committee, the Management Committee, and the Chief Executive. The Management Committee and the Chief Executive will also have a responsibility to the Equestrian Council.

The Chairman of The Pony Club will be appointed by the Board, after consultation with the Equestrian Council (see next paragraph). The Chairman may be either from within or without the existing Trustees or Equestrian Council. He will hold office for three years from 1st January after his appointment. A retiring Chairman will be eligible for re-appointment. The Chairman of The Pony Club will chair meetings of the Equestrian Council, and will be responsible for co-ordinating issues of policy as between the Board and/or Equestrian Council, to ensure that both are functioning well and efficiently. The Board will also appoint a Vice-Chairman of The Pony Club after similar consultation with the Equestrian Council, to assist the Chairman in the performance of his duties. He will also hold office for three years from 1st January after his appointment and will be eligible for re-appointment. If the appointed Chairman or Vice Chairman is already a Trustee, an Area Representative or a Nominated Equestrian Council Member, then, at his own discretion, he may decide to resign his original position. In such an event, the vacancy shall be filled in the manner described in the Rules.

At the end of each period of office of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of The Pony Club, the Equestrian Council shall consider the positions at its autumn Meeting, and shall make its recommendations to the Board. Should the recommendations not be endorsed, the Board may appoint another person as Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman. Casual vacancies shall be the subject of recommendations from the Equestrian Council to the next Board meeting, following the procedure described above.

II. Honorary Appointments

The Board may make honorary appointments, such as President, or Vice-President. The holders of such appointments will not, by virtue solely of that office, be members of any Pony Club committee.

III. The Equestrian Council

The Equestrian Council will be responsible for the full range of equestrian activities of The Pony Club (including Branch and Centre Membership, tack, dress, tests and competitions), on behalf of the Board of Trustees. It will be responsible for the provisions of the Rules of The Pony Club involving these activities, as well as the provisions of the Discipline Rule Books.

The Equestrian Council will meet not less than twice a year.

The Equestrian Council will consist of the Chairman of The Pony Club (who will chair meetings of the Equestrian Council), the Vice-Chairman of The Pony Club, the Area Representatives, the Treasurer of The Pony Club, and the Chairmen of the following Equestrian Council Committees:

- Training
- Centre Membership
- Health and Safety
- Eventing*
- Show Jumping*
- Dressage*
- Mounted Games*
- Tetrathlon*
- Polo*
- Polocrosse*
- Racing*
- Endurance*

The Equestrian Council Committees marked above with an asterisk comprise the Competitive Discipline Committees.

The Treasurer of The Pony Club and the Chairmen of the above Committees shall be known as the Nominated Equestrian Council Members.

In the event that a person is an Equestrian Council member in more than one capacity (e.g. as an Area Representative and also as a Committee Chairman) they shall not have any additional right of representation on the Equestrian Council and the Equestrian Council member shall only have one vote.

If a member of the Equestrian Council or an Equestrian Council Committee cannot attend a meeting, they cannot nominate an alternate person to attend on their behalf. The Chairman of The Pony Club may invite a person to attend an Equestrian Council Meeting for a specific purpose but that person shall not have a vote.

The Equestrian Council may also appoint Co-opted Advisors to the Equestrian Council. Co-opted Advisors may attend all Equestrian Council Meetings but will not be entitled to vote. Co-opted Advisors may serve for up to three years at the Equestrian Council's discretion and may be appointed again.

Equestrian Council decisions will normally be made by open vote. However, the Equestrian Council may decide to have a secret ballot if a majority of those present so wish.

Save as indicated above, all members, excluding Co-opted Advisors, will have equality of voting on all matters, although the Chairman of The Pony Club will have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes. A quorum will consist of not fewer than twelve members of the Equestrian Council entitled to vote, at least eight of whom must be Area Representatives.

IV. Audit Committee

The Audit Committee will monitor the integrity of The Pony Club's financial statements and internal controls. It will also review the risk management systems, and will make recommendations to the Board in relation to the appointment and remuneration of the external auditor. It will also hear appeals from Branches and Branch Officials that relate primarily to financial or legal matters.

The Audit Committee **must include at least one** Trustee, and will meet as required, but at least twice each year.

V. Management Committee

The Management Committee is the executive body charged with the administration of The Pony Club in accordance with the policies and guidelines established by the Board of Trustees (consulting on equestrian matters with the Equestrian Council). It will consist of the Vice-Chairman of The Pony Club, the Chief Executive, the Treasurer, the Chairman of the Training Committee, the Chairman of the Health and Safety Committee, the Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee, the Branch Operations Directors, two members elected by the Area Representatives, and one member elected by the Chairmen of the Competitive Discipline Committees. The Chairman of The Pony Club will be an ex-officio member of the Management Committee.

The two elected Area Representatives will serve for a three year period. When required, an election for a new member of the Management Committee will be held at the last meeting in the year of the Area Representatives' Committee, to take office from the following 1st January. An Area Representative who has served on the Management Committee may not immediately stand for re-election. The same Area Representative may not serve at the same time on the Board of Trustees and the Management Committee.

The elected Discipline Chairman will serve for a three year period, and may not immediately stand for re-election to the Management Committee.

Casual vacancies for any elected member of the Management Committee will be filled by a poll of the appropriate electorate. The member so elected will serve the remainder of the term of the member that he is replacing.

At the first meeting of the Management Committee each year, it shall choose a Chairman from within its ranks, who will serve as Chairman for the remainder of the year. A Chairman may be re-appointed, provided that he is still a member of the Management Committee. The Chairman will have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes.

The Management Committee will meet at regular intervals, but the members will be responsible at all times for handling issues that arise within their functional areas.

No commitment to expenditure of whatsoever kind (including the commissioning of books and videos) in excess of £5000 may be made by The Pony Club without the agreement of the Management Committee. Except in urgent circumstances, no commitment in excess of £100,000 will be made by the Management Committee without giving prior notice to the Board.

Management Committee decisions will normally be made by open vote. However, the Management Committee may decide to have a secret ballot if a majority of those present so wish. Save as indicated above, all members will have equality of voting on all matters, except the Branch Operations Directors who will only have one vote between them. The Chairman of the Management Committee will have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes. A quorum will consist of not fewer than five members of the Management Committee entitled to vote.

VI. Equestrian Council Committees

The Equestrian Council will appoint Committees to administer certain activities. These Committees will be directly responsible to the Equestrian Council, which has the power to dissolve them, or to create new Committees. The Committees will meet as and when required. All Committee decisions are subject to the agreement of the Equestrian Council.

The Equestrian Council Committees are as follows: -

- Area Representatives' Committee
- Competitive Discipline Committees
- Training Committee
- Centre Membership Committee
- Appeals Committee
- Health & Safety Committee
- Chairmen of Committees Meeting

The following Rules shall apply to all Equestrian Council Committees, with the exception of the Appeals Committee: -

Each Committee shall have a Chairman, who will normally hold office for three years, terminating at the end of the third Pony Club Year, although he may offer himself for re-appointment.

At the end of each period of office, each Committee shall consider the Chairmanship at its meeting prior to the last Equestrian Council Meeting of the year, and shall make its recommendation to the Equestrian Council. The Equestrian Council will then vote on that recommendation. Should the recommendation not be endorsed, the Equestrian Council may vote to appoint another person as Chairman. Casual vacancies shall be the subject of recommendations from the Committee to the next Equestrian Council Meeting, to be voted on as above.

If the Chairman of an Equestrian Council Committee loses the confidence of his Committee members, and he is unwilling to resign, then this should be reported to the Equestrian Council in writing, signed by a majority of the Committee members. The Equestrian Council will appoint a person to investigate fully and, if necessary, report back on the facts. The Equestrian Council, in its absolute discretion, may end the appointment of a Committee Chairman at any time upon giving written notice to the individual. The Equestrian Council will normally seek representations from the individual concerned and will give reasons for its decision.

Each Committee (other than the Training Committee) shall include at least two Area Representatives. Every eligible Area Representative shall be offered a place on at least one Committee. Area Representatives will serve on a Committee for three Pony Club Years (unless they are the Chairman of that Committee), and can offer themselves for re-appointment.

The Training Committee shall include at least three Area Representatives, who will serve on the Committee for three Pony Club Years. At the end of this period, they will not be eligible for re-appointment in their capacity as Area Representatives, but may be appointed as ordinary members of the Committee.

A newly appointed Area Representative shall not be eligible for appointment to an Equestrian Council Committee (unless he is already a member of such a Committee) until he has served for one complete Pony Club Year as an Area Representative. Other than these new Area Representatives, each Area Representative shall be invited to indicate, no later than 1st August each year, the Committees on which he wishes to serve. These should be given in order of preference. The Chairmen of Committees Meeting shall then allocate the Area Representatives to Committees, subject to ratification by the Equestrian Council.

Other than the Area Representatives, persons will be invited to become members of Equestrian Council Committees because of their expertise in a particular discipline. They will serve for a period of three years, but may be re-appointed. All appointments to Equestrian Council Committees require Equestrian Council approval.

After consultation with his Committee, each Committee Chairman shall submit a list of the proposed composition of his Committee for the coming year to the last Equestrian Council Meeting of the year. The Equestrian Council will then ratify or reject the new or re-appointed members on that list.

Proposals to fill casual vacancies shall be submitted to the next Equestrian Council Meeting after the vacancy arises.

All members of an Equestrian Council Committee shall have equal voting rights, except that Co-opted Advisors shall not have a vote. The Chairman of the Committee shall have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes. Any three members of a Committee will form a quorum.

VII. Area Representatives' Committee

The Area Representatives Committee will meet at least twice a year, under the chairmanship of the Chairman of The Pony Club, to discuss Branch matters.

VIII. Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee of the Equestrian Council hears issues or complaints that cannot be resolved by either the Area Representative or the Management Committee. However, if these involve matters that are primarily of a financial or legal nature, they should be heard by the Audit Committee.

The Committee will comprise the Chairman of The Pony Club, who will chair the Committee, and four elected Equestrian Council members, at least three of whom should be Area Representatives. They will be elected by the Equestrian Council for a three year period, with two members standing down at the end of each of the first two years in each three year cycle, and one member standing down at the end of the third year. The new members of the Committee will be elected at the last Equestrian Council meeting of the year, to take office from the following 1st January. An Equestrian Council member who has served on the Appeals Committee may not immediately stand for re-election to the Committee. Equestrian Council members serving on the Board or the Management Committee shall not be eligible for election to the Committee. Casual vacancies will be filled by election at the next Equestrian Council meeting. The member so elected will serve the remainder of the term of the member that he is replacing.

The Chairman will have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes.

The Appeals Committee will meet when required.

The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final on any matter referred to it by the Equestrian Council.

Any three members of the Appeals Committee will form a quorum.

IX. Competitive Discipline Committees

Each Competitive Discipline Committee has overall responsibility for the administration of their discipline within The Pony Club. With the support of The Pony Club Office, they are responsible for organising the Inter-Branch Championships for their discipline. They also maintain a separate discipline Rule Book which is published annually and they adjudicate on any matters requiring resolution within their discipline. These discipline Rule Books form part of the Rules of The Pony Club

Each Committee shall meet in the autumn of each year, prior to the Chairmen of Committees Meeting, to consider whether any changes are required to the Rules of their discipline. Any proposed changes will be put to the Chairmen of Committees Meeting.

Prior to the autumn meeting, the Discipline Secretary should write to any retiring Committee Members, asking if they wished to stand again. If they did so, the remaining Committee Members would be appraised of this, and asked if they wished to put forward any other nominations. If necessary, a vote should then take place at the autumn meeting.

With the approval of the Chairman of The Pony Club, a newly appointed Discipline Chairman may ask up to 50% of the Discipline Committee to resign.

X. Training Committee

The Training Committee has overall responsibility for all training activities within The Pony Club, and for all elements of horsemanship and horsemastership within competitions, and also for the commissioning of instructional publications (subject to the approval of the Management Committee, if the expenditure is in excess of £5000). They are also responsible for the administration of Tests and for the appointment and removal of Examiners to and from the Panel of Examiners for 'A' Tests.

The Training Committee shall meet in the autumn of each year, prior to the Chairmen of Committees Meeting, to consider whether any changes are required to the syllabus of each Test, or to the fees charged for 'B' and 'A' Standard Tests. Any such proposed changes will then be put to the Chairmen of Committees Meeting.

XI. Centre Membership Committee

The Centre Membership Committee has overall responsibility for the administration of Centre Membership. It represents the interests of Centre Members. It is responsible for establishing the standards required of Pony Club Linked Riding Centres and for giving approval for individual Riding Centres to join the Centre Membership scheme. To assist in carrying out this responsibility, it will appoint Regional Centre Co-ordinators to visit Riding Centres to assess their suitability. It may also remove Riding Centres that do not maintain the required standards. It will administer all competitions organised for Centre Members, and will establish and publish the Rules for such competitions.

The Centre Membership Committee shall meet in the autumn of each year, prior to the Chairmen of Committees Meeting, to consider whether any changes are required to their competition rules, or to the standards required from Riding Centres. Any such proposed changes will be put to the Chairmen of Committees Meeting.

XII. Health and Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee has overall responsibility for implementing and reviewing the Health and Safety Policy of The Pony Club, as described in Rule 1.II. It is also responsible for implementing and reviewing child protection issues, and for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Criminal Records Bureau. The Committee shall meet as required.

XIII. Chairmen of Committees Meeting

The Chairmen of Council Committees, plus the Treasurer of The Pony Club, shall meet **at least once** each year under the chairmanship of the Chairman of The Pony Club. One of the meetings will be prior to the last Equestrian Council meeting of the year. This Committee has particular responsibility for ensuring consistency of approach throughout The Pony Club. It will make recommendations to the Equestrian Council on the proposals put to it by the Training Committee, the Competitive Discipline Committees, the Health & Safety committee, and the Centre Membership Committee. They will also make recommendations on the allocation of Area Representatives to Equestrian Council Committees and the setting of competition entry fees and tests fees.

When there is a change in the Chairmanship of an Equestrian Council Committee, both the outgoing and the incoming Chairmen shall attend this meeting, but only the incoming Chairman shall be entitled to vote. Other than this, all the attendees shall have equal voting rights, except that the Chairman of The Pony Club shall have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes. A quorum shall consist of at least five voting Chairmen of Equestrian Council Committees.

XIV Treasurer of The Pony Club

The Treasurer of the Pony Club shall be appointed by the Board and will hold office for a period of three years. A retiring Treasurer will be eligible for re-appointment. The Treasurer will be responsible for all financial matters affecting The Pony Club. He shall be a member of the Management Committee.

Not later than the end of July each year, the Treasurer of The Pony Club will submit to the Board a budget for the following Pony Club Year, together with recommendations on Annual Subscriptions and Capitation Fees for that year. The Board will be required to approve or modify these proposals, after taking into account the views of the Equestrian Council.

At each Board Meeting, the Treasurer of The Pony Club will give a Financial Report, during which he will comment on any material variations from the approved budget.

XV. Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will be an employee of The Pony Club, responsible for administering the activities of The Pony Club and the Office within the policies and procedures established by the Board of Trustees and the Equestrian Council, and in accordance with statutory requirements and the approved budget. He will report to the Chairman of The Pony Club and, through him, to the Board of Trustees. He will attend all meetings of the Trustees, the Equestrian Council and Equestrian Council Committees, but shall not have a vote, except on the Management Committee.

The Chief Executive can only hire or dismiss permanent or temporary staff with the approval of the Chairman of The Pony Club.

The remuneration of The Chief Executive will be decided upon by the Chairman of The Pony Club in consultation with the Audit Committee, after taking advice from the Treasurer of The Pony Club.

In the event of a vacancy for the position of Chief Executive, the Trustees will establish a Recruitment sub-committee to recruit a new Chief Executive. This sub-committee will consist of no more than six members, to include the Chairman of The Pony Club (who will act as Chairman of the sub-committee) and the Treasurer of The Pony Club. The other members of the sub-committee may be drawn from within or without the Board and the Equestrian Council. The sub-committee will decide upon the selection policy and methods and will have absolute and irrevocable authority, on behalf of The Pony Club, to make an offer of employment to the candidate that it chooses. In the event of equality of votes, the Chairman of The Pony Club will have the casting vote.

XVI. Pony Club Conference

A meeting of Area Representatives, District Commissioners and those on Branch Committees will be held at least once a year, at a time and place set by the Equestrian Council. At this meeting, subjects put forward by Branches will be discussed and any recommendations made will be considered by the Equestrian Council.

XVII. Year Book

The Pony Club Year Book will be published annually. It will include the Rules (but not the Discipline Rules); subscriptions and Test fees; names of members of the Board of Trustees, the Equestrian Council and Equestrian Council Committees and of Branch officials and Regional Centre Co-ordinators and Centre Proprietors; the consolidated Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account for the prior year; statistical information on Branches and Centres; details of Insurance cover; information on Pony Club merchandise; the Visiting Instructors' Panel, the Dressage Judges' Panel; and dates for the coming year.

XVIII. Bankruptcy

Any member of the Board, the Equestrian Council or of Equestrian Council Committees, or a District Commissioner, who becomes bankrupt or makes a composition with his creditors, shall be disqualified from office and their appointment shall be terminated immediately. No person who is an undischarged bankrupt may be appointed to any of these offices. This Rule shall also apply to any Officer or member of a Branch Committee who has any responsibility for the financial affairs of the Branch

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

At all levels of The Pony Club, from the Board of Trustees to Branch Sub-Committees, avoidance of any potential conflict of interest must be strictly observed. Whenever an individual has a personal interest in a matter to be discussed at a meeting of a committee of which he is a member, he must: -

- a) Declare his interest before discussion begins.

- b) Be absent from the meeting for that item, unless expressly invited to remain to provide information.
- c) Not be counted in the quorum for that part of the meeting.
- d) Be absent during the vote, and have no vote on the matter.

5. MINUTES

All meetings of the Board, the Equestrian Council, the Audit Committee, the Management Committee, and the Equestrian Council Committees must be minuted, and copies of the minutes will be distributed to all members of these bodies, whether they were present at the meeting or not.

Copies of the minutes will also be distributed as follows: -

- The Equestrian Council, the Audit Committee and the Management Committee – to the Board of Trustees
- The Management Committee and the Equestrian Council Committees – to the Equestrian Council.

6. MEMBERSHIP

I. Eligibility

Membership is available to anyone until the end of The Pony Club Year or the Centre Membership Subscription Year, whichever is relevant, in which they become 21 years old.

It is open for anyone to apply for Branch Membership. It is desirable that they should have the use of a pony. Membership is of a Branch and a Member cannot join more than one Branch at one time.

Associate Membership is available for persons aged over 21 until the end of the Pony Club Year, or the Centre Membership Subscription Year, whichever is relevant, in which they become 25 years old. Associate Members must previously have been either Branch or Centre Members.

Usually Branches accept any application for Membership from people resident within their Branch District. Applications to join other Branches should be agreed with the Area Representative.

Centre Membership is intended for anyone who does not have their own pony, either owned, hired or on loan, who ride at a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre. However, anyone who owns a pony, keeps it at a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre and has no means of transporting it, may apply for Centre Membership.

Dual Membership – if the Member does obtain a pony and transport they must join their local Branch, however if they wish to remain a Centre Member as well they may do so. Subscription should be paid to both Branch & Centre. Efficiency tests must be taken at the Branch, Achievement Badges and Progressive Tests may be taken at the Centre or Branch. At Pony Club Competitions, the Member must compete on behalf of the Branch.

The decision whether to accept such an application rests with the Area Representative, who shall take advice from the Regional Centre Co-ordinator. A Centre Member who subsequently acquires a pony, and has transport, should join a Branch. In such an instance, The Pony Club Office may give a partial refund of the Centre Membership subscription.

II. Termination of Membership

If the Annual Subscription of any Branch Member has not been paid by 31st January in The Pony Club Year in which it is due, Membership is terminated from that date. Membership will also be terminated for any Centre Member who has not paid their renewal subscription by the end of their Centre Membership subscription year. As insurance cover will also cease at the same time, it is essential that a lapsed Member should not be permitted to take part in any Branch or Centre activities, except those that are open to non-Members, until such time as he rejoins The Pony Club. A lapsed Branch Member who rejoins shall be liable to pay the joining fee, but this may be waived at the District Commissioner's discretion.

A District Commissioner may at any time recommend to his Branch Committee that they end the Membership of any Branch Member who, in the opinion of the District Commissioner, shows insufficient interest in their Branch. The District Commissioner may, at his own discretion, make a Branch rule that Members must go to a certain number or percentage of the working rallies of the Branch in a calendar year unless prevented from doing so by illness, absence from home or any other reason which in the opinion of the District Commissioner justifies absence. If it is proposed to end the Membership of any Member, notice will be given to the Member, who then may make appropriate representations. The Chairman of The Pony Club or the Chief Executive may suspend any Member whose conduct is under investigation.

The Equestrian Council (or, throughout this Rule, the Management Committee pending a meeting of the Equestrian Council) may expel any Member whose conduct is such, in its opinion, to be injurious to the character or reputation of The Pony Club or of any of its Branches or Centres or to the interests of The Pony Club or its Members. The request for such an expulsion will be initiated by the decision of a Branch Committee to recommend to their Area Representative the expulsion of the Member. The Area Representative will then present the case to the Equestrian Council. Alternatively, the Equestrian Council may decide to suspend the Member for a fixed period. In the case of a Centre Member, a Regional Centre Co-ordinator will recommend the expulsion to the Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee, who will present the case to the Equestrian Council.

Before the Equestrian Council expels or suspends a Member, he will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and full opportunity to defend himself, and to justify or explain his conduct. This will include making representations by way of defence, justification and explanation on behalf of the Member by the parents. If a majority of the Equestrian Council present at the inquiry is of the opinion that the Member has been guilty of the alleged conduct and that the Member or parents of such Member has or have failed to justify or explain it satisfactorily, the Equestrian Council shall decide either to expel or suspend the Member from The Pony Club.

The Equestrian Council may also terminate the membership of a Member on medical grounds, if it considers that the continuation of membership would be dangerous or detrimental to either the Member himself or to others.

In reaching its decision, the Equestrian Council shall take into account such medical reports that may be available to it, but the absence of any medical reports shall not preclude the Equestrian Council from taking termination action.

Before the Equestrian Council terminates Membership on medical grounds, the Member will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and full opportunity to justify his continued membership. This will include making representations by way of justification and explanation on behalf of the Member by the parents and or by appropriate medical professionals.

If a majority of the Equestrian Council present at the inquiry is of the opinion that the Member's medical condition is not appropriate to his continuing membership, then the membership will be terminated.

In the event of either expulsion or termination, the Area Representative or the Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee as appropriate has the authority to suspend the Member from membership pending the Equestrian Council or Management Committee inquiry. Any expulsion, suspension, or termination by the Management Committee shall require ratification by the next meeting of the Equestrian Council, but the Member shall be excluded from membership until that meeting.

On the termination of membership for medical reasons, the Member will be entitled to a pro-rata refund of the subscription paid for the current year.

A District Commissioner may refuse to accept an application for Membership or renew the Membership of a Member. Reasons for such action would normally be given.

On the ending of Membership, either because of age, non-payment of subscription, resignation, expulsion or any other reason whatsoever, the Member will forfeit all the privileges of Membership and all rights against The Pony Club. Subscriptions will not, in such circumstances, be returnable and the Member will still be liable for all Annual Subscriptions that had become due and remained unpaid at the date of ending of the Membership.

III. Parents and Supporters

Where the behaviour of a parent or supporter is considered to be detrimental to the conduct of branch activities it may be necessary to ban them from attending Pony Club activities. The parent or supporter should be informed of the decision by means of a letter from the District Commissioner which should indicate the reasons for the decision and indicate that the parent or supporter can appeal against the warning to the Area Representative within three weeks of receipt of the warning and that if this appeal is not successful they may appeal to the Pony Club Review and Appeals Committee.

They should also be informed that the member with whom they are associated is still welcome at Pony Club activities and that the District Commissioner will indicate on entry forms to competitions run by other branches that they have been banned from attending Pony Club activities.

7. BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

I. Joining Fee and Subscription

The Trustees will set the rate for the joining fee and for the Annual Subscription, and will publish these in The Year Book. They will also determine the Capitation Fee, which is that part of the Annual Subscription that is paid by Branches to The Pony Club Office. A new Branch is exempted from paying the Capitation Fee in The Pony Club Year in which it is formed, and also in the following Pony Club Year.

The Annual Subscription is due on 1st January for the following year. The first Annual Subscription is due when first applying for Membership. A new Member joining for the first time in July or August will pay a reduced subscription, as published in The Year Book, for the remainder of The Pony Club Year. A new Member joining for the first time between September and December, and paying the subscription at the rate set for the following Pony Club Year, will not be required to pay another Annual Subscription until the end of the following Pony Club Year. In this latter case, such a Member shall not be included in the Annual Report and Capitation Return for the Pony Club Year in which he joined, but shall be treated as a new Member in the following Pony Club Year.

Joining fees and Annual Subscriptions are paid to the Branch to which application for Membership has been made. Renewal Subscriptions are also paid to the Branch.

II. Visiting Members

All Branch Members will be welcomed as occasional visitors at working rallies or other Branch activities of a Branch other than their own Branch, provided that the agreement of both District Commissioners is obtained. A Visiting Member cannot represent the Branch that he is visiting in any Pony Club competitions. He may not take Tests (other than Achievement Badges) at that Branch without the permission of the District Commissioner of his own Branch.

III. Transfers

Members wishing to transfer between Branches are actively discouraged from doing so, as the Equestrian Council believes transfers are not in the best interests of The Pony Club as a whole.

A Member who changes Branches, other than because of a change of residence, may not compete in any Championship qualifying competition or Championships (Open, Intermediate or Novice) as an Individual or Team Member for fourteen calendar months from the date of transfer.

On change of residence, however, into another Branch's district, a Member may choose either to remain with his existing Branch or transfer to the Branch into whose district he has moved. Provided he requests a transfer within twelve calendar months of the change of residence, the fourteen calendar month ban on competing in any Championship qualifying competition or Championships will not be imposed.

If the transfer is requested because the Branch to which the Member currently belongs does not offer the opportunity to take part in Mounted Games, Polo or Polocrosse at any level, be it rallies, friendly competitions or Area Competitions, the fourteen month rule will not apply to those disciplines, but it will apply to those other disciplines in which he could have taken part.

In the case of lapsed membership, anyone who applies to join a different Branch is subject to the transfer provisions as set out above and a Transfer Form must be submitted. For competition purposes, the new membership will be deemed to start from the date that the subscription is paid, or February 1st, whichever is the later. Individual consideration will be given in cases where Membership has lapsed for two years or more.

Every request for a transfer must be made to the Area Representative and a Transfer Form will be issued. The Transfer Form must be completed by the respective District Commissioners of the Branches concerned and returned, for consideration, by the Area Representative(s). Any transfer agreed by the Area Representative(s) and by both District Commissioners can go ahead without reference to The Pony Club Office. If the proposed transfer is not agreed by the Area Representative(s) and both District Commissioners, it shall be referred to the Management Committee.

A final appeal may be made to the Appeals Committee, which will have the absolute discretion and authority to approve or reject any transfer and will generally give reasons for doing so. It will be determined what, if any, representation of interested parties is appropriate and, in relevant circumstances, reasonable and adequate notice of meetings will be given. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

In the year of transfer, no part of the joining fee or Annual Subscription of a Member will be payable to the "receiving" Branch, unless the Subscription is paid to the "receiving" Branch after the transfer.

IV. Branches outside the UK

The Rules of The Pony Club apply only to Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Any Club situated outside Great Britain and Northern Ireland and having objects similar to those of The Pony Club may, with its approval, be affiliated to The Pony Club and when and so long as it is affiliated it must be known by a name indicating that it is a Branch of The Pony Club.

Any affiliated Club, Advisory Board or Committee will make any rules for its constitution and organisation as it shall think fit, but these rules must first be sent to and approved by The Pony Club who may require any amendments and additions and deletions as it thinks proper. In any event approval will be withheld unless the rules incorporate the objects and spirit of the Rules of The Pony Club.

A Member of an affiliated Overseas Branch can transfer to a UK Branch and become a full Member. The same conditions will apply as for British Members (see Transfer rule).

Affiliated Clubs will contribute an affiliation fee to The Pony Club, which will be set by the Trustees.

Any approval by the Equestrian Council given to Affiliated Clubs may at any time be withdrawn when all privileges will be terminated. Adequate notice will be given, along with reasons for withdrawal, in reasonable time. The Equestrian Council from time to time may also vary the conditions of Membership and the Rules of Affiliated Clubs, upon reasonable notice.

The Equestrian Council may at any time make new Rules as they think appropriate for Affiliated Clubs and Advisory Boards or Committees.

8. AREA AND BRANCH ORGANISATION

1. Areas and Branches

The Pony Club's administration in the UK is divided into Areas, which are defined by the Equestrian Council. Each Area will be headed by an Area Representative. Areas consist of a number of Branches and the Area Representative will agree the geographical boundary of each Branch. The creation of a new Branch, or the amalgamation of existing Branches, must have the prior agreement of the Equestrian Council. If a Branch cannot agree its boundaries with the Area Representative, it will have the right of appeal to the Equestrian Council. It is permissible for Branches to have overlapping boundaries.

Branches must follow the purposes of The Pony Club, as stated in Rule 1.1, and are governed by the Rules of The Pony Club. The Equestrian Council shall have the power to suspend or expel a Branch or an Officer or Committee member of that Branch, if it believes there to be a breach of this requirement. Similar action may be taken if the Equestrian Council believe that The Pony Club is being brought into disrepute.

Before the Equestrian Council recommends the Board of Trustees to suspend or expel a Branch, the District Commissioner and Branch Secretary will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and full opportunity to defend the Branch and to justify or explain its conduct.

This will include making representations by way of defence, justification and explanation on its behalf. If the majority of the Equestrian Council present are of the opinion that the Branch is in breach of its obligations and that its representatives have failed to justify or explain it satisfactorily, the Equestrian Council shall decide either to suspend or to expel the Branch. In the case of the proposed suspension or expulsion of an Officer or Committee member, they shall be entitled to similar notice periods and entitlement to defence.

II. Area Representatives

The District Commissioners in each Area will elect, from amongst themselves or from outside, an Area Representative. On a vacancy, or in June of the third year of an Area Representative's term, The Pony Club Office will ask the District Commissioners in that Area to nominate their choice, having confirmed that the person concerned is willing to stand. The Pony Club Office will then organise a postal vote. District Commissioners can nominate themselves.

Area Representatives will be confirmed by the Equestrian Council. They will hold office for three years from 1st January after the date of their election. A retiring Area Representative will be eligible for re-election.

They will represent their Area on the Equestrian Council, and will offer help and advice to District Commissioners and/or their Committees on the organisation and administration of the individual Branches in their Area either as Area Representative or as a member of the Equestrian Council, as required.

The duties and responsibilities of Area Representatives are: -

- To ensure that their Branches are aware of The Pony Club's Health and Safety Policy, and other statutory obligations.

- To hold at least two Area Meetings per year. (See below).

- To co-ordinate with Branches in the Area the dates of Inter-Branch events, Instructors Courses and training days and to arrange organisers, dates and venues for Area Inter-Branch competitions.

- To find out the views and wishes of their Branches and put them to the Equestrian Council.

- To pass to The Pony Club Office anything in the Area that requires its attention.

- To advise the Equestrian Council: -

- On the suitability of new District Commissioners elected by Branches in their Area.

- On new Branches proposed in their Area.

- To handle complaints.

- To give, when appropriate, general advice, help and support to District Commissioners and if necessary, to exercise supervision on:

- The appointment of new District Commissioners

- Branch Committee problems

- Branch programmes

- Health, Safety and Welfare matters

- Transfers between Branches

To accredit Instructors, Trainers and Nominees for the Visiting Instructors' Panel and National Examiners' Panel.

To organise or delegate the responsibility of organising Area Training courses for Instructors, Examiners for 'AH' (Horse and Pony Care) and 'B' Test levels, and candidates for the higher Tests as required by their Branches.

To approve 'A' Test (Riding) nominations.

To arrange 'AH' Test days, have a panel of Examiners, and either act themselves or appoint an 'AH' Test steward for the Area.

To have an up-to-date panel of Examiners for 'B' Tests and send it to The Pony Club Office each year.

To organise, or delegate the responsibility for appointing, a suitable 'B' Test Examiner to attend a study day to make sure there is a level standard of examining for the Test in the Area. Examiners should attend at least one study day every two years to remain on the Area Panel.

To keep a record of passes at all levels of 'B' Tests.

To advise Regional Centre Co-coordinators their opinion of any Riding Centre in their Area applying to become a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre.

To assist Centre Proprietors to find Examiners for Pony Club Tests up to and including 'C' Standard.

To let The Pony Club Office know of any suitable Members from their Area for overseas visits and other events.

To inform The Pony Club Office of any suitable students for any nationally organised course, such as the Young Instructors' Advanced Course and Senior Instructors' Courses. All final decisions on these suggestions must rest with the Equestrian Council.

If an Area Representative loses the confidence of his District Commissioners, and he is unwilling to resign, then this should be reported to the Equestrian Council in writing and signed by a majority of the District Commissioners in the Area. The Equestrian Council will appoint a person to investigate fully and, if necessary, report the facts to the Equestrian Council. The Equestrian Council in its absolute discretion, may end the appointment of an Area Representative at any time upon giving written notice to the individual.

The Equestrian Council will normally seek representations from the individual concerned, and will give reasons for its decision. However, in certain circumstances (which it may in its absolute discretion determine), it may decide not to give reasons.

Area Representatives are given an Annual Grant to meet Area expenses (in addition to their travelling expenses), and an Area Training Grant. A supplementary Training Grant is available if required.

III. Area Meetings

At least twice per year, Area Representatives will hold meetings with the District Commissioners (or their representatives) in their Area. If so wished, these may be open meetings. The purpose of these meetings shall be to provide a forum for debating areas of concern. Area Representatives should obtain the views of their District Commissioners on these matters, whilst recognising the independence of individual Branches to conduct their own activities, subject to the ultimate authority of the Equestrian Council. One of the meetings shall be held in the autumn, prior to the last Equestrian Council meeting of the year.

The Pony Club Office will refund the travelling expenses of one Branch delegate to go to no more than three Area Meetings each year. The District Commissioner of the Branch should make requests for this refund direct to The Pony Club Office.

IV. District Commissioners

Each Branch will be managed by a Branch Committee under a District Commissioner. The first District Commissioner of a Branch will be appointed for three years by the Equestrian Council and on the recommendation of the Area Representative.

When the term of office of a District Commissioner has expired, the Branch Committee will elect his successor, although the retiring District Commissioner may offer himself for reelection. If he is offering himself for re-election, the retiring District Commissioner cannot vote in this election, and must retire from the meeting whilst the election and votes take place. The other Members of the Branch Committee at that meeting will appoint a person present to act as Chairman for the election. In the event of an equality of votes, the acting Chairman will have a casting vote. If the new District Commissioner is appointed before 1st July in the calendar year, his term will end at the third 31st December after the date of his appointment. If he is appointed after 30th June, his term will end at the fourth 31st December after the date of his appointment.

If the retiring District Commissioner is not standing for re-election then he does not have to retire from the meeting and will continue to act as Chairman of the Branch Committee until the end of his period of office. In the event of there being more than one candidate for District Commissioner, the election will be by secret ballot and it will be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Branch Committee to provide a sufficient number of ballot papers for each Committee Member present to vote. All candidates nominated for District Commissioner will retire from the meeting when the ballot is taking place and will not return until all the votes have been counted and the result given to the Chairman of the meeting.

Candidates will not have a vote. The newly elected District Commissioner will take office on the next 1st January, unless the position of District Commissioner is vacant, in which case he will take office immediately.

The appointment of the District Commissioner elected will be subject to the approval of the Equestrian Council, which will take the opinion of the Area Representative into account.

For all District Commissioners approved by Council after June 2006, their appointment will not be confirmed until they have attended a District Commissioners' Training Day. If a District Commissioner has not attended a District Commissioners' Training Day within 12 months of receiving Equestrian Council approval, his Area Representative must either revoke his appointment or grant him an extension of time. The maximum extension allowed is one further period of 12 months. Until the approval and training process is completed, a new District Commissioner will run the Branch in an acting capacity.

In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Equestrian Council, two Joint District Commissioners of a Branch may be appointed. However, in this event, one of the District Commissioners must agree to accept the ultimate responsibility for carrying out the duties and responsibilities of a District Commissioner, as detailed below.

No person who is financially interested in letting out or selling horses, in instructing in equitation or keeping livery for personal profit will be eligible for appointment as a District Commissioner except in special circumstances which the Equestrian Council in their absolute discretion will decide. A District Commissioner does not need to be a member of the Branch Committee before election.

If any person ceases to be a District Commissioner for any reason, or if a District Commissioner elected by a Branch Committee is not approved by the Equestrian Council, the Branch Committee will immediately hold a Committee meeting and will elect a District Commissioner to take the place of the existing one. The District Commissioner thus elected will hold office for three years.

Such an election will be subject to the approval of the Equestrian Council and the training process as detailed above.

The Equestrian Council generally will, but is not required to, give reasons for not giving its approval of the appointment of a District Commissioner elected by a Branch Committee. It may allow representations from the candidate.

A District Commissioner is not allowed to make a cash or other financial contribution towards the expenses of his Branch. This does not preclude a District Commissioner from waiving repayment of his travelling or out of pocket expenses, if he so wishes.

The duties and responsibilities of District Commissioners are to ensure that:

Their Branch complies fully with The Pony Club's Health, Safety and Welfare Policy, and other statutory obligations.

He is familiar with The Pony Club's Health and Safety Rule Book, and must ensure that a copy is given to every Camp Organiser.

Camps, Rallies, lectures and other events are organised for the Branch Members

A record is kept of all Members of the Branch.

Joining fees and Annual Subscriptions are collected.

All returns and moneys required by the Rules are sent to The Pony Club Office according to the established timetable.

The names of Instructors used by the Branch, and their qualifications, are sent to The Pony Club Office each year for approval.

Minutes are taken of all Branch Committee Meetings and Annual Meetings, and are kept in a Minute Book.

Simple financial accounts for the Branch are kept and arrangements made for the inspection of them if required by the Trustees. A financial statement should be produced at each meeting of the Branch Committee.

Accounts should be audited yearly by an appropriate person or reviewed by a member of the Branch Committee. **The auditor or reviewer must not be related in any way to the Treasurer or reside at the same address as the Treasurer.**

Annual accounts are sent to The Pony Club Office on the form provided. The accounts of all Sub-Committees, Parents' Associations or Support Groups must also be included in the Branch Return.

A register is kept of all of the fixed assets (land, buildings, vehicles, caravans, trailers, jumps, trophies and other equipment) belonging to the Branch, whether or not the Branch capitalises fixed assets in its accounts. Items costing or valued (whichever is the greater) less than £100 need not be entered on the register. Property comprising a set should be priced as a set, not as individual items. This register must be physically checked at least once every year.

The Branch Committee is made aware of all important information from The Pony Club Office.

Any other tasks and responsibilities that are given by the Equestrian Council are carried out.

V. Branch Committee and Committee Members

The Branch Committee will consist of not less than five people including the District Commissioner.

The Committee will choose the following Officers of the Branch: - Secretary, Treasurer, Health and Safety Officer, and Child Protection Officer. It is also recommended that a Chief Instructor be appointed. A person, including the District Commissioner, may hold more than one appointment, except that the Treasurer may not be the District Commissioner, nor may he be anybody residing at the same address as the District Commissioner. Additionally, the Committee may opt to appoint an Assistant District Commissioner.

All Officers and Committee members will be appointed for a three-year term, terminating at the third 31st December after the date of their appointment, but may offer themselves for re-appointment. A Branch Committee can at any time increase or reduce its number provided that it will not be lower than five. To do this or to fill casual vacancies, the Committee can at any time elect new members to its Committee.

Inherited Committees – In exceptional circumstances, after consultation and with the approval of the Area Representative, a newly appointed DC may ask up to 50% of the Branch Committee to resign.

The District Commissioner will be the Chairman of the Branch Committee. However, if he is unable to be present at a Committee meeting, the other members present shall choose one of their number to chair the meeting. The Branch Committee of each Branch will meet at least four times each year. A quorum will consist of not less than three members. Questions at any meeting will be decided by a majority vote. In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman will have a casting vote. If a member of the Branch Committee cannot attend a meeting, they cannot nominate an alternate person to attend on their behalf.

The Treasurer must present an Income and Expenditure Account and a Balance Sheet for the previous Pony Club Year, for approval by the Committee. This should be done no later than the first Branch Committee meeting after the end of February.

The accounting records of the Branch (including, but not limited to, ledgers, bank statements, invoices, cheque books and counterfoils, paying in books and counterfoils, pass books and computerised records) are the property of the Branch. Should the accounts be kept on a computer, then the rights to use any proprietary software (including serial numbers and activation codes) must be owned by the Branch. Accounting records kept in a computer must be securely backed up at regular intervals, at least monthly. If the computer system is password protected, the password must be known by another member of the Branch Committee as well as the Treasurer.

Regulation of charities has become increasingly strict, particularly in regard to the management of finances. A pamphlet “Guidelines for Branch Treasurers” is issued to all Branch Treasurers and District Commissioners, (and is also available on the web site), and this gives advice on the duties and responsibilities of Treasurers. Should it appear that a Treasurer or any other person carrying out the functions of a Treasurer, **or any other person performing financial functions for the Branch (such as cheque signing or handling cash)**, is not providing the required level of financial stewardship, the Management Committee may suspend them from office, and order that all of the Branch’s financial records and documents should be surrendered to a named person.

In the period between Management Committee meetings, the Treasurer of The Pony Club may initiate the suspension.

The Management Committee shall order an investigation into the complaint against the suspended person. Depending on the outcome of this investigation, he may either be reinstated or removed from office. In the latter case, he shall have the right to appeal to the Audit Committee, the decision of which shall be final.

If a Branch Committee loses confidence in the District Commissioner, or a member of the Committee, and he is unwilling to resign, then this will be reported to the Area Representative. The Area Representative will investigate and report the facts to the Equestrian Council.

The Area Representative or the Equestrian Council may also initiate such an investigation. The Equestrian Council may also deem it appropriate that a person other than the Branch's Area Representative should carry out any investigation. The Equestrian Council, in its absolute discretion, may end the appointment of a District Commissioner or Branch Committee Member at any time upon giving written notice, both to the individual and to the Secretary of the Branch. The Equestrian Council would normally seek representations from the individual concerned, and would give reasons for its decision. However, in certain circumstances (which it may in its absolute discretion determine), it may decide not to give reasons.

A Branch Committee may create one or more Sub-Branches in outlying parts of the District covered by the Branch. These Sub-Branches will be managed by the Branch Committee who can appoint a Sub-Committee for that purpose. The District Commissioner and at least one other member of the Branch Committee will be members of any Sub-Committee. This rule also applies to Parents' Associations/Support Groups, etc.

The funds of any Sub-Branches, Parents' Associations, or any other Support Group and their use are under the control of the District Commissioner and the Branch Committee, and they may instruct that all or part of such funds shall be transferred to the Branch account.

VI. Parents' Meeting

Each Branch must hold a Parents' Meeting annually, **open to parents and Members**. As a minimum, the Meeting must include a report from the District Commissioner on the activities of the past year, the presentation of a simple financial statement by the Treasurer, and questions and opinions from the floor. Other reports may be given as appropriate, and awards may be presented. This Meeting has no authority to impose decisions on the Branch Committee.

VII. Returns to The Pony Club Office

To comply with Charity law, all Branches are required to submit an Annual Financial Return to The Pony Club Office by 28th February following the end of The Pony Club Year. Failure to do this may result in fines being imposed on The Pony Club, which will be re-charged to the Branch(es) concerned.

The funds of all Sub-Branches, Parents' Associations and other Sub-Groups must be reported, either separately, or consolidated with the Branch.

Capitation Returns must be sent to The Pony Club Office twice yearly, together with the appropriate Capitation Fee. The first Return is due by 28th February, and should include all renewals and new Members up to and including 31st January. In exceptional circumstances, which would generally be of hardship, the Treasurer of The Pony Club may grant a Branch permission to dispense with the first Return and to report all Membership information with the second Return. In such a case, the capitation fees will not become due until the second Return. The Second Return, which includes all subsequent renewals and new Members up to and including 31st August, forms part of the Annual Report (see below).

For the purposes of the Capitation Returns and the Capitation Fees, a Member who transfers from one Branch to another during the course of The Pony Club Year shall be reported by the Branch to which he has paid his subscription. He should be excluded completely from the Return of the other Branch.

The Annual Report, which includes the second Capitation Return, together with statistical information about the Branch and details of Branch Officers, must be sent to The Pony Club Office, to arrive by 30th September.

A Branch which has failed to submit any of the following: -

- The Annual Financial Return,
- The First Capitation Return (unless permission has been given to dispense with it),
- The Second Capitation Return
- The Annual Report
- Capitation Fees that are due.

within six weeks after the specified due date, shall incur a late submission fee. If the item is still outstanding three months after the specified due date, a further late submission fee will be incurred. The fee(s) will be published in The Year Book, or in the Bulletin. The invoice for the fee will be addressed to the District Commissioner of the Branch. If it is not paid within 28 days from the date of the invoice, the Branch and/or one or more of its Officers or Committee members may be suspended from membership of The Pony Club until such time as it is paid, and the Return is received. If a Return or Report has to be returned to a Branch because it contains errors, the Branch will remain in default until the satisfactorily corrected Return or Report (together with any payment that may be due) is received at The Pony Club Office. The Chairman of The Pony Club has discretion to waive this Rule if he is satisfied that there are sufficient extenuating circumstances. With the agreement of the Area Representative, the Management Committee may impose different reporting requirements upon Branches that are persistently late in filing their Returns.

It is a requirement of The Pony Club's insurers that a list of the Members covered by public liability insurance can be made available to them if required. To satisfy this requirement, all Branches must submit details of their current Membership by means of the on-line Members Database.

VIII. Branch Presidents

A Branch Committee may have a Branch President, but a person shall not by virtue only of being the President become a Member of the Branch Committee. Presidents shall serve for a three-year term, terminating at the third 31st December after the date of their appointment. They can be re-appointed by the invitation of the Branch Committee.

IX. Closing of Branches

If a Branch, for whatever reason, ceases to exist it is the duty of the District Commissioner, or if there is not a District Commissioner then of the Secretary of the Branch Committee, to send the following to The Pony Club Office: -

- All the funds of the Branch and of any Sub-Branch(es) under the management of the Branch Committee.
- All the Branch Membership records, including those of any Sub-Branch(es).
- All financial books and statements of the Branch and any Sub-Branch(es)
- The Minute Books of the Branch and of any Sub-Branch(es).
- All other significant documents held by the Branch and any Sub-Branch(es).
- An inventory of all equipment (such as jumps) held and owned by the Branch and any Sub-Branch(es).

The Equestrian Council shall decide the disposition of Branch equipment and assets, although it may delegate this decision to the Area Representative

X. General Complaints

The Branch Committee must consider any difficulty, complaint or controversy in the Branch. If it cannot satisfactorily be dealt with by them, a report, signed by at least two Members of the Branch Committee, should be sent to The Pony Club Office, who will consult the Area Representative. The Area Representative may decide to refer the complaint to the Branch Operations Director. If the complaint concerns the Area Representative, The Pony Club Office will refer it to the Equestrian Council, who will consider it in the manner previously specified.

9. BRANCH ACTIVITIES

I. Scope

Branches have the right to arrange their own programme of activities, subject only to compliance with these Rules and to any directions that may be given by the Equestrian Council or the Management Committee. A Branch Programme, listing forthcoming activities approved by the District Commissioner, should be given to all Members at regular intervals.

A Branch will not hold an activity in the District of any other Branch (unless it is in shared territory) except by invitation or permission of the other District Commissioner. This should not unreasonably be refused. This Rule shall not apply to commercial premises.

At Pony Club Rallies and other mounted activities, the following are unacceptable: -

- ponies that are aged under four years.
- ponies that are infirm through old age;
- ponies that are ill, thin or lame;

- ponies that are a danger to their riders or to other Members or their ponies;
- mares that are heavy in-foal, mares in milk and mares with foal at foot.

Stallions can only be ridden at Pony Club events by Members if they obtain written permission from their District Commissioner and must wear identifying discs on their bridle in the interests of safety.

All ponies are expected to be properly groomed and well turned out.

If Branches incur expenses to pay for Instructors and/or facilities, it is permissible to charge Members a commensurate fee for attendance at an activity. Membership of The Pony Club does not confer any right to free rallies, although these may be given if funds permit.

II. Working Rallies

Rallies will be held when required, and organised by Branch Committees. Nobody can hold a Rally or give Instruction at a Rally unless authorised by the District Commissioner.

A working Rally is one at which instruction is given and which is open to all Members of the Branch within the age range for which it is intended. It may be either a mounted or unmounted Rally. An unmounted Rally is usually for horse and pony care instruction. Team practices or coaching sessions do not qualify as Working Rallies.

For Area Competitions and above, Members must have been to a minimum of three working rallies since the previous 1st July, to be eligible to represent their Branch. Camp counts as one Working Rally. Below this level, Branches may adopt their own policy.

III. Practices

Practices for the various discipline competitions shall be announced in the Branch Programme, so that all eligible Members wishing to take part may do so. Any additional practices that are arranged within the period covered by the current Branch Programme, but after the Programme has been distributed, must have the approval of the District Commissioner.

IV. Pony Club Camps

A Camp is an assembly of the Members of a Branch, together with their ponies, held over a period of several days, usually during the summer holidays. It may be either residential or non-residential for both Members and ponies. The object of Camp is to provide an instructional holiday for Members and their ponies. Instruction should be given each day, but the holiday element must not be neglected and there should be a balanced mix of enjoyable activities and competitions. Not all of these activities and competitions need to be equestrian in nature. Camp is intended to be fun.

In view of the additional responsibilities for the Health, Safety and Welfare of the Members that arise from the very nature of Camp, Branches must plan Camp organisation very carefully, especially for residential Camps. Rigorous Risk Assessments must be carried out at all venues to be used, and both the District Commissioner and the person in charge of the Camp (the Camp Organiser) must be fully conversant with The Pony Club's Health and Safety Rule Book on child protection. Camp Organisers should be given guidance on supervision levels and child protection, particularly at night.

A responsible adult should be available to the Members at all times of the day and night. There should also be a trained First Aider equipped with a mobile telephone and an appropriately stocked First-Aid Box. Arrangements for catering must ensure that all food hygiene regulations are fully met.

V. Competitions

A Branch may organise competitions in any of The Pony Club's disciplines. These competitions can either be restricted to the Branch's own Members, restricted to Pony Club Members from any Branch or open to the general public. All competitions organised by Pony Club Branches shall be conducted under the Rules as printed in the applicable Discipline Rule Book, unless otherwise stated in the schedule of classes and regulations published for the competition.

If a Branch organises a competitive event that is open to Members of other Branches, but not to the general public, then the entry form must require a visiting competitor's Branch to be identified. Either the District Commissioner or the Secretary of the visiting competitor's Branch must countersign the entry form.

Cash or other valuable prizes must not be given at Pony Club competitions. Prizes should normally take the form of rosettes and/or trophies.

VI. Other Activities

A Branch can arrange other activities for its Members and their families, such as a Quiz, outings, social events and fund-raising events. These other activities do not need to be equestrian in nature.

10. CENTRE MEMBERSHIP

I. Purpose and Scope of Activities

Centre Membership is intended to enable anyone who rides at Centres, but who does not own a pony, to become a Member of The Pony Club. They are able to take Pony Club Tests up to and including AH Standard as well as the Progressive Tests. They can also take part in the Achievement Badges scheme.

Competitions may be held at Centres, and Centre Members are also eligible to participate in the following: -

Pony Club Winter League Show Jumping and Dressage Competitions

National Quiz.

Horse & Pony Care

Dressage to Music

Mounted Games

Novice Championships (Team & Individuals) Dressage, Show Jumping and Eventing
Intermediate Championships (Individuals only) Dressage, Show Jumping, Eventing and Tetrathlon.

Polocrosse

Polo

Racing

Endurance

Centre Equitation

Centre Members have Third Party Legal Liability Insurance cover.

Centre Members may be invited to take part as individuals, or as a team, in Branch competitions restricted to Members of The Pony Club.

II. Membership

The Trustees will set the rate for the Annual Subscription and will publish this in The Year Book.

The first Annual Subscription is due when first applying for Membership. The initial Membership application must be endorsed by the Centre Proprietor.

The Annual Subscription runs for twelve months from the first day of the month in which the Subscription is received. A renewal reminder will be sent to the Member one month before the end of the Centre Membership Subscription Year.

The Equestrian Council may expel any Member whose conduct is such, in their opinion, to be injurious to the character or reputation of The Pony Club, to any of its Centres, to the interests of The Pony Club or Members or whose conduct shall in the opinion of the Equestrian Council, make a Member unfit or unsuitable to continue as a Member.

Before the Equestrian Council expels a Member, they will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, full opportunity to defend themselves and to justify or explain their conduct. This will include making representations by way of defence, justification and explanation on behalf of the Member by the parents. If the majority of the Equestrian Council present at the inquiry are of the opinion that the Member has been guilty of the alleged conduct and that the Member or parents of such Member has or have failed to justify or explain it satisfactorily, the Equestrian Council shall ask the Member to resign. If they do not resign the Equestrian Council will expel the Member from The Pony Club.

The Pony Club Office may refuse to renew the Membership of a Member. Reasons for such action would normally be given.

On the ending of Membership, either because of age, non-payment of subscription, resignation, expulsion or any other reason whatsoever, the Member will forfeit all the privileges of Membership and all rights against The Pony Club. Subscriptions will not, in such circumstances be returnable and the Member will still be liable for all Annual Subscriptions that had become due and remained unpaid at the date of ending of the Membership.

III. Regional Centre Co-ordinators

The duties and responsibilities of a Regional Centre Co-ordinator are:

To visit all riding schools who apply to become a Pony Club Linked Centre & report their findings to the Centre Membership Executive Officer.

To revisit each of the existing Pony Club Linked Centres in their Area annually & report their findings to the Centre Membership Executive Officer.

To be a point of contact for the Centres in their Area for advice & assistance with Pony Club Tests and other aspects of Pony Club within the Centre.

To assist the Centre Membership Executive Officer & Area Representative in communicating national or regional events, qualifying competitions & training opportunities to the Pony Club Linked Centres.

IV. Pony Club Linked Riding Centres

When a Riding Centre Proprietor applies to join the scheme, the Area Representative will be informed and the Riding Centre will be visited by a Regional Centre Co-ordinator.

Provided that the Centre Membership Committee is satisfied that the Centre meets the required standards, the Centre Proprietor will be invited to enter into a legal agreement regulating the relationship between himself and The Pony Club. The Riding Centre will become known as The..... Pony Club Centre and its participation in the scheme will be renewable annually through a Letter of Agreement.

The Equestrian Council may, at its absolute discretion, withhold or terminate a Centre's participation in the scheme at any time if the Centre is unable to provide, or ceases to provide, the benefits of Centre Membership as determined in Section 10.1 above, or ceases to meet the standards required by The Pony Club. Adequate notice will be given, along with reasons for withdrawal, in reasonable time.

Linked Centres will display a Pony Club Centre plaque.

All Centres will hold a current licence under the Riding Schools Act.

All Centres must have current Public Liability Insurance Cover, which must include cover for all their Pony Club activities. Members riding Centre owned ponies will be covered by The Pony Club Third Party Legal Liability Insurance Policy when taking part in any Pony Club activity. However, the pony itself will not be covered by this Insurance.

Instructors that are not on the current British Horse Society Register of Instructors should attend a Pony Club accreditation day at least once every two years. On attending an accreditation day, Instructors can get their logbook signed to record their attendance. Logbooks are available from Pony Club Headquarters free of charge.

Centres are required to provide the benefits of Membership, including instruction to Members on all aspects of equitation.

All Health and Safety and Child Protection requirements are the responsibility of the Centre.

V. Pony Club Tests for Centre Members

Centre Members may take The Pony Club Tests up to and including AH Standard.

The Centre Proprietor must contact his Regional Co-ordinator or Area Representative, or the local District Commissioner if known, in order to find a suitable examiner for the Test to be taken at D, D+, C or C+ Standard. Thereafter, the Proprietor must consult the Area Representative as to how and where further Tests are to be taken.

The Riding component of the C Test must be taken outside and not in an indoor school. The E Standard Test is optional, but all other Tests must be taken in sequence.

It will be the responsibility of the Proprietor to order any badges, felts, and certificates for presentation to successful candidates.

The Proprietor or Test Organiser will inform The Pony Club Office of any impending Test days, at least one month before the proposed date. A Test Results Sheet, as supplied by the Office, must be completed and returned.

Candidates may be charged a fee by the Centre to cover the cost of examiner's expenses, normal hire charges, and other costs.

VI. Progressive Tests.

These are Tests designed primarily for Centre Members but may also be used in Branches.

There are four levels with three awards at each level – Bronze 3 to 1, Silver 3 to 1, Gold 3 to 1, and Platinum 3 to 1. Progressive Awards Tests are taken in addition to, but not instead of, The Pony Club Efficiency Tests. Bronze may be taken at levels 3, 2 or 1 in Riding and Road Sense or Horsemanship at each level. The same applies to Silver, Gold, and Platinum. The Riding and Road Sense elements are always taken together. The Riding and Road Sense award and the Horsemanship award are taken separately.

Once Bronze 1 is achieved the D Test may be taken. The D+ Test may follow the completion of Silver 1, and the C Test may follow completion of Gold 1. The C+ Test may be taken after successfully completing Platinum 1.

Candidates may be charged a fee by the Centre to cover the cost of Examiner's expenses, normal hire charges, and other costs.

11. REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

I. Remuneration

No Trustee shall receive remuneration from The Pony Club in any circumstances. No Area Representative nor any District Commissioner, shall receive any salary or emolument from The Pony Club or any of its Branches for performing his normal function within The Pony Club. However, the Management Committee shall have authority to waive this Rule for Area Representatives and District Commissioners in exceptional circumstances, in order to employ the particular skills of an individual for a specific purpose and provided that such payment is legally permissible. Applications for such a waiver should be sent to the Chief Executive, in writing, giving precise details of the work to be done and the remuneration to be paid.

The receipt by members of the Equestrian Council of occasional fees for teaching or examining at Pony Club Branches shall not disqualify them from being members of the Equestrian Council.

II. Payment of Instructors and others

Instructors, and others such as Camp helpers, may be paid a fee on production of an invoice. It is strongly recommended that fees should be negotiated in advance, and that they should not be paid in cash. Those paid fees may be members of Branch Committees but cannot be the District Commissioner.

III. Expenses

Travelling and out of pocket expenses of Trustees, Equestrian Council members, members of Equestrian Council Committees, and Visiting Instructors going to Branches will be refunded by The Pony Club Office.

Branches may also reimburse such expenses incurred by District Commissioners, Branch Officers, Committee members and others acting on behalf of the Branch. Branches may, if they wish, pay a flat sum or a rate per capita to their District Commissioner, but they should be aware that the Inland Revenue may require the District Commissioner to justify the amount paid. Travelling expenses will be paid at either the Standard Class train fare or at the currently approved mileage rate if travelling by car. This rate should be used as the normal allowance for all Pony Club meetings and events. However, when using qualified officials (i.e. British Dressage judges or BSJA judges) their official rate should be paid. Branches using a member of the Visiting Instructors' Panel (as listed in The Year Book) to instruct at Camp pay their expenses, except for one return journey, which will be paid by The Pony Club Office.

12. THE PONY CLUB TESTS

I. Purpose and Structure

The Tests are intended to assess riding and horse and pony care in a structured way. There are a number of Tests ranging in difficulty from **E**, which is the easiest, to the **A** Riding, the most difficult. The Tests must be attempted in succession. The syllabi are published on Test Cards and leaflets, which shall be available from Branches or direct from The Pony Club Office.

There will be no set fee for Tests below B standard, except for the BHS Riding & Road Safety Test, which will be at the rate currently set by the BHS. However, Branches may charge a fee commensurate with the expenditure incurred. Fees for 'B' and 'A' and Lungeing Tests **and the Coaching Certificate** will be determined by the Equestrian Council upon the recommendation of the Training Committee, and will be published in The Year Book. The E Standard Test is optional, but all other Tests must be taken in sequence.

II. The E, D and D + Tests

These are designed for the younger rider. They may be taken by Branch and Centre Members alike. Before attempting the D Test, Members must have passed the Road Rider Mini Achievement Badge. The District Commissioner or Centre Proprietor will arrange simple test preparation and select the Examiner.

The Tests are usually carried out during a Rally or at Camp. Successful candidates will be awarded Citron Yellow (E), yellow (D) and white (D+) circular felts, which are worn behind the membership badge, and signed certificates.

III. The Road Rider Test

The Branch or Centre will arrange the Tests for Members. Two Examiners will be required: -

- 1. A riding Examiner who is at least a C Test Examiner and an experienced driver.**
- 2. A road safety Examiner, who is a Pony Club Examiner, an experienced driver, and has studied The Pony Club Road Rider DVD and Junior Road Rider book.**

Successful candidates will be awarded a signed certificate.

Alternatively riders may choose to take the BHS Riding and Road Safety Test at one of their approved centres. Members who intend subsequently to take BHS Stage Examinations must have passed the BHS Riding and Road Safety Test in order to be accepted for these examinations.

IV. The C and C+ Tests

Both C and C+ are more demanding Tests and require greater skills. Candidates generally need specific training on all parts of the syllabus if they are to succeed. Before attempting the C Test, Members must have TRAINED for and passed the Road Rider Achievement Badge.

Again, both Centre and Branch Members are allowed to take these Tests. The District Commissioner or Centre Proprietor will arrange C and C+ Tests.

The Area Representative will have a list of approved Examiners who have been selected to examine at this level. Otherwise a Visiting Instructor, an experienced equine Branch Instructor or a 'B' Test Examiner may be used. At C+ there should preferably be two examiners, one of whom should be a B Test Examiner. Additionally, one Examiner should be external to the Branch or Centre. If the Test is conducted by only one Examiner, he must be both a B Test examiner and external to the Branch or Centre. Green (C) and pink (C+) felts and certificates will be awarded to all successful candidates.

V. The 'B' Test

The B Test has two parts. The first part is the B Riding Test and the second the B Horse and Pony Care Test. In order to be awarded the full B Test Pass certificate both parts must be passed either together or separately. Before attempting either B Test section they must pass either the BHS Riding & Road Safety Test or the PC Road Rider Test.

The Area Representative will be responsible for the creation and maintenance of a panel of well-qualified experienced Examiners in his Area. Their names must be submitted to The Pony Club Office. Examiners must be selected from this approved list. All 'B' Examiners must attend a Study Day every two years if they are to remain on the panel. Test Candidates must be examined by two Examiners in each part of the Test. Only in exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Area Representative, will there be less than two Examiners.

Candidates must be over 14 years of age. The fee is payable to the Area Representative who organises the Tests. A small additional sum may be payable if the Area has to hire a suitable venue at which to hold the Test. The Test fee will be forfeited if the candidate withdraws in the three weeks before the day of the Test. Candidates who pass the Riding component will be awarded a beige felt and a certificate. Candidates who pass the Pony Care component will be awarded a brown felt and corresponding certificate. A red felt and certificate for the full B Pass will be given once both felts have been awarded. Branch Members taking this Test must have the endorsement of their District Commissioner.

Centre Members must apply directly to the Area Representative, who will include them in an Area Test. Candidates who fail any part of the Test must wait at least two months before another attempt is made.

VI. The Lungeing Test

This test may be taken after B Test or B Horse and Pony Care Test. It is necessary to pass this test before attempting the AH Test. It will be examined by an AH Test examiner. Candidates must be 16 years of age or over. The fee is payable to the Area Representative who organises the test. Candidates who pass will be awarded a light blue felt and a certificate. Candidates who have passed the BHS Stage 3 are exempt from the Lungeing Test.

VII. The 'AH' Test (A Horse and Pony Care Test)

Candidates should ideally hold their full B Test, but Members who hold only their B Test Horse & Pony Care may take the test, providing that they have a satisfactory report on their riding from an AH Test panel examiner, who will be chosen by the Area Representative. All candidates must also hold their Lungeing Test or BHS Stage 3 and they must be at least 16 years old although 17 years plus is advised.

The Test may not be attempted on more than four occasions without further assessment by an AH Test Examiner.

Branch District Commissioners should have a stock of the Test nomination forms. The completed signed form together with the fee must be sent to the Area Representative, who will organise Tests according to demand. The Test fee will be forfeited if the candidate withdraws in the three weeks before the day of the test. Four Examiners, taken from the 'A' Test Examiners' Panel, will examine a maximum of eight candidates at each Test. An additional 'A' Test Panel Examiner may be present, sent from The Pony Club Office to ensure uniformity of the standard of assessment. At this level candidates must be prepared to commit a great deal of time and effort if they wish to succeed. Successful candidates will be awarded an orange felt and certificate. The Examiners may convert a pass into an Honours pass at any time after the Test has ended, and this will be awarded with a salmon pink felt and certificate.

A supporter should accompany all candidates from the Branch during the Test. There is an opportunity for dialogue between candidate, supporter and Examiner at the end of the Test and often candidates find this aspect helpful.

VIII. The 'A' Riding Test.

This Test may only be taken at one of several regional centres nominated by The Pony Club Office. Candidates must have a full 'B' Test pass and their 'AH' (A Horse and Pony Care Test) to proceed to this Test. All applicants must be at least 17 years old.

No candidate may take the Test at any venue at which he has received tuition during the three months prior to the Test date.

Nomination forms are obtainable from The Pony Club Office. Fully completed forms, supported by the signature of the Branch District Commissioner and the Area Representative, should be returned to The Pony Club Office together with the fee.

The District Commissioner must declare that the rider is of the required standard to attempt the Test. All applications will be dealt with in the order that they are received at The Pony Club Office, so early application is advised. Any candidate applying to take the Test in the three weeks before the day of the Test will have to pay an extra fee of £20. All prospective candidates and their Branches will be advised by post from The Pony Club Office when their application has been received and a place has been offered. Candidates must confirm acceptance. The Test fee will be forfeited if the candidate withdraws in the three weeks before the day of the test. Three Examiners, taken from the 'A' Test Examiners' Panel, will examine a maximum of eight candidates at each Test. An additional 'A' Test Panel Examiner may be present, sent from The Pony Club Office to ensure uniformity of the standard of assessment. This test may be attempted a maximum of four times.

Successful candidates will be awarded a blue felt. Exceptionally, an Honours pass may be awarded along with a purple felt. Unsuccessful candidates are allowed to retake the Test after 3 months.

Only Branch Members and Associates may take this Test.

A supporter should accompany all candidates from the Branch during the Test. There is an opportunity for dialogue between candidate, supporter and Examiner at the end of the Test and often candidates find this aspect helpful.

All candidates who have to make a round trip of more than 140 miles in order to take this Test may claim the excess over 140 miles at the rate of 15p per mile from The Pony Club Office.

IX. The Coaching Certificate

This Certificate is not compulsory. Candidates must have passed the full B Test, and it is **recommended that they should have attended the Year 1 and Year 2 Pony Club 'Introduction to Coaching' Courses and attended First Aid and Child Protection Training. Successful candidates will receive a certificate and a metal 'Rally Instructor' badge. District Commissioners, Area Representatives and Centre Proprietors can organise an assessment as and when the need arises in their Branch / Area / Centre. Local Branches and/or Centres may run a joint assessment if they wish. Assessors should be booked by the organiser; they must be on the Coaching Certificate panel. One assessor can assess a maximum of four candidates in one day. The assessors should be paid by the Organiser. Assessors' travel expenses will be paid by The Pony Club Office – claims should be made on the standard expenses claim form direct to the Training Secretary.**

X. Achievement Badges

These are awarded to members who have studied a variety of topics on pony care and the environment. The circular fabric badges are designed to be sewn onto Branch or Centre sweatshirts.

All examiners for Achievement Badges should be conversant with The Pony Club Manual of Horsemanship, the relevant Test Card and syllabus, which cover the requirement up to C Test level.

Candidates should be examined in as informal a fashion as possible, ideally orally in small groups. Achievement Badges are not intended to be examined by written tests.

On gaining 21 Achievement Badges, a Gold Badge and certificate can be awarded.

XI. Mini Achievement Badges

These are aimed at younger Members. They are designed to give a basic grounding in the main topics of equestrianism and the countryside. On gaining 14 Mini Achievement Badges, a Gold Badge and certificate can be awarded.

13. INTER-BRANCH CHAMPIONSHIPS

Each year, the Equestrian Council will arrange an Inter-Branch Championship for each of the competitive disciplines that have their own Equestrian Council Committee. The Championships will be organised by the Equestrian Council Committees, with the support of The Pony Club Office. Wherever possible, all of the disciplines will hold their Championships at the same venue during one week in the second half of August, but it is recognised that some disciplines may have to hold their own separate Championships.

Qualification for the Championships will be through competitions held by each Area. In some disciplines, these Area competitions may be replaced or augmented by Zone competitions, in which two or more Areas combine.

The rules for each competition will be approved by the Equestrian Council, voting upon the recommendations of the Equestrian Council Committees for each discipline.

14. DRESS FOR PONY CLUB MEMBERS

I. Hats

It is mandatory for all Members to wear a protective helmet manufactured to one of the minimum standards listed below. It must bear the CE mark and a quality symbol, either the BSI Kitemark, the SAI Global symbol or the official Snell label with number. The CE symbol on its own is not sufficient to ensure consistent standard of manufacture. The PAS 015:1998 and the Snell E2001 meet higher impact criteria and therefore give more protection.

PAS 015:1998 or EN 1384:1996 BS EN 1384:1997 with the BSI Kitemark	Snell E2001 with the official Snell label and number	AS/NZS 3838 1998 or AS/NZS 3838 2003
<div data-bbox="213 1257 381 1342" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>NB The prefix 'BS' on the EN 1384 standard does <u>not</u> mean that the hat has undergone batch testing by the British Standards Institute – the hat must contain the BSI Kitemark as well.</p>	<div data-bbox="479 1257 647 1342" data-label="Image"> </div>	<div data-bbox="740 1257 897 1342" data-label="Image"> </div>

The fit of the hat and the adjustment of the harness are as crucial as the quality. Members are advised to try several makes to find the best fit, the hat should not move on the head when the head is tipped forward. It is strongly recommended that second hand hats are not purchased.

Hats must be replaced after a severe impact, subsequent protection will be significantly reduced. Hats deteriorate with age and should be replaced after three to five years depending upon the amount of use.

For Cross Country riding (over fences 0.80m high and above) including Eventing, Tetrathlon, Hunter Trials and Pony Racing, whether it be tests, rallies or training, a jockey skull cap with no fixed peak must be worn. It is also strongly recommended that a jockey skull cap is worn for cross country riding even over lower fences.

Hats, with a cover, must be worn when mounted (this includes at prize-giving) with a chinstrap fastened at all times. For Dressage, Show Jumping and Mounted Games the cover shall be dark blue or black only. Hats with vertical plastic / metallic strips are permitted. The Official Steward/Organiser may, at his discretion, eliminate a competitor riding in the area of the competition without a hat or with the chinstrap unfastened or with a hat that does not comply with these standards.

In the interests of safety, long hair must be secured.

Children under 9 years old

Medical advice is that children's neck muscles do not develop adequately to support a fairly heavy helmet until the age of nine. Therefore it may be appropriate for children under nine years of age to wear a lightweight hat made to comply with the above requirements. Hats with long ventilation slits are not allowed for Members over nine years old.

Hat Checks and Tagging

The Branch District Commissioner will appoint two Branch officials (one of whom may be the District Commissioner) who are familiar with The Pony Club Rules for hats to carry out hat checks and tag each hat that complies with the above requirements with a Pony Club hat tag. This process may also be performed by a Centre Co-ordinator. Hats fitted with a Pony Club tag will not need to be checked on subsequent occasions.

Tags may only be fitted by the appointed official after he has personally checked the hat. Tagging indicates that a hat meets the above standards; NO check of the fit and condition of the hat is implied. It is considered to be the responsibility of the Member's parent or guardian to ensure that their hat complies with the required standards and is tagged before they go to any Pony Club event, and also to ensure that the manufacturer's guidelines with regard to fit and replacement are followed.

Further rules for headwear for specific disciplines can be found in the relevant discipline rule books.

II. Ties and Stocks

The Club's colours are pale blue, gold and purple, and Members should wear the approved tie in these colours whenever attending a Pony Club activity, unless the wearing of a tie is inappropriate to that activity.

Recognising the wide age range of Members, there is also a dark blue tie, which may be worn by Members who have attained their 18th birthday. Alternatively, a plain white or cream stock may be worn with a black or navy jacket, or a coloured stock may be worn with a tweed hacking jacket.

III. Badges

The official Membership badge should be worn at all Pony Club activities when a jacket is worn.

Branches give Members a coloured felt showing the highest Test standard achieved by the Member. It should be worn behind the Membership badge.

Cloth Achievement Badges should be sown on to the Branch or Centre sweatshirt.

IV. Body Protectors

The Pony Club does not make the use of body protectors compulsory, except for all cross-country riding and Pony Racing whether it be training or competing.. For general use, the responsibility for choosing body protectors and the decision as to their use must rest with Members and their parents. It is recommended that a rider's body protector should not be more than 2% of their body weight. When worn, body protectors must fit correctly, be comfortable, and must not restrict movement.

Riders who choose to use the Woof Wear Body Cage EXO must lodge a key with the event organiser when they collect their number.

Air Jacket - If a rider chooses to wear an air vest it must only be used, in addition to a normal body protector and in the event of a fall it must be fully deflated or removed before continuing. **Air Jackets must not be worn under any item of clothing, and number bibs should be fitted loosely or with elasticated fastenings over the air jacket.**

V. Medical Armbands

Medical Armbands are recommended at all times, including hacking on roads, but are compulsory for all cross country phases and for endurance rides.

VI. Clothing and Footwear

When mounted at Pony Club activities, Members should wear a riding jacket or Branch sweatshirt, jodhpurs with leather shoes or jodhpur boots or breeches and either leather or rubber riding boots, a suitable plain-coloured shirt with a collar and The Pony Club tie or a stock. Only standard riding or jodhpur boots with a fairly smooth, thin sole and a well defined square cut heel may be worn. Plain black or brown half chaps may be worn with jodhpur boots of the same colour. Tassels and fringes are not allowed. No other footwear will be allowed. Stirrups should be of the correct size to suit the rider's boots. They must have 7mm (¼") clearance on either side of the boot. There is a tendency for manufacturers to put a treaded sole on riding boots. These will significantly increase the risk of the foot becoming trapped in the stirrup in a fall which could result in serious injury. In the interests of safety, Wellington boots, "Muckers", or trainers **must not be worn. Boots and stirrups with interlocking treads are not permitted, nor are the boots or treads individually.** New clothing is not expected, but what is worn must be clean, neat and tidy. Jeans should not be worn when mounted except when specifically allowed by certain disciplines. Polo shirts in Branch colours are allowed to be worn at rallies and at camp, however long sleeves should be worn for all jumping activities.

VII. Spurs

Spurs may be worn at Rallies and other events by Members who have passed their B Test. Members without their B Test must have written permission to wear spurs from their District Commissioner, which they should carry with them.

Only blunt spurs, without rowels or sharp edges, may be worn. Spurs that have a smooth rotating ball on the shank are permitted. If the spurs are curved, the curve must be downwards and the shank must point straight to the back and not exceed 3cm in length. Sharp spurs may not be worn.

VIII. Jewellery

This Rule applies to all Pony Club mounted equestrian activities. No jewellery is allowed for safety reasons, other than a wristwatch, a wedding ring, a stock pin worn horizontally or a tie clip. It is recommended that stock pins are removed for cross country. Members who are contemplating piercing their ears or any other part of their body should be aware that they will not be allowed to participate in any Pony Club mounted equestrian activities until such time as the “sleepers” can safely be removed.

The reason for this is that sleepers have in the past caused injuries following falls. There are vulnerable blood vessels behind the ear and if the facial nerve is pierced partial paralysis of the face can occur.

IX. Competitions

Additional or different dress requirements for competitions may be specified in the Discipline Rule Books, but otherwise, these Rules shall apply.

15. DISPLAYS

Branches will not give displays, or stage competitions, at shows or other public gatherings without first obtaining the permission of their Area Representative.

16. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

Because of the risks involved, Team-chasing events or practices must not be organised by The Pony Club, nor should Branch teams be entered in such events. The same restriction applies to Racing, other than Racing sanctioned by The Pony Club Racing Committee. Team-Chasing and other unauthorised Racing is not covered by Pony Club insurance.

It should be noted also that Vaulting is not currently approved as a Pony Club discipline. Any Branch wishing to participate in Vaulting should write to The Pony Club Office for guidance.

17. FINANCE

Branches shall be largely autonomous in their control of Branch funds. However, it should be understood that, under Charity law, the funds of The Pony Club, whether they are held by the Branches or by The Pony Club Office, are all regarded as being part of The Charity. This means that if any part of The Pony Club cannot pay its debts, its creditors can seek payment from elsewhere in The Charity.

For this reason, no Branch may enter into a financial commitment that risks a loss that is larger than 50% of its free reserves at the time of the commitment, or £2,500, whichever is the greater, without the approval of the Management Committee. Free reserves are the assets of the Branch (excluding fixed assets) less its liabilities and also less any amounts that have been set aside for a specific purpose.

Any purchase of freehold land (irrespective of value), and any capital expenditure in excess of £20,000, requires the prior approval of the Board of Trustees. This also applies to commitments in excess of £20,000, such as a 5 year lease at a rental of £5,000 per annum.

Legally, The Pony Club is a charitable company, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. In order to comply with the Memorandum and Articles, Pony Club funds may only be deposited with or lent to an institution, such as a bank or building society, which is regulated by the Financial Standards Authority.

Duplicate paper bank statements must be obtained at not greater than monthly intervals, with one copy being sent to the Treasurer, and the other copy to the District Commissioner. If the Branch has a building society account, the Treasurer must bring the pass book to every committee meeting, and make it available for inspection. No person should be allowed single access to Branch funds, save as shown below: -

- I. **Cheques**
Single signatures may be allowed on cheques up to £200. Payments above this amount must bear dual signatures.
- II. **Telephone Banking**
Disbursements may not be made by telephone banking.
- III. **On-line Banking**
On-line banking is permitted, provided that the Bank has a feature that requires two separate people to authorise the transaction.
- iv. **Credit Cards**
Credit cards are not allowed.
- v. **Debit Cards**
Debit cards may be used, but the Treasurer may not be the holder of a Debit Card. The person who is the holder must give the transaction dockets to the Treasurer at not greater than monthly intervals, together with an explanation of the reason for each purchase.

18. INSURANCE

The Pony Club has Insurance under a number of headings and policies, a summary of which is provided in The Year Book. In particular, all Branch and Centre Members are covered for their legal liability for accidental injury or damage to third parties or their property, arising out of the use or ownership of ponies at any time, not just on Pony Club activities. A full policy summary is shown on The Pony Club website under Parents Info.

Members and their parents must read the summary of cover carefully, to ensure that it satisfies their own requirements. It must be understood that this is liability Insurance and does not cover property belonging to, or in the care of, the Member or his family. Nor does it cover injury to the Member or his family.

To comply with insurance requirements, all employees of The Pony Club (including contractors), paid & unpaid Officials, Instructors, volunteers, parents, Members of The Pony Club and visitors must: -

Take all reasonable care for the Health, Safety & Welfare of themselves and others that may be affected by their actions or omissions.

Co-operate fully with The Pony Club and its Officials on all Health, Safety & Welfare issues.

Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of Health & Safety.

Use correctly and as intended all work items, procedures and personal protective equipment provided by The Pony Club (or other employers), in accordance with the training and instructions given and report any loss or defect immediately.

Inform the District Commissioner or activity organiser of any situation they consider represents danger or could result in harm to themselves or others.

Inform the District Commissioner or activity organiser of any failings or shortcomings as regards Health, Safety & Welfare.

Report accidents. Either by making an entry in The Pony Club Accident Book or by informing the District Commissioner or activity organiser.

19. LEGAL LIABILITY

Neither The Pony Club, the Trustees, the Equestrian Council, nor any person acting on behalf of The Pony Club will be held responsible for any accident, damage, injury or loss at rallies or any other meetings to Members or their ponies.

20. INTERPRETATION OF RULES

In the event of a dispute over the meaning of any of the Rules of The Pony Club, the Chairman of The Pony Club shall give his interpretation. An appeal against his decision may be made to the Audit Committee. In the event that this Committee does not uphold the Chairman's interpretation, this shall not affect the validity of that interpretation during the interim period. In interpreting the Rules, priority shall be given to the spirit and ethos of The Pony Club, rather than the strict wording of the Rule in dispute.