

NEW ZEALAND
THOROUGHBRED **RACING**



PUREI HŌIHO NĀTI O AOTEAROA

Elite Jockey Programme

FAQ's for
Apprentices



Why do we have to move to a new system?

Following feedback from past apprentices and stakeholders, it is clear the current apprentice training system is not producing the results that are required to adequately attract and develop apprentices for the future of the industry.

Attracting, training and retaining jockeys is of the utmost importance for the sustainability of our racing industry. The Elite Jockey Programme will ensure apprentices are afforded a fair opportunity to develop their race day riding skills and that employers are adequately supported to coach the apprentice for performance and qualification as a senior rider.

What is in it for me as an Apprentice Jockey?

- Individual and bespoke training and development programme.
- Monitored riding opportunities.
- Access to High Performance Sport NZ and NZTR professionals.
- Supported performance as an elite athlete, including career progression.
- Heightened emphasis on role as a professional jockey and elite athlete.
- Consistent workplace standards for apprentice jockey training and welfare
- 3 Year Apprenticeship.

I already have my probationer licence, where do I fit in?

If you already hold a Probationer licence you can continue riding trials (for the duration of your probation licence and to the competency scale set out for probationers), the NZTR Education and Training team will be in contact with you regarding what selection course for the Elite Jockey Programme you will be targeting. This will be based on your skill level at the trials to date.

I am a second/third/fourth year apprentice, can I join the EJP?

No. You will continue your apprenticeship under the old format with the aim of being qualified to hold a senior riders licence. You will still attend apprentice school, athlete development days and have regular on-on-ones with your regional mentor. NZTR will continue to support you and your employer through your four year apprenticeship.

I am a first year apprentice, can I join?

If you have recently been licenced as an apprentice and you and your employer are interested in taking part in the new EJP format, there may potentially be an opportunity to switch.

I want to apply for the EJP but my employer does not want to become an approved employer OR does not have enough horses to support me, what can I do?

To be part of the EJP it is essential to have the support from your employer and part of that is having the right knowledge and skills to help develop you as an athlete.

Encourage your employer to engage with the Training and Education team to explain the process. If they are not in or do not have the time, you may need to look to for another employer.



"New Zealand has long been known as a producer of top athletes worldwide and jockeys will now be recognised as one of those athletes"

If I attend the selection course for the EJP and are unsuccessful, can I reapply?

Yes. You can continue to working on your skills, and reapply for the next selection course which are run twice per year. You will be given support from NZTR and provided an improvement plan to work on.

If I am not getting the minimum number of rides per season can I change employers?

The riding mentor will be working alongside you and your employer to ensure you are getting adequate opportunity. If there is any concern, we will proactively work with you both to identify any issues and will put a plan in place to support increased rides. If the opportunities do not improve, NZTR will support a loan or a transfer. 200 rides for the first season = a minimum of 4 rides per week, over 48 weeks. Minimum riding opportunities are expected to increase as the apprenticeship continues. An apprentice should finish their 3 year apprenticeship having had a minimum of 900 raceday rides



What will happen if I am not ready to race ride or did not reach the 30 competent trial rides by licencing time?

Probationers will only be licenced as apprentices twice per year, so you can extend your probationary period an extra 6 months and to give you time to gain competency. This will be a one-off extension, you can have a maximum 12 month probation period. Regional riding mentors can put in a recommendation for you to attend the selection course for the EJP if they believe you are ready. You must have had a minimum of 20 official trial rides to do this.

If I currently hold a probationer licence and I choose to apply for the EJP selection course and are not selected, can I then carry on under the existing format?

No you cannot. You would need to reapply for the next intake.

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