



Equestrian Sport in Australia

Leadership Charter

EA Board | State Boards | National Discipline Committees | Leadership Teams

1. Purpose

This Leadership Charter defines how we, as leaders across equestrian sport in Australia, commit to working together to serve our sport and our equestrian community. It applies to all who hold leadership positions—EA Board members, State Board members, National Discipline Committee members, and EA and State leadership employees.

This charter represents our collective agreement to lead with integrity, collaborate across boundaries, and always act in the best interests of our members and the sport we love. It establishes both our positive commitments and our clear boundaries—what we will do and what we will not tolerate.

2. Our Unified Commitment

Despite our different roles, levels, and disciplines, we are one leadership community working toward a common purpose: to grow, strengthen, and sustain equestrian sport in Australia. We recognise that our effectiveness as leaders depends on our ability to work collaboratively across the EA Board, State Boards, National Discipline Committees, and leadership teams.

3. Our Core Commitments: WE WILL

As leaders across equestrian sport in Australia, we make the following fundamental commitments to each other, our organisation, and the equestrian community we serve:

- **Work towards a common goal** - We align our efforts across all levels and disciplines, focusing on shared objectives that advance Australian equestrian sport
- **Be respectful by listening, collaborating, and being inclusive** - We create space for all voices across our diverse equestrian community, actively seek perspectives from different disciplines and states, and treat every individual with dignity
- **Achieve a common purpose and culture by teamwork** - We recognise that our success depends on working together across boards, committees, states, and disciplines, supporting one another to achieve our collective mission
- **Think forward collectively** - We maintain a long-term perspective for the future of equestrian sport in Australia and make decisions that position us for sustainable success
- **Be curious about someone else's thinking** - We don't judge; we assume positive intent and seek to understand different viewpoints across disciplines, states, and roles
- **Always explain 'the why'** - We provide context and rationale for our decisions, helping members, officials, and the broader community understand our thinking
- **Uphold the rules for all** - We apply standards consistently across all states and disciplines, holding ourselves to the same expectations we have for others

- **Start with the member** - We keep our members—riders, owners, officials, clubs, and the broader equestrian community—at the centre of every decision and action
- **Welcome collaboration and innovation** - We embrace new ideas, encourage creative problem-solving, and work across state and discipline boundaries to strengthen equestrian sport

We operate in good faith at all times

4. Our Boundaries: WE WON'T

To protect our culture and maintain trust across the equestrian community, we establish clear boundaries. We will not engage in or tolerate these behaviours:

- **Denigrate individuals** - We will not diminish, belittle, or demean any person within our equestrian community
- **Be disrespectful** - We will not treat anyone with disrespect or discourtesy, whether they are members, volunteers, officials, competitors, or fellow leaders
- **Undervalue contributions** - We will not dismiss or minimise the work and efforts of volunteers, officials, committees, or members across our sport
- **Tolerate abuse or lack of respect** - We will not allow abusive behaviour or disrespectful conduct toward anyone in our equestrian community
- **Personalise negative comments** - We will not make negative feedback about the person rather than the issue or behaviour
- **Be partisan** - We will not favour particular states, disciplines, or individuals unfairly, or allow bias to influence our decisions
- **Customise rules by 'names'** - We will not apply different standards based on who someone is; rules and policies apply equally to all members, at all levels
- **Rant on social media or make ill-informed public comments** - We will not engage in public outbursts or commentary that lacks proper consideration and evidence, recognising our responsibility as leaders in the equestrian community
- **Make ill-informed decisions** - We will not make decisions without proper evidence, facts, and due consideration of impact across our sport
- **Argue publicly in front of the community we serve** - We will not display our disagreements or conflicts in ways that undermine confidence in our leadership or cause harm to members, particularly young riders and their families

5. Accountability Standards

Accountability is not just a principle—it's a daily practice. We commit to these specific behaviours that make accountability real and visible across all levels of leadership:

5.1 Transparency & Communication

- **Appropriate reporting mechanisms** - We use suitable reporting structures and processes to include key metrics and progress updates that maintain shared awareness across boards and committees
- **Communicate to our members** - We ensure clear, consistent, and timely communication with the equestrian community we serve
- **Clarity and respect confidences** - We communicate with precision while honouring confidentiality and trust, particularly regarding sensitive matters

- **Address issues directly with the person** - We have courageous conversations face-to-face rather than avoiding difficult topics

5.2 Direct & Constructive Dialogue

- **Won't engage in gossip** - We don't discuss people or issues behind their backs; we direct people to talk directly to each other
- **Won't argue by email** - We recognise that complex or sensitive issues require real conversation, not electronic debate
- **Use common language** - We communicate in ways that are accessible and clear to all, avoiding unnecessary jargon

5.3 Ownership & Responsibility

- **Be receptive to concerns about our own conduct** – We commit to listening respectfully and openly when concerns are raised about our actions or behaviours, particularly where those actions are perceived to be inconsistent with this charter
- **Take responsibility for our actions** - We own our decisions and their outcomes, both positive and negative
- **Own up to our mistakes** - We acknowledge errors promptly and learn from them
- **Have the ability to apologise and explain** - We admit when we're wrong, apologise sincerely, and provide context for how we'll improve
- **Respect fiduciary obligations** - We honour our legal and ethical duties as board members and leaders of Equestrian Australia

5.4 Follow-Through & Action

- **Follow up with action (do what you say)** - Our commitments are meaningful because we consistently deliver on them
- **Respond and take action in a timely manner** - We recognise that delays and silence erode trust; we respond promptly even when we don't have complete answers
- **Able to respond to feedback** - We receive feedback with openness and use it to improve our leadership

6. Core Leadership Principles

6.1 Integrity & Ethics

- Demonstrate unwavering commitment to ethical conduct and transparency
- Lead by example and hold ourselves accountable to the highest standards
- Foster a culture where integrity is never compromised for expediency
- Respect the national integrity framework and avoid involvement in integrity complaints or investigations

6.2 Member-Centered Leadership

- Value and respect every member of the equestrian community, recognising their unique contributions
- Invest in the development and growth of our sport and our people
- Create inclusive environments where diverse perspectives across disciplines and states are welcomed

6.3 Strategic Vision for Australian Equestrian Sport

- Maintain clear focus on long-term objectives for the growth and sustainability of equestrian sport
- Balance immediate priorities with future opportunities
- Communicate vision clearly and inspire others to embrace shared goals

6.4 Collaboration Across Boundaries

- Work effectively across EA Board, State Boards, National Discipline Committees, and leadership teams
- Leverage the strengths and expertise of different disciplines and states
- Support colleagues in their leadership journey across all levels of governance

7. Decision-Making Framework

When making decisions at any level—EA Board, State Board, National Discipline Committee, or leadership team—we follow these guiding principles:

- **Member-centered approach:** Start with the member and ensure decisions serve the best interests of the equestrian community
- **Sport-wide perspective:** Consider impact across all disciplines, states, and levels of participation
- **Alignment with values:** Ensure decisions reflect our core values and ethical standards
- **Evidence-based:** Ground decisions in data, analysis, and sound judgment—not ill-informed opinion
- **Inclusive process:** Seek diverse perspectives from across disciplines and states when appropriate
- **Transparent rationale:** Always explain 'the why' behind our decisions
- **Long-term view:** Consider both immediate and long-term implications for Australian equestrian sport
- **Good faith:** Operate with honesty, integrity, and positive intent at all times

8. Our Commitment to the Equestrian Community

Our members—riders of all ages and abilities, owners, officials, coaches, volunteers, and clubs—are at the heart of everything we do. We commit to serving them with excellence, integrity, and unwavering dedication. Every decision we make, and every action we take, begins with asking: 'How does this serve our members and strengthen equestrian sport in Australia?'

We are particularly mindful of our responsibility to young riders and their families, ensuring that our leadership models the values and behaviours we wish to see throughout our sport.

9. Living the Charter

This Leadership Charter represents our binding commitment to each other and to the equestrian community we serve. It applies equally to all leaders—whether serving on the EA Board, State Boards, National Discipline Committees, or in leadership roles. We will:

- Integrate these principles into our daily leadership practices
- Hold ourselves and each other accountable to these standards, regardless of role or level



- Call out behaviour that violates our 'WE WON'T' boundaries with respect and directness
- Model these behaviours publicly and inspire others throughout the equestrian community to embrace them
- Regularly assess our leadership effectiveness and seek continuous improvement
- Welcome feedback from the community we serve and remain open to evolving our approaches
- Review this charter regularly to ensure it remains relevant and meaningful

*Together, across all levels and disciplines,
we lead Australian equestrian sport with purpose, integrity, and good faith.*