MADRIX EQUESTRIAN

ACADEMY

A different way of learning.
A deeper way of partnering.

COMMUNICATION Clear, considerate cues	**CONNECTION** Trust before expectation	**CONFIDENCE** Progress at the horse's pace

THREE COURSES. ONE HORSE-FIRST PHILOSOPHY.

The Madrix Equestrian Academy offers a progressive learning pathway for riders and horse owners who want to develop thoughtful, effective bitless communication. From understanding the horse and developing empathy to advanced ridden partnership, each course combines theory with practical application.

THE LEARNING PATHWAY

01 EMPATHY IN PRACTICE — Learn to read, listen and respond with understanding.

02 FOUNDATIONS — Understand the principles of bitless communication.

03 ADVANCED PARTNERSHIP — Refine your skills across dressage, jumping and hacking.

HORSE FIRST. ALWAYS.

A learning experience built around welfare, clarity, patience and partnership.

LEVEL 2 · EMPATHY IN PRACTICE

EMPATHY IN PRACTICE

Learn to read, listen and respond to your horse with patience and true understanding.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

Develop the ability to recognise, interpret and respond to the physical, emotional and behavioural communication of the horse. Explore emotional awareness, stress signals, learning behaviour, individual personalities and the importance of adapting your approach to each horse.

10-MODULE CURRICULUM

1. Seeing the Horse as an Individual

Look beyond behaviour and consider each horse's personality, history, experiences, preferences and emotional responses.

2. Learning to Listen: Equine Body Language

Interpret subtle communication through facial expression, ears, eyes, nostrils, posture, movement and body tension.

3. Understanding Emotions and Emotional Responses

Explore fear, frustration, curiosity, confidence, anxiety and relaxation, and how emotional state can influence learning.

4. Stress, Discomfort and the Language of Resistance

Distinguish between unwillingness, confusion, fear, discomfort and possible pain. Recognise early warning signs instead of labelling behaviour as naughty or disobedient.

5. The Art of Timing, Patience and Observation

Learn when to ask, wait and release. Consider how timing, energy, body language and expectations influence the horse.

6. Building Trust Through Consistency

Explore predictable, fair interactions, boundaries, choice, reinforcement and a safe learning environment without intimidation or punishment.

7. The Horse's World: Social and Environmental Needs

Understand herd dynamics, social relationships, movement, grazing and enrichment, and how management can influence behaviour.

8. Adapting Your Approach

Recognise why one method will not suit every horse. Adapt requests, exercises and progression to individual needs, confidence and experience.

9. Empathy Under Saddle

Apply empathy to ridden work by recognising changes in rhythm, balance, tension and willingness, then responding with clarity and patience.

10. Empathy in Action

Bring together observation, emotional awareness and practical communication. Make decisions that prioritise welfare while maintaining clear, consistent communication.

ASSESSMENT

Theory: body language, emotional responses, stress, discomfort, learning, management and appropriate responses to training scenarios. Practical: behavioural observation, identifying signals, timing and release, adapting communication, trust-building and an individual communication plan.

R350	R3,000
Per individual module	Complete 10-module course

Complete course enrolment saves R500 compared with purchasing all 10 modules individually. Course completion includes theoretical and practical assessment.

LEVEL 1 · FOUNDATIONS

FOUNDATIONS

Begin your journey with the principles of bitless communication.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

An introduction to the principles of bitless communication, equine behaviour, groundwork and ridden communication. Students develop an understanding of how horses receive, interpret and respond to human cues, and how to build a relationship based on trust, clarity and mutual understanding.

10-MODULE CURRICULUM

1. The Madrix Philosophy

Explore the 3 Cs — Communication, Connection and Confidence — alongside the horse-first approach, ethical horsemanship, welfare and the responsibilities of working with horses.

2. Understanding the Horse

Discover equine behaviour, body language and natural instincts. Recognise signs of relaxation, tension, discomfort, anxiety and confidence.

3. Understanding Bitless Equipment

Explore bitless options, how they function, correct fitting, pressure distribution and equipment limitations. Removing the bit does not automatically remove pressure.

4. The Language of Pressure and Release

Learn about reinforcement, timing, consistency and clear requests. Understand pressure and release, and why punishment has no place in the Madrix approach.

5. Groundwork and Communication

Develop communication from the ground through personal space, leading, stopping, backing up, yielding and moving forward.

6. The Rider's Role

Understand balance, posture, seat, legs, hands and breathing, and how the rider's body influences the horse.

7. Introduction to Ridden Bitless Communication

Introduce steering, forward movement, slowing down and stopping through the seat, legs, voice and reins.

8. Building Confidence and Understanding Responses

Identify uncertainty, resistance, confusion and stress. Learn to adjust requests, recognise when a horse needs a break and build confidence progressively.

9. Putting the Principles Together

Apply the 3 Cs to everyday handling, groundwork and ridden work. Develop consistency and recognise each horse's individual needs.

10. Assessment and the Way Forward

Consolidate course learning, reflect on personal development and demonstrate understanding of the Madrix Foundations principles.

ASSESSMENT

Theory: the 3 Cs, equine body language, bitless equipment, reinforcement, rider influence and welfare. Practical: safe handling, reading body language, groundwork, pressure and release, rider position and basic bitless communication.

R350	R3,000
Per individual module	Complete 10-module course

Complete course enrolment saves R500 compared with purchasing all 10 modules individually. Course completion includes theoretical and practical assessment.

LEVEL 3 · ADVANCED PARTNERSHIP

ADVANCED PARTNERSHIP

Refine your skills in advanced bitless riding.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

Develop confident, balanced and harmonious bitless partnerships through advanced ridden communication. Refine rider influence, balance, rhythm and responsiveness, and apply these skills to dressage, lateral work, jumping and safe hacking.

10-MODULE CURRICULUM

1. The Advanced Bitless Partnership

Refine communication, connection and confidence through consistency, responsiveness and harmony as training expectations increase.

2. Advanced Rider Position and Influence

Develop seat, balance, posture, leg and rein aids. Understand rider asymmetry and communicate with minimal interference.

3. Balance, Rhythm and Straightness

Explore rhythm, relaxation, suppleness, contact and impulsion. Develop balance through transitions, circles, changes of direction and variations of pace.

4. Introduction to Lateral Movements

Understand the purpose and mechanics of lateral work. Introduce leg yield, correct positioning, sideways movement and forward rhythm.

5. Developing Advanced Dressage Skills

Introduce shoulder-in and develop suppleness, balance and engagement. Understand bend, angle, positioning and the difference between shoulder-in and leg yield.

6. Introduction to Bitless Jumping

Explore jumping principles, rider position, balance, rhythm and approach. Maintain clear communication without interfering with the horse's jumping movement.

7. Developing Confidence Over Fences

Progress through suitable polework, cross-poles, combinations and related distances, prioritising confidence, balance and straightness over height.

8. Hacking Out and Riding Beyond the Arena

Prepare for unfamiliar environments through safe hacking practices, group etiquette, road awareness, terrain and appropriate responses to unexpected situations.

9. Adaptability, Confidence and Partnership Under Pressure

Apply advanced communication in varied environments. Recognise tension, maintain confidence and adapt techniques while prioritising horse and rider safety.

10. The Complete Partnership

Bring together refined communication, understanding, balance and confidence. Demonstrate skills and develop an ongoing training plan.

ASSESSMENT

Theory: equipment, rider biomechanics, dressage and lateral work, jumping, hacking safety, fitness and welfare. Practical: balanced riding, transitions, leg yield, shoulder-in at an appropriate level, progressive jumping and safe supervised hacking practices.

R350	R3,000
Per individual module	Complete 10-module course

Complete course enrolment saves R500 compared with purchasing all 10 modules individually. Course completion includes theoretical and practical assessment.

ENROLMENT & COURSE FEES

Choose the learning option that suits your goals.

OPTION	FEE	WHAT'S INCLUDED
Individual module	**R350**	One selected module from a course.
Complete course	**R3,000**	All 10 modules, plus the course assessment.

A SAVING WHEN YOU ENROL IN A COMPLETE COURSE

Each course contains 10 modules. Purchasing modules individually would total R3,500. The complete-course fee of R3,000 represents a saving of R500.

LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

Each course combines theory and practical learning. Students complete a theoretical assessment and a practical assessment appropriate to the course level. Practical activities and assessment must always be adapted to the horse's suitability, soundness, fitness, experience and confidence.

PROGRESSION THROUGH THE ACADEMY

The courses are designed as a progressive pathway: Empathy in Practice → Foundations → Advanced Partnership. Students should complete the earlier courses, or demonstrate equivalent knowledge and experience, before progressing to the next level. Advanced activities such as lateral work, jumping and hacking are introduced progressively and only where suitable.

THE MADRIX APPROACH

We believe that better riding begins with better understanding. Our approach places the horse's welfare first and values clear communication, thoughtful timing, patience and mutual confidence. The aim is not simply to ride without a bit, but to build a partnership in which horse and rider can understand one another.

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Course outlines are a summary of the learning content. Module delivery, practical activities and assessment arrangements may be refined as the academy develops.