



Schooling (I) Scheme 2026

Horse Sport Ireland are delighted to re-launch the schooling scheme for owners of future breeding performance studbook sport horses, rare breeds and studbook ponies including fillies, young mares, and stallions. This scheme is delivered by Horse Sport Ireland and funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food, and the Marine (DAFM) under National Breeding Services. The aim of this initiative is to incentivise Irish breeders to produce future breeding horses through a designated training pathway. This scheme aimed to add value to these young equines while providing information to their owners regarding their positive and negative traits, to aid breeders with informed decision making with regards to the potential of their young horse.

Schooling (I)

This scheme is open to breeders/owners with young horse/pony mares and stallions intended for breeding born between 2020 and 2022. Equines are sent for training with a producer, selected by the owner, who must meet producer criteria outlined below. For smaller/Native Rare breeds and ponies, producers will be selected based on their skill in a specific discipline (i.e. pony size, driving, showing) on a case-by-case basis. Breeders may apply for up to two equines to participate in the scheme. Horses cannot complete a combination of starting, schooling I and schooling II schemes in the same year, i.e. 2026.

Breeders/owners will have the opportunity to apply to participate in the scheme by completing an online application only. **HSI will reimburse breeders with funds towards eight weeks training with a producer to school their young horse/pony up to a maximum of €1,500 per horse/pony** following receipt of a valid application which is subsequently approved prior to the training period. Please see page 8 for a detailed checklist of items required for reimbursement.

SCHEME DEADLINES	
Application closing	Return of invoices
31st March 2026	23rd July 2026
*Subject to availability under the maximum budget allocation, this scheme may close earlier owing to demand.	

TERMS AND CONDITIONS – General Terms

- Applicant hereafter pertains to the breeder/owner of the horse(s) funded under this scheme.
- Horse hereafter pertains to both horses and ponies.
- Training must begin within 14 days of approval. The approval process typically takes 2 – 8 working days. Training period must not begin until after approval date.
- All applications must be submitted before the above stated deadlines.
- **Invoices/ documentation received thereafter will not be funded.** This deadline will not be extended, and no late submissions will be accepted.
- The scheme may be closed ahead of the advertised deadline if the maximum allocation facilitated by the existing budget allocation has been reached.



- Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to use performance/classification equivalents as appropriate.
- Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to reject any application and amend the scheme terms and conditions at any time.
- Horse Sport Ireland reserves the right to permit veterinary equine identification and welfare spot checks for any scheme approved horses at producer's yards onsite to ensure that the horses entered into the scheme are the same horses present for training.
- Applicant and horse application data will be shared with the relevant studbook to confirm breed, studbook, ownership, and any other relevant eligibility for application processing.
- Horse Sport Ireland will provide the results of this scheme, where relevant, to the studbook of origin of the equine in question.
- All information and videos provided to HSI may be retained by HSI for research and studbook purposes.
- Please see checklist of documentation required for reimbursement on page 7.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS - Equine Eligibility:

- Mares and stallions must meet all of the following eligibility criteria:
 - Be born in 2022, 2021 or 2020;
 - Be registered/endorsed in a DAFM approved studbook;
 - Sires must have an Approved/Preliminary Approved or Recognised/Preliminary Recognised or Class 1 OR relevant classification in a DAFM/WBFSH Approved studbook; or equivalent in their breeding programme (i.e. height categorised).

OR

In rare breed studbooks, the animal subject to the application has attended an inspection and been designated either Class 1 or Class 2. The applicant must provide proof of classification.

 - Stallion/colt applications must be accompanied by a signed and dated letter from a veterinary surgeon confirming the horse's entirety.
 - Native Rare Breeds must be registered in the Connemara Pony, Irish Draught or Kerry Bog Pony* studbooks with a full recorded pedigree.
 - *See Appendix 1 for further KBP criteria.
 - Irish Standard bred Pacers and Trotters must meet the attached criteria*.
 - *See Appendix 2 for further criteria.
- Mares produced under the 2026 Premium Retention Scheme are not eligible to be schooled in the 2026 Schooling Schemes.
- Horses started on the 2026 Starting Scheme are not eligible to be schooled under the 2026 Schooling Schemes.
- Approved equines must release permission to access equine genotype (if not existing in HSI) for the purposes of research into traits and breed improvement.
- Animals must be in the applicant ownership and ownership of the animal cannot be changed between family members for the purpose of gaining entry onto the scheme.
- **Applicants must provide a screenshot of their [DAFM Equine Operator Profile](#), or for Northern Ireland applicants a valid [Equine Establishment Number](#).**



- Horses are sent for training with a producer selected by the owner who must meet the specific criteria. Breeders/owners may apply for up to two equines to participate in the scheme.
- For inclusion of equines registered in dual ownership/breed partnership permission in written or email correspondence must be received by HSI from the non-applicant owner. Scheme approval will not occur in the absence of this written or email permission.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS – Applicant:

- Applicants and producers must be resident in Ireland (including Northern Ireland).
- Applicants must be the registered owner of the animal at the time of application.
- The applicant and producer are responsible for all insurance costs and liability for both horse and producer i.e. to cover any personal accident/injury and or horse accident/injury. Horse Sport Ireland will not be liable for any damages or losses incurred by applicants or producers during the training period.
- Applications must be submitted and approved before the start of the training period.
- Application numbers are limited to two horses per applicant.
- Applicants must be satisfied as to the skills, knowledge, experience, and facilities of their selected producer to care for their horse appropriately and to produce it in an appropriate manner.
- Applicants must select their own producer, HSI cannot provide or recommend producers.
- HSI will reimburse the pre-approved costs of eight weeks of training up to a maximum of €1,500. This may include training, livery and associated equine health/management costs (dentistry, saddle fitting, farriery and feeding costs) and associated livery costs (producer fee, entry fees, arena hire, etc.) all receipts must be submitted with the invoice.
- **Payment will not be issued until receipt of valid copy of the paid invoices, receipts, producer feedback, SNP genotype and video evidence of the young horse's progress.**
 - **All receipts/invoices must clearly indicate: Company/supplier name and address, receipt ID number, date of issue, date of payment, horse details (name/UELN/Chip number) itemised breakdown of services including unit prices and the amount paid.**
- A [Producer Feedback Form](#) must be submitted at the culmination of schooling.
- Video evidence must be submitted to the online portal by the applicant to HSI and should include:
 - One video [identifying the equine](#) (showing markings and microchip)
 - One video in the first week of training showing the horse's starting point
 - One video towards the end of the training showing the horse's progress.
 - In the Schooling I Scheme horses should be ridden under saddle in both training videos.
- **The three videos submitted must be geotagged and dated videos via the 'Timestamp Camera Basic' App from Apple's App Store to take Geotagged videos or via the suitable application on other devices.**
- If videos are not submitted with dated geotags and/or the horse is not progressing to a sufficient standard Horse Sport Ireland reserve the right to withhold/refuse payment.



- Grant payments are made in respect of costs already incurred. Invoices (marked with proof of payment) **must** include the following:
 - Name and address of person receiving invoice (owner)
 - Name and address of person giving invoice (producer/ Vet Clinic etc.)
 - Date of Invoice (must be dated within scheme dates)
 - Invoice Number
 - Name and UELN/Microchip of equine the invoice refers to, which must be the same as the approved equine for the scheme
 - Description of services provided (schooling/livery, ET, X-Rays etc)
 - A total figure for the invoice, provided in €
 - **Proof of Payment**- invoices not marked as paid or accompanied by proof of payment are not accepted.

Invoices that do not include the above will not be accepted. Invoices are only accepted in pdf, scanned PDF or physical copies. Images/ screenshots of screens are not acceptable.

- For invoices given in Sterling, HSI will not calculate the exchange rate, the figure supplied will be paid in Euro.
- IBANs provided for scheme payment **MUST** be the IBAN of the registered owner of the animal (applicant). The producer, partner or any other IBAN is not permitted for payment.
- The drawdown of funding is subject to the completion of scheme feedback.
- Applicants must be prepared to provide Horse Sport Ireland with a Tax clearance certificate should the sum of their approvals and or prize money equal €5,000 or more. If a tax clearance cert cannot be furnished on request, grants cannot be provided. [CLICK HERE FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO APPLY.](#)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS - Producer Criteria

- The selection of a producer is at the discretion of the applicant; Horse Sport Ireland accept no liability for potential damage arising during or related to the funded period.
- Producers must not be the owner/close family members of the applicant/breeders/co-owners of the young horse/employees of the applicant or operating from the same premises as the applicant.
 - Nominated producers must produce the horse, no other rider/producer is acceptable.
- Nominated Producing professionals' qualification must meet one of the following criteria:
 - Riders that have qualified a horse for the final in RDS SJ 4-, 5-, 6- or 7-year-olds in the last 3 years.
 - Riders that have qualified a horse for the final day of any leg in the HSI/DAFM Studbook Show Jumping Series in the last 3 years.
 - Riders that have competed a horse for the final in RDS Young Event Horse class in the last 3 years.
 - Riders that have recorded a MER at CCI2*L in the last 3 years.
 - Riders that have recorded a double clear at National 1.35m or higher in the last 3 years.



- Riders that have recorded a MER in the HSI/DAFM Studbook Eventing Series/age class equivalent in the last 3 years.
- Riders that have qualified a horse for the World Breeding Championships for Young horses in Lanaken or Lion d'Angers;
- Producer and underage rider combinations that have qualified a pony for the RDS in the last 3 years.

OR

- Producers for ponies and Native Rare Breeds will be selected based on their skill set in specific discipline (i.e., pony size, driving, showing etc) and must have relevant producing and competing experience (Kerry Bog Pony Society showing and Dublin Horse Show equivalents for Irish Draught and Connemara Ponies)
 - Nominated Producers must provide verification of qualification for the Connemara Performance hunter class in the RDS Dublin Horse Show OR the Clifden High Performance Final Or a top 5 placing in a RDS/Clifden pony showing class in the last 3 years
 - Nominated Producers must provide verification of qualification for the Performance Irish Draught class in the RDS Dublin Horse Show OR a top 5 placing in a RDS Irish Draught showing class in the last 3 years.
- HSI reserve the right to refuse an applicant/producer based on the information provided. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- Horse Sport Ireland will not be party to any contracts or agreements entered or between breeders/owners and producers.
- Horse Sport Ireland will have no role to play in the event of any disputes between breeders/owners and producers arising from participation in this scheme.
- Producers must complete a [Producer Feedback Form](#).

By signing this form, I declare that:

- I understand and agree to the terms and conditions of this scheme in their totality
- I provide my informed consent to participate in this scheme
- I understand that the drawdown of funding is subject to the completion of scheme feedback and submission of all relevant documentation.
- I understand that HSI will publish a list of awardees (forename, surname, county and mare name) on the HSI website
- I am satisfied as to the skills, knowledge, experience and facilities of my selected producer to care for my horse appropriately and to produce it in an appropriate manner and I understand that I, the applicant, accept liability and responsibility for any damages or losses occurring to i) the producer ii) the horse(s) during or related to the funded period.
- I understand and provide consent for my equine's data to be used for research and studbook purposes, including but not limited to publication.
- I understand that if I do not adhere to the schemes terms and conditions, I will not receive funding, even if my horse has been produced by my chosen producer.



- **I agree to indemnify and keep indemnified Horse Sport Ireland against all liabilities, losses, costs, demands, orders, recommendations, determinations, judgments, damages, actions, expenses, fines, penalties, interest, reasonable legal costs and expenses and all claims howsoever and whenever incurred by the Company:**
 - i. **relating to any income tax, PRSI, levies, contributions and any other liability, deduction, contribution, assessment or claim arising from or made in connection with either the provision of the Services; and/or any payment or benefit claimed or received by any person engaged by me (or associates) in connection with the performance of the Services, where such recovery is not prohibited by law:**
 - ii. **as a consequence of any allegation or claim related to employment or alleged employment, transfer or employment, worker status or worker remuneration brought by me, or by any person or persons procured by me in the provision of the Services whether under contract, in equity, at common law or pursuant to statute (including, without limitation pursuant to the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977 to 2007), or otherwise;**
 - iii. **relating to injury, loss or damage caused by an act or omission by me or by any person or persons procured by the me in the provision of the Services;**
- I/we understand that pursuant to the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016, customer consent is required by the data controller, Horse Sport Ireland, to process personal data which it may have in its possession **including direct disclosure** to third parties (data processors) such as, but not limited to selected/approved producers for the purpose of the Schooling I Scheme 2026.
- I/we understand that selected owners are responsible for administration services relating to the Schooling Scheme on behalf of HSI and are responsible for the processing of any information relating to that scheme, either contained within the application form or otherwise. I note that selected producers will only process this data for the purpose of administration of the Schooling I Scheme 2026.
- I confirm that I have reviewed Horse Sport Ireland's Data Protection and Privacy policies (available at www.horsesportireland.ie or on request) and I note that HSI only process personal data for legitimate business purposes and/or where required by law. All processing will have due regard to the DPA 2018 and GDPR 2016. I note that this personal data may include sensitive personal data, as defined within the DPA and GDPR, the processing of which requires my explicit consent. I note that HSI and selected/approved producers will honour the rights and freedoms of the data subjects at all times, as long as there is no other overriding law which limits those privileges.



CHECKLIST for Schooling I

- ✓ Please ensure that the producer invoice includes the following information:
 - Name and address of producer
 - Name and address of applicant
 - Correct amount on invoice in euro (no other currency is acceptable)
 - Invoice must be for **8 weeks**
 - Name and UELN of horse
 - Invoice is signed and paid

- ✓ Video evidence must be submitted to the online portal by the applicant to HSI.
 - One video must be provided identifying the horse, showing its scanned microchip number and markings,
 - One from the first week of training showing the horse's starting point,
 - One video towards the end of the training (week 8) showing the horse's progress.
 - **The videos submitted must be geotagged and dated videos via the 'Timestamp Camera Basic' App from Apple's App Store to take Geotagged videos or via the suitable application on other devices.**

- ✓ Stallion/colts applications must be accompanied by a letter from a veterinary surgeon to confirm that they are entire.

- ✓ [Producer feedback form](#) must be completed and returned to HSI.

- ✓ Equine Operator Profile screenshot must be uploaded or for NI applicants a valid EEN number.

- ✓ IBANs provided for scheme payment **MUST** be the IBAN of the applicant. The producer, partner or any other IBAN is not permitted for payment

- ✓ SNP genotype – if not existing in HSI

- ✓ [CLICK HERE](#) for FAQ document for all schemes.



Appendix 1 Kerry Bog Pony Criteria

Kerry Bog Ponies Criteria

- Ponies to be 4 to 8 years old.
- Mares, colts/stallions, and geldings are permitted.
- Inspections may be required from 2026.
- Sires must be classified as KBP1.

Ridden Ponies

- To be ridden by a child in a safe manner.
- Walk, trot, canter, stand still and back. Jump cross poles.
- Pony to attend and compete at a show or take part in pony club activities.
- Video evidence of above necessary.

Driven Ponies

- To stand still unattended. To walk, trot a figure of eight, stand still, back and walk forward answering to voice commands.
- To be safe in traffic and at a show.
- Video evidence of above necessary.

Trainer/Producer

- To be selected by the owner of the pony.
- Should have experience in producing young ponies.

Ponies to be selected by HSI based on applications and adherence to the criteria for qualification. Ponies to be assessed by HSI based on video evidence prior to payment.

Appendix 2 IHRA Criteria

- Horses must be 2 years old.
- Fillies and colts are permitted.
 - Colts must be accompanied by an entirety letter.
- Horses must be the progeny of Sires that have raced with the following minimum mile rate race time:
(Pacer Sires: Under 2.00- UK/Ireland, 1.55- USA/Canada/ Southern Hemisphere or have progeny that have won races.
Trotter Sires: Kilometre rate of 1.14 or have progeny that have won races).
- Pacers should be pacing and be able to work out or qualify in 2 minutes and 25 seconds.
- Trotters should be trotting and be able to work out or qualify in 2 minutes and 45 seconds.
- Between the months of June to September.
- Video evidence must be submitted.

Trainer/Producer:

- To be selected by the owner of the horse.
- Must be a public trainer licensed with the IHRA.
- The Applicant must also be licensed with the IHRA.