

# How to Become a Certified Eventing Instructor



Presented by



**PLEASE NOTE:** To ask questions about the Instructors' Certification Program or to find out how to sign up for ICP Workshops, contact Nancy Knight at [nancy@useventing.com](mailto:nancy@useventing.com) or Sue Hershey at [swhershey@cs.com](mailto:swhershey@cs.com).

The Instructors' Certification Program is a professional education and certification program for instructors of event riding, competing and horse care. The six levels of ICP certification correspond to the levels of national and international competition from Novice through Advanced and from CIC\* through CIC\*\*\* and Training Level 3-Day Event through CCI\*\*\*\*. Candidate instructors seeking regular ICP certification should have or have had at least 3 students competing at the high end of the ICP level for which they seek certification. Verification from those students is requested at the time when an instructor candidate registers with ICP by contacting this office. For information about provisional ICP certification, a new option first offered in January of 2007, please read the article below.

Click for a [list of instructor ICP Levels with their corresponding student competition levels](#).

Note: A candidate instructor does not need to start with ICP at Level I and proceed upward through the ICP Levels. Rather, each candidate instructor evaluates his or her own teaching knowledge, experience, and skill and selects the ICP Workshop Level appropriate for him/her. At the end of each Workshop, ICP faculty will assist each candidate instructor in making a decision about the ICP Level at which that instructor should be assessed for ICP certification.

## ICP Workshops

All candidate instructors who wish to be ICP-certified MUST attend the teaching Workshop(s) specified for their ICP Level. A Workshop for horse and stable management is available, but not required. The Levels I/II Workshops Pair includes a three-day Teaching of Dressage Workshop and a three-day Teaching of Jumping Workshop. The Levels III/IV Workshop consists of a three-day Workshop for teaching of dressage and teaching of jumping. The Workshop list is updated as soon as Workshop dates are confirmed by each Workshop host/organizer. Assessments are listed as soon as they are confirmed by this office. Click for the list of [Workshops and Assessments](#).

You are NOT required to be registered with the program to attend a Workshop as a fully participating candidate. However, preference will be given to registered candidates in the event that a Workshop exceeds the maximum of eight candidates per faculty member. Auditors are invited to attend Workshops, but no credit except Continuing Education credit for already-certified instructors will be accrued by attending a Workshop as an auditor.

Each day of an ICP Workshop involves lecture, discussion, faculty model-teaching, and candidate instructor practice-teaching in front of the ICP faculty member(s) and the other candidate instructors attending the Workshop. During and at the end of each Workshop, candidates are provided with feedback by the faculty member, who may or may not recommend mentoring. Mentoring is a process whereby candidate instructors who have been advised to work on some areas of their teaching apply privately to a mentor and receive additional tuition. Click for the [ICP Mentor List](#).

Workshops are organized and operated by host/organizers; anyone wishing to attend a listed Workshop should contact the host/organizer whose contact information is indicated on the ICP Workshops and Assessments list. All ICP Workshops are operated under the guidelines provided by the USEA office and the ICP committee and implemented by the ICP faculty member(s) and the Workshop host/organizer.

ICP written materials are available for purchase from the USEA office. It is recommended that candidate instructors have these **in advance of attending a Workshop**. The *ICP Standards Booklet* is the definitive outline of the program and its standards; it is priced at \$7.50 per copy. The *ICP Workbook*, a loose-leaf binder containing information about instruction of dressage and jumping, safety/medical issues, teaching theory and practice, and horse and stable management, is available for \$25 and is necessary for both Workshops and on-going study. Both the *Standards Booklet* and the *Workbook* include the ICP required and recommended reading list.

### **ICP Assessments**

All candidate instructors **MUST** have attended the requisite ICP Workshop(s), completed any recommended or required mentoring, and should have registered with the program before attending an Assessment, which is organized and run by the USEA office. To acquire the necessary ICP registration form, contact [Nancy Knight](#). To sign up for an ICP Assessment, you must contact Nancy Knight more than 60 days before that Assessment.

In order to receive his/her ICP certificate after passing an ICP Assessment, each instructor must have sent to the USEA office proof of current CPR/first aid training and proof of his/her state's version of Child Abuse Clearance.

Assessment for certification involves teaching before a pair of ICP assessors – a dressage lesson, a show-jumping lesson, and a cross-country lesson – and writing responses to questions about Horse and Stable Management, Teaching Theory and Practice, and Medical/Safety issues. Also, a practical "hands-on" Horse and Stable Management test is administered at the Assessment.

### **To Instructors of Event Riders:**

#### **The Provisional ICP Certificate Option Initiated in January, 2007**

Now beginning its fifth year of operation, the USEA's Instructors' Certification Program has certified 96 instructors across all the ICP Levels from I through IV. As instructors and event riders already know, instructors must attend the ICP Workshop(s) appropriate to their ICP Level before being evaluated for certification at an ICP Assessment. Also, an instructor must teach/have taught at least 3 students while those students are/were competing at the high end of the competition level taught at the ICP Level for which the instructor is being assessed and certified. All candidate instructors must register with ICP before they are assessed.

At its Workshops and Assessments, ICP has so far primarily attracted and focused upon established instructors who have or have had a well-developed base of competing students. In 2007, the ICP will

enlarge its focus to include instructors who do not yet have a group of students competing at the high end of the ICP Level that they are teaching or feel prepared to teach. These might be young instructors who are just starting out in the profession, instructors wishing to educate themselves to teach students competing at a higher level than they are teaching now, or instructors living in an area without many opportunities for their students to compete in eventing. For these instructors, ICP education/certification would come *before* they acquire experience teaching the relevant competing students, whereas with instructors already developed as professionals, ICP education/certification tends to come *after* they have acquired experience teaching the relevant competing students.

Therefore, starting in 2007, in addition to offering its regular certificate ICP will begin to offer a provisional certificate to those instructors who neither have nor have had as many as three competing students at the high end of the competition level of their ICP Level. Such an instructor will attend the requisite ICP Workshops, just as all other instructors do, and then go on when ready to an ICP Assessment at the level appropriate for his/her teaching and horse care knowledge and skill. The Assessment itself and the standards by which each level is scored for the provisional certificate will be the same as for candidate instructors who do have or have had competing students at the high end of their ICP level. The provisional certificate differs from the regular certificate **ONLY** in that the instructor working toward the provisional certificate does not need to have or have had three students competing at the high end of her/his ICP Level, whereas the instructor working toward the regular certificate does need to have or have had three students competing at the high end of her/his ICP Level. If the instructor in question passes his/her ICP Assessment, he or she will receive a **provisional certificate** that both attests to ICP certification and anticipates a gradual transition of that instructor's student group to include riders who compete at the high end of the competition level of his/her ICP Level. Please note also that those who are provisionally certified must fulfill ICP Continuing Education requirements just as regularly certified instructors do.

Described below are three different applications of the provisional certificate concept. One of these instructors might be someone like you.

1. A young instructor teaches riders up through the Novice level but does not yet have any students who compete at Novice. He attends a Levels I/II Workshops Pair, follows through with mentoring if that is recommended by his Workshop faculty, and then attends an ICP Assessment for Level I-Novice. He passes, receiving a provisional ICP certificate for Level I-Novice. After this instructor develops and/or acquires three students who compete at Novice, he asks them to verify with ICP that they are competing at Novice, just as all other ICP instructors do when they register with ICP. Then ICP sends the regular ICP Level I-Novice certificate to that instructor.
2. An instructor already has some competing students but is in the process of developing her knowledge and skills so that she can teach students competing at a higher level in the future. She currently teaches Training level students, among whom there are at least three who compete and who verify this fact with ICP when the instructor registers. This instructor attends a Levels I/II Workshops Pair, goes to an Assessment, and gets certified at Level I-Training, receiving the regular ICP certificate for Level I-Training. She then continues to develop her eye, her awareness and use of more demanding dressage movements and jumping exercises, and greater knowledge of conditioning and competing skills so that she feels ready to be assessed for Level II. But she doesn't yet have three students competing at Preliminary – only one. Nonetheless, she decides to be assessed again, this time at Level II. Because she has already been to a Levels I/II Workshops Pair, she does not have to go again to I/II Workshops before she is assessed the second time, although she certainly may if she wishes to do so. She does ask for and get input from other instructors who act as mentors, as well as from her own students. She passes her Level II assessment and receives her provisional ICP certificate for Level II. Then, over the course of the next year, one of her

Training level students begins to compete at Preliminary and another of her students acquires an Intermediate horse whom he competes at Preliminary and CIC\*s. This instructor asks these three students who are competing at Preliminary to verify that fact with ICP, and she receives the regular ICP certificate for Level II.

3. An eventing instructor who is not necessarily young or just starting to instruct lives in a region of the U.S. where there are not a lot of riding students who compete in eventing. She teaches students whose riding skills are equivalent to those of riders competing at Novice. She goes forward to receive a provisional ICP certificate in the manner described in example #1. If she never acquires three students who compete at Novice, she simply retains the provisional certificate, since a provisional certificate does not expire unless it is replaced by a regular certificate. If she does develop or acquire students who compete at Novice, she gets them to verify this fact with ICP and receives the regular ICP Level I - Novice certificate.

At its various Workshops for Levels I through IV, ICP engages with event instructors at all levels of experience, knowledge and teaching skill. For the instructors, the riders, the auditors, the organizers and the faculty, the learning on these occasions comes from focused observation, analysis of riding and model- and practice-teaching, and lively discussion. Whether you are on your way to regular or provisional ICP certification, contact [Nancy Knight](#) to become a candidate instructor in the program. If you have questions about the provisional ICP certificate, contact [Sue Hershey](#).