

## Work Rider

Racehorse Training

### Job Summary

A work rider is responsible for riding racehorses during workouts particularly in their fast work; they must be accomplished riders and be able to follow instructions to the letter. Riders must be in top physical shape and they must maintain appropriate riding weights—generally under 12 stone for jump racing and under 10 stone for Flat.



### Main Duties

- Maintain physical fitness levels by training regularly, following nutrition plans, or consulting with health professionals;
- Exercise ride a horse in training for a set piece of work i.e. a training session on the gallops;
- Communicate with trainers in order to understand and accomplish desired goals;
- Develop a sense of the horse's running rate in order to meet the trainer's expectations for the distance a horse must cover in a given time;
- Provide knowledgeable feedback on how the horse felt in order to contribute to its ongoing improvement in fitness & performance;
- Detect and report a horse's injuries or lameness exhibited before or during workouts;
- Fastidiously keep safety equipment in good repair;

### Job Level

Skilled Operator Role

### Typical Employer

Self employed; Training Yard;

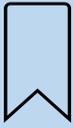


### Case Study

#### *Racehorse Training*

*Ireland has some of the leading trainers in the world amongst its 372 public trainers and 248 restricted licence holders. Whilst there are areas of concentration, notably The Curragh being a global centre of excellence for thoroughbred racehorse training, trainers are located in 31 of Ireland's 32 counties. The largest trainers account for a relatively high proportion of horses in training. In 2016 the largest 32 yards accounted for over 3,500 horses, 45% of all horses in training. At the opposite end of the spectrum the smallest 166 yards accounted for less than 900 horses (11%).*

*[Source: Economic Impact of Irish breeding and racing 2017]*



## Competencies (Behavioural)

- Passion - a love for horses, horse riding or horse racing is the No. 1 motivating factor why people work within the horse racing industry (HRI Education & Training Survey 2020);
- Intrapersonal skills (perseverance; initiative; self-motivation), Critical thinking skills (problem solving), Interpersonal skills (communication; teamwork);

## Knowledge & Skills

### Equine Knowledge & Skills

Horse training, performance & fitness;  
Horse care & welfare;  
Breeding operations & pedigrees;  
Equine nutrition, anatomy & physiology;  
Facility management & maintenance;  
Horsemanship skills;

### People Knowledge & Skills

Communication skills;  
Health & safety at work;  
Self development;

### Racing Knowledge & Skills

Riding skills;  
Racing industry knowledge;  
Racing rules & regulations;  
Integrity of the sport;  
Raceday operations:

### Business Knowledge & Skills

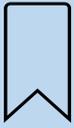
I.T. / digital skills;  
Media & communications skills;

## Education

While no specific qualification or training is required to become a Work Rider, many new entrants have completed the Level 4 Racehorse Care and Riding - Trainee Jockey course run by Racing Academy Centre of Education (R.A.C.E).

CPD - R.A.C.E. also provides specialist riding skills training throughout the calendar year. See [www.racingacademy.ie](http://www.racingacademy.ie) for further information. Other educational opportunities include the Level 5 Horsemanship (Course Code: 5M3371) qualification. See [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie) for further information.

For self employed work riders the local enterprise office network provides business skills training to sole traders, small to medium sized business including finance & taxation, IT, digital media and communication, see [www.localenterprise.ie](http://www.localenterprise.ie).



## Career Path (Alternative Careers)

Professional Jockey  
Head Person (Lad/Lass)  
Assistant Trainer

## Experience

Whilst many work riders go on to become jockeys, former jockeys who can no longer make Race weight conversely transition to exercise rider careers. Some individuals couple work/exercise riding careers with other equine-related roles, such as a horse grooming or stable management.

## Job Availability

Positions are most readily available in areas of the country with a large amount of racing yards. Follow [www.equip.ie](http://www.equip.ie) for information on job opportunities.



## Certification

No Certification is Required.

Trainers are required to apply for a Racing Establishment Card issued by the Irish Horse Racing Board (I.H.R.B.) within 5 days of commencement of employment for all staff within their stable yard.

## Working Conditions

Dedication is needed as work riders are up early and outside in all weathers, training and exercising horses on the gallops.

## Pay & Benefits

Work Riders can be employed by a trainer or are often self-employed, working for many trainers. For those working for a single trainer, the Work Rider role may also include yard work before and after exercising. When employed on a freelance basis the rider would usually be paid per lot (horse) they ride regardless of how long this may take.