

Key Competences for the European Equine Entrepreneur

created by
the network for European Equine Entrepreneurs (EEE)



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Background

These key competences for the European Equine Entrepreneur have been produced as a result of the EEE project, a project under the Erasmus+ program.

The competences are described at EQF level 4.

The project partners who have contributed to this document are:

- Chichester College, UK
- Raahen koulutuskuntayhtymä, Finland
- Roskilde Technical College, Denmark
- Aeres MBO Barneveld, the Netherlands
- Equipeople, Ireland
- Sectorraad paaarden, the Netherlands
- Holland Horse Foundation, the Netherlands

We also thank the following organization for its input:

- Not So Far Farm Inc. USA

The definition of a key competence:

A competence is successful behaviour in all possible professional situations within the equine sector ()*

Acting or not acting = Knowing + Able + Willing

Behaviour = knowledge & understanding + skills + norms & values + personality

Effect = insight + experience + attitude + character

(*) all possible professional situations imply routine and complicated situations

The units are introduced using a section called “About this unit”. This section describes the unit in brief and simple terms for the benefit of the end user. The performance criteria simply describe ‘what you must be able to do’. When you are competent to do things, you also need sufficient knowledge and understanding.

The “scope” outlines the requirements of the performance criterion to which it refers and describes the range of applications and contents over which the competence applies.

Prerequisites

This document contains the professional competences that an equine entrepreneur needs to successfully start and / or run a business in the equine sector within Europe and outside Europe. The project specifically researched the competences required in upcoming economies like the Emirates and China.

To become an entrepreneur, a student needs to have an open, flexible and enquiring mind and the desire to create an enterprise. There are many areas in which students can work in the equine sector and the periphery of this sector.

There is the potential to create a lot of new equine enterprises. To stimulate this potential, equine students need to develop an entrepreneurial spirit. This document aims to create a road map to help students develop the skills needed to start and grow their own businesses.

It must be understood that a student can only fully master these competences with sufficient underlying knowledge and skills in the equine sector:

- Taking care of healthy horses (feeding, animal care, animal handling, animal husbandry, housing, hygiene, knowledge of species and breeds). This is *essential* for entrepreneurs working with horses. Entrepreneurs with businesses in the periphery of the sector also need a *basic knowledge* in these subjects, but not necessarily all the skills.
- Horse behavior: this is *essential* for entrepreneurs working with horses. Entrepreneurs with businesses in the periphery of the sector also need a *basic knowledge* in this subject.
- Knowledge of the sector in general
- General social skills

These necessary theoretical and practical modules are not described in this dossier.

General “scope”

The student needs adequate knowledge and understanding of equine management in order to meet each performance criteria.

The student needs to have a knowledge of business and needs to have developed the spirit of an entrepreneur.

Not every student is suited to being an entrepreneur, but for those that are, this project aims to give them the skills and tools to enable them to start and grow their own equine business.

Unit 1: Commitment

- KC1A Show a pro-active attitude and determination
- KC1B Show ambition and passion (drive) for the equine sector
- KC1C Have a “Growth” mindset as against a “Fixed” mindset (Dweck)

About this unit

To succeed as an entrepreneur, you need to be able to realize your (innovative) ideas. This asks for a pro-active attitude, determination, ambition, passion and confidence in your own plans. The entrepreneur also needs a good background understanding of why some businesses succeed and some fail. This requires a level of business education and knowledge and an understanding of how to identify a business opportunity and the skills to follow it through.

Unit 2: Planning

KC2A See opportunities (market orientation and research)

KC2B Create a solid business plan for the equine sector to include identification of USP, strategic planning, goal setting and making relevant adaptations

KC2C Take educated risks (risk management)

About this unit

As an equine entrepreneur, you need to plan your business: make a solid business plan that involves making a profit without risking the wellbeing of horses. This asks for research, anticipation of changing markets, analytical thinking and a helicopter view.

Unit 3: Sharing

KC3A Create your own equine network

KC3B Understanding the uniqueness of the Equine client

KC3C Market your business / products in the equine sector to support growth at home and abroad, with understanding of target markets

About this unit

As an equine entrepreneur, you can only be successful if you can communicate your ideas to clients and stakeholders. The equine sector asks for a sector-specific communication.

Unit 4: Doing

- KC4A Show understanding of the requirements of the sector
- KC4B Ability to overcome challenges within the business
- KC4C Evaluate and improve continuously
- KC4D Implement your USP
- KC4E Understand the importance of buying-in the expertise that you don't have

About this unit

As an equine entrepreneur, you need to recognize and understand good horsemanship to be able to be respected by your clients and stakeholders.

You need to be able to solve problems that you encounter.

You need to be able to evaluate your actions in order to successfully change your business tactics and move with changing markets.

You need to recognize the need for outside expertise and approach this with a growth mindset in order to ensure viability and growth.

Unit 5: Operating in upcoming foreign markets

KC5A Work with horses and the equine sector within different (new) cultures

KC5B Deal with challenges in non-European countries

KC5C Find opportunities in upcoming foreign markets

About this unit

There are great opportunities for equine entrepreneurs in upcoming foreign markets i.e. China, the Emirates, Eastern Europe and Russia. To seize these opportunities, as an equine entrepreneur you must be able to adapt to different cultures and face the challenges.

KC 1A Show a pro-active attitude and determination

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur has innovative ideas for the equine business and acts to realize these ideas. The equine entrepreneur shows confidence in their own plans.

Result

Innovative ideas for the equine business, in the form of a vision and a mission statement. The entrepreneur presents his/her ideas in a convincing way.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Creates an innovative vision and a mission statement for an equine company	<u>Equine company:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Horse centred enterprise (e.g. yard setting) Company in equine supplies Company in equine services (e.g. events and training)
2	Presents ideas for an equine company in a convincing way	<u>Presents ideas:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation skills to a range of audiences Adaptability of communication skills
3	Shows confidence when questions are asked about their ideas	<u>Questions asked by:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Colleagues Banks Teachers Potential clients Other stakeholders

KC 1B Show ambition and passion (drive) for the equine sector

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur has the desire and devotion (and the vision) to meet and exceed goals for the equine business. The equine entrepreneur is driven to satisfy customers. He/she also has a desire to keep improving the business and to constantly be looking for new and innovative ways to advance the service that he/she provides to clients.

Result

Necessary tasks are seen and performed with motivation. Customers are satisfied.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Sees and performs tasks with motivation	<p><u>Tasks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Training, handling and horse care if relevant b. Administration c. Management d. High standards of customer care e. PR and marketing
2	Shows positive attitude	<p><u>Positive attitude:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A collaborative approach b. Developing a growth mindset c. Facilitate completion of necessary tasks through effective leadership
3	Maintains working relationships	<p><u>Working relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Colleagues b. Horse owners c. Business relations d. Customers e. Stakeholders
4	Keeps updated on new developments in the equine sector	<p><u>New developments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Horse related b. Business related c. Taking a responsibility for Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

KC 1C Have a “Growth” mindset as against a “Fixed” mindset

Description of competence:

A Growth mindset is the most important component of a successful entrepreneur.

Result:

Courage has been chosen over fear, action over inaction, positivity over negativity.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Embraces challenge	<p><u>Embraces challenge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Analysing and understanding of the bigger picture and the goal b. Breaking down challenges into smaller components c. Seeing opportunities where others see difficulties
2	Persists in negative moments	<p><u>Persists:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Determination to not give up b. Understanding of concepts such as “if it was easy, everyone would do it” c. Identifying the opportunity in moments of negativity d. Maintaining high standards
3	Sees effort as necessary	<p><u>Effort:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Embracing challenge b. Understanding that although the rewards will be higher, the effort required will be greater
4	Learns from criticism	<p><u>Learns:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding that criticism is positive and key to growth b. Continuing to learn from others
5	Finds inspiration	<p><u>Inspiration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Taking inspiration from other successful entrepreneurs b. Considering the influence of others on the entrepreneurial attitude and mindset
6	Is competitive	<p><u>Competitive:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Continuing focus on improvement of self b. Continuing focus on improvement of business

KC 2A See opportunities (market orientation and research)

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur sees opportunities for their business. He/she can translate an idea into a service or a product that creates value for customers or the business. To validate business ideas, he/she can do the necessary research to find out if there is a (future) market for these ideas.

Result

A research report that explores opportunities for potential business ideas.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Anticipates changes to equine markets	<u>Equine markets:</u> a. Local b. National c. International
2	Identifies opportunities	<u>Opportunities:</u> a. Recognising need and idea generation b. Trend analysis, making use of resources to inform ideas and opportunities
3	Carries out and draws appropriate conclusions from market orientation and research	
4	Acts on those conclusions (creates a business plan)	

KC 2B Create a solid business plan for the equine sector

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur can write a solid business plan and can communicate their plan to stakeholders.

Result

A viable business plan.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Makes a business plan that addresses the marketing mix (5p's)	<u>Marketing mix (5 p's):</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Place Product Personnel Price Promotion
2	Understands the concept of a Unique Selling Point	
3	Identifies the Unique Selling Point	<u>USP:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Analysing the assets of the business Understanding what makes your business different Exploring the uniqueness of this
4	Makes a business plan with a sound financial basis	<u>Sound financial basis:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Trading Staff Business-model (e.g. for/not for profit, social enterprise) Loans, subsidies and grants Assets Viability and sustainability Taxes
5	Make a business plan that is environmentally sustainable and promotes the welfare of animals if relevant	<u>Environment and welfare:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of environmental impact Implementation of best practice control measures Promotion of best practice equine welfare Implementation of best practice equine welfare

6	Communicates plan to stakeholders	<u>Stakeholders:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investors Colleagues Customers Suppliers
7	Understands benefits of strategic partnerships	
8	Identifies existing businesses or organisations that can be partnered with - to the mutual benefit of both parties	
9	Creates new markets via the implementation of strategic partnerships	
10	Understands threats and external influences on business (PESTLE analysis)	<u>PESTLE Analysis:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Political Economic Social Technological Legal Environmental
11	Understand SMART goal setting	<u>SMART:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Timely
12	Manages projects	<u>Managing projects:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Setting goals Accountability Logistics
13	Manages time	
14	Makes a profit	<u>Making profit:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on development and improvement, linking these to opportunities Reviews options for improvement from financial and organisational aspects

KC 2C Take educated risks (risk management)

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur can take educated risks to improve the business. He/she is able to identify and control threats to business assets.

Result

Risks are taken to improve business/profits based on careful consideration (research).

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Shows analytical thinking and a helicopter view	<u>Analytical thinking:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Step by step approach Breakdown of challenges into manageable components
2	Makes a SWOT analysis	<u>Analysis:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats Expected profit / benefit Effect on personnel Effect on the horses Effect on customers
3	Shows effective risk management without compromising health and safety	<u>Health and safety:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Applying standards of international best practice within the equine sector Safety regulations Health and safety for horses and people, to include effective risk assessment Implementing a code of conduct for respectful communication and behaviour
4	Creates a safe and pleasant working environment	<u>Safe and pleasant working environment:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable personnel conditions Continuing Professional Development Ensure a safe environment for customers and visitors
5	Recognising importance and complying with legislation for health and safety of humans and animals	<u>Health and safety:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Fulfilling legislative requirements for health and safety Promoting and implementing international best practice in all markets

KC 3A Create your own equine network

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur can create his/her own equine network.

Result

A network consisting of colleagues, advisors, clients and stakeholders.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Works well in a team	<u>Team:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> With colleagues and employees With respect for each other Taking team responsibility Use each other's strengths
2	Understands how to create networks	<u>Create networks:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Social Media Local government and regional business assistance Networking events and trade shows
3	Creates a network of advisors	<u>Advisors:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Financial and legal specialists Business mentors Equine specialists Personal support
4	Creates a network of clients/customers (implementing an effective marketing strategy)	
5	Creates a network of stakeholders	<u>Stakeholders:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Investors Sponsors Suppliers Local Government

KC 3B Understanding the uniqueness of the equine client

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur can see the perspective of the client and understands what makes an equine client unique. The equine sector has its own specific needs and demands and customers, and to be a successful entrepreneur in the sector there is a need to understand these.

Result

Satisfied clients, leading to business growth.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Has knowledge of the sector	<p><u>Sector:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Horse centred enterprise (e.g. yard setting) b. Equine supplies c. Equine services (e.g. events and training) <p><u>Knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Current situation in the sector b. Developments in the sector
2	Relates to the client	<p><u>Relate:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Show understanding through effective communication b. Use 'equine' language c. Detect needs of the client d. Monitor client satisfaction

KC 3C Market your business / products in the equine sector to support growth at home and abroad, with understanding of target markets

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur can market his/her products and/or services successfully and can identify and exploit opportunities both at home and abroad.

Result

Products and/or services are sold within the equine sector.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Markets products successfully	<p><u>Market:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding the marketing mix b. Marketing campaigns and strategy c. Using different types of media d. Consulting with marketing professionals e. Exploring opportunities for cross marketing within the wider sector
2	'Delivers' the business aims to the client	<p><u>Deliver:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implementing business plan b. Monitoring and reviewing, adapting as necessary c. Delivering high standards and quality to clients
3	Expands the equine sector in order to create business growth – encouraging new entrants and subsequent clients into the sector	<p><u>New entrants:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. disadvantaged groups b. corporate c. youth groups d. wellbeing
4	Identifies opportunities in new emerging economies – exploiting opportunities in new markets	<p><u>Opportunities in emerging economies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. selling horses b. selling skills c. training d. equipment e. experiences
5	Identifies new trends in lifestyle – exploiting opportunities in line with new trends	<p><u>New trends:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. sustainability b. fitness c. wellbeing d. awareness of disability e. active and eco-tourism

6	Identifies opportunities in therapy sector – meeting emerging therapeutic needs	<u>Opportunities in therapy sector:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. disabilitiesb. an aging populationc. PTSDd. emotional therapy
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KC 4A Show understanding of the requirements of the sector

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur recognizes and understands competency in the sector. Success as an equine entrepreneur is linked to a basic knowledge of horses and their requirements.

Result

The entrepreneur is respected by all partners in the equine sector and confidence is maintained.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Recognizes and understands (awareness of) skills needed for the different disciplines within the equine sector	<u>Awareness of skills:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Awareness that the sector is wide and variedb. Expertise in own specific area of business development, but understanding there are potential opportunities across the sector, for which an awareness is necessary
2	Understands what is needed to take good care of horses	<u>Equine knowledge:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Implements understanding of equines and the sector in a business-related capacityb. Basic knowledge of horses and their requirements

KC 4B Ability to overcome challenges within the equine business

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur is able to solve problems within the equine business on different levels. This asks for resilience, flexibility and creative thinking.

Result

Problems are solved.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Shows resilience when problems occur	<u>Resilience:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Showing positive attitudeb. Ability to face reality
2	Shows flexibility when things change	<u>Flexibility:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Ability to change plans when neededb. Ability to convince others that change is neededc. Maintains international best practice
3	Shows creative thinking	<u>Creative thinking:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Comes up with (novel) solutionsb. Thinks 'outside the box' when necessary (fresh perspective)

KC 4C Evaluate and improve continuously

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur is able to evaluate processes and results. He/she uses the PDCA cycle or the CRTA model to continuously improve business results.

Result

Business is continuously evaluated and improved.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Can use the PDCA cycle	<u>PDCA:</u> a. Plan b. Do c. Check d. Act
2	Can use the CRTA model	<u>CRTA:</u> a. Connect b. Respond c. Trust d. Accelerate
3	Makes plans to improve business results – strives for continuous improvement	

KC 4D Understand your USP (‘unique selling point’) and how to apply this USP to create more equine business

Description of competence:

To be successful in business you need to exploit your unique selling point, know how to recognise it and apply it for maximum impact and business growth.

Result:

A knowledge of how to really understand your business and your clients, their needs and their wants.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Knows who his/her client is – understands the importance of a client profile	<p><u>Client profile:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Age b. Gender c. Aims d. Wants e. Needs
2	Demonstrates leverage of assets on a private client base	<p><u>Leverage:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding of what makes you different b. Having flexibility to meet changing demands of assets and clients
3	Finds niche markets (has an open mentality)	<p><u>Open Mentality:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implementing growth mindset to identify, consider and explore potential niche markets b. Leverage USP to maximise these

KC 4E Understand the importance of buying-in the expertise that you don't have

Description of competence:

As a business manager, you need to have a professional team to support you.

Result:

Weak points are identified and assistance found.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Audits own strengths and weak points (SWOT)	<u>SWOT:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Developing self-awareness and reality of own abilityb. Updating and reviewing SWOT analysisc. Going forward as the business develops
2	Creates a professional team - be open to engage with specialist external partners and teams	<u>Professional team:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Lawyerb. Marketing and designc. Technologyd. Sector specialistse. Business advisors

KC 5A Work with horses and the equine sector within different (new) cultures in a global context

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur is able to work with horses and the equine sector regardless of location.

Result

Successful businesses in or with different countries worldwide.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Has knowledge of the sector in different countries	<p><u>Knowledge of the sector:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Rules and regulations b. Types of businesses c. Knowledge of contracts and human resource management d. Sector specific local knowledge e. Rules concerning wellbeing of horses f. Health and hygiene regulations (humans and horses) g. Control of infectious diseases (dealing with regulations but also decisions for your own business) h. Differences in ethics (norms and values) i. Recognise if local 'experts' (i.e. veterinarians) are competent enough for your business j. Knowledge of key figures k. Knowledge of products
2	Can work within different cultures	<p><u>Working in different cultures:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In combination with local differences, implement international best practice. b. Adaptable approach, cope with cultural diversity c. Understanding and respect for other cultures/religions d. Adjust your business-dealings to other cultures/religions with awareness of challenges. e. Use cultural habits to improve business f. Manage personnel from a range of cultures. g. Create work protocols h. Give constructive feedback i. Use appropriate management/planning tools

3	Can work with people speaking different languages	<u>Working with people speaking different languages:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate effectively in English b. Willingness to learn other relevant local languages c. Find possibilities to communicate in other languages d. Work with translators who are not familiar with the sector (sector terminology)
4	Is able to transfer the basic horsemanship competencies to locals using international best practice.	<u>Transfer international best practice:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Care for horses b. Give advice on health and wellbeing of horses
5	Deals with challenges	<u>Challenges:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Cultural differences b. Restrictions due to religious or cultural beliefs. c. Different climate d. Different infrastructure e. Different communication structure f. Different financial infrastructure g. Different business models h. Trade restrictions between countries (politics) i. Deal with changing dynamics in politics and global markets j. Find funding for your business plan k. Different perception of horse welfare (i.e. coaching, management, transportation)

KC 5B Find opportunities in upcoming global markets

Description of competence

The equine entrepreneur is able find opportunities for business in upcoming foreign markets (i.e. the Emirates, China, Eastern Europe and Russia).

Result

Successful start-ups in upcoming foreign markets.

Performance criteria		Scope
1	Maintains knowledge of the sector in upcoming global markets	<u>Knowledge:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying upcoming markets globally Exploring the sector in these markets Identifying possible opportunities
2	Maximises business opportunities in upcoming global markets	<u>Business opportunities:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the need for your product / service Recognise distinctiveness of your own product / service Market your product / service in the foreign market Find the most profitable fiscal options Use insight in foreign currency market to be as profitable as possible