

NEQHA Guidelines and Eligibility January 2025

NEQHA is an AQHA affiliate and as such operates under all rules of the AQHA. Versatility Ranch classes which have been approved by RHAA operate under RHAA rules and are endorsed by AQHA who have recognised RHAA as the governing body.

Versatility Ranch Rules and Guidelines

- Horses registered with a breed association are eligible to enter all offered classes.
- Unregistered horses are eligible to enter in Any Handed, Green Horse/Rider, Intermediate Horse/Rider/Youth, Beginner and NEQHA Club classes.
- Unregistered horses must have an aged vet certificate provided via email to admin@neqha.com.au to enter Amateur, Select, Masters, Junior, Senior Horse or All Age Classes.

The following eligibility divisions are determined by RHAA.

Green Rider

A class for inexperienced adult riders. Open riders are NOT eligible for this class. Riders will be required to show their horses at the walk & trot only. The purpose of this class is to encourage those new to riding and/or new to showing. Those entered in this class are ineligible for any INTERMEDIATE or OPEN classes.

- Any age horse may be ridden two handed in a Snaffle Bit or hackamore. (No curb/shank bits)
- Any 'safe' saddle; English, Western, stock, fender or half breed saddles with the exclusion of bareback pads
- Ownership of horse not required – a borrowed horse may be used (owner of the horse must be a financial member)

Green Horse

Open to all riders wanting to bring inexperienced horses (3yrs and over) into the show arena. Horses will be required to show at the walk, trot & lope.

- Horse may be ridden one or two handed in any legal headgear (see RHAA rules 'Gear')
- Rider must not swap from one to two hands or vice versa during the class
- Any 'safe' saddle; English, Western, stock, fender or half breed saddles with the exclusion of bareback pads
- Ownership of horse not required - a borrowed horse may be used (owner of the horse must be a financial member)

Intermediate Rider

A class for nonprofessional adult riders with some previous show experience. Riders will be required to show their horses at the walk, trot & lope. Riders can ride in a snaffle, hackamore or a curb bit with split reins or a romal.

Intermediate Horse

Open to all riders, either professional or nonprofessional. Horses with previous show experience may be shown in this class. Horses will be required to show at the walk, trot & lope.

Intermediate Youth

A class for Youth riders with some previous show experience. Open to Youth riders, 7 to 18 years as at 1st August. Riders will be required to show their horses at the walk, trot & lope.

Youth competitors are required to wear an approved safety helmet whilst mounted. Youth must not ride or handle a stallion at any time.

Amateur/Select Amateur

A person must be a financial member of an association and hold a current Amateur Permit.

Select Amateur classes are for those who have attained the age of 50 years and been endorsed as such by their breed association. Select Amateurs must choose which class they wish to enter at a show, if the show offers Amateur, Select Amateur and Novice Amateur (if eligible).

Junior Horse, Senior Horse, All Age

Horses must be registered with their breed association or have provided a vet certificate verifying the age of the horse.

Horse must be ridden in the correct head gear in a western saddle as per AQHA/RHAA rules.

- Junior Horse is 3 – 5 years old
- Senior Horse is 6 years and older

Heritage Snaffle Bit

The rider may be on a horse of any age that must be shown in a snaffle bit and stock/fender saddle. Those entered in this division if eligible, can cross enter Amateur, Select Amateur, Intermediate Rider, Green Rider and Youth classes.

WESTERN ATTIRE IS MANDATORY; (All divisions)

- long sleeved, collared, button-up shirt
- western hat (the hat must be on the rider's head when the exhibitor enters the arena) or ASS approved safety helmet
- western pants/jeans
- western boots

Optional Attire – necktie, scarf, spurs, chinks and chaps in ridden classes.

Versatility Ranch Rules

- No horse under 3 years of age may be entered in ridden classes
- No hoof polish/black
- No braided or banded manes/tails or tail extensions
- Trimming inside ears is discouraged. Trimming bridle path is allowed, also trimming of fetlocks or excessive (long) facial hair
- Equipment with silver should not count over a good working outfit. Silver on bridles and saddles is discouraged
- Holding the saddle horn with either hand will not be penalised in any class
- Posting or standing in stirrups at extended trot is acceptable
- When exhibiting in a snaffle bit or hackamore, an exhibitor may switch between two hands and one hand on the reins at any time
- No drag allowed in Green level, Intermediate Level, Heritage Snaffle Bit or Youth classes.
- **Intermediate horse/rider cannot have won more than 10 cumulative points per class/division**

Western Performance Guidelines and Club Rules

NEQHA shows are AQHA sanctioned events and therefore run under AQHA rules. Competitors are responsible for ensuring they know the rules and regulations for the classes they are entering. Beginner, Any Handed and NEQHA Member's classes are run under club rules and do not attract breed association points. Led Hack/Show Hunter and Walk/Jog classes are also non-sanctioned. Judges score sheets will only be available for viewing at the end of each day.

BEGINNER A rider or handler who has never won an equivalent class at any sanctioned western event and has not won an NEQHA Beginner end of year High Point award. Beginners who meet these criteria can compete for the show season in this category.

Any Handed These classes are known as our training runs, ultimately to build confidence. The horse may be unregistered and can be ridden in a snaffle, hackamore, or curb bit. These classes do not attract points or end of year awards.

NEQHA Member's Class This is a class for club members with some show experience. The horse may be unregistered and can be ridden in a snaffle, hackamore, or curb bit. Open or professional riders are not eligible for this class.

WESTERN ATTIRE IS MANDATORY; (All divisions)

- long sleeved shirt or jacket with a collar
- western hat (the hat must be on the rider's head when the exhibitor enters the arena) or ASS approved safety helmet
- western pants/jeans
- western boots

Optional Attire – necktie, scarf, spurs, chinks and chaps in ridden classes.