

An introduction to *Equitation Science*

“The integration of training psychology and horsemanship has the potential to propel horse training in all disciplines to unimagined heights”
Andrew McLean, *The Truth About Horses*

“Equitation Science uses scientific evidence to determine the best way to train and manage horses”
Portland Jones & Sophie Warren, *Horses Hate Surprise Parties*



Nicki Stuart

B.A. Sports Studies
Diploma of Equitation Science
Certificate IV – Training & Assessment

What is Equitation Science?

Equitation Science (ES) explains the foundations of every horse training system and embraces all horse-human activities. It combines a practical understanding of horse behaviour, biomechanics and the principles of animal training. Being evidence-based, training is backed up by research and is continually evolving.

ES is based on science and the shared knowledge of academics, industry professionals and equine practitioners. With an emphasis on horse welfare and best practice, ES will help you develop an understanding of how horses think, how they learn and why they respond the way they do.

“We cannot change the innate need to flee when frightened, but to a large extent we can change the horse’s perception of what is dangerous.”

- Jan Ladewig, *Equitation Safety* -

Why use a Qualified Coach?

Employing a safe, simple and logical approach to how you train your horse, ES helps you to better understand your horse and how to work with them to modify their behaviour. Once you’ve acquired the foundations of learning theory, you will be able to correctly apply the principles to your training, thereby enabling you to achieve a safe and more pleasurable riding experience.

A coach with an Equitation Science International (ESI) Diploma...

- Has the most up to date knowledge on how horses learn, move and function.
- Can assess and improve a horse’s behaviour and training using evidence, not hearsay.
- Will share methods that are logical, ethical and effective.
- Will assess and control hazards & risks in every situation.
- Has the knowledge to instruct fundamental & advanced horse-riding skills.

A qualified ESI coach will help you learn how to calm and motivate your horse, so you can train it to the best of its ability. Ultimately, giving you the tools and confidence to problem solve independently, enhancing your communication, enjoyment and your horse’s well-being.

DID YOU KNOW? Horse owners are likely to be involved in a serious accident **1 out 350 hours** they spend with a horse. (Ceroni, 2007)

What to expect?

Once you and your horse have been assessed your ESI coach will work with you in a systematic way to develop your communication. There may be some new concepts and terms to learn. Information and methods will be shared in a clear and progressive way that are accessible to all levels of horse and rider combinations.

Work on the ground or 'In-Hand' will be an essential part of your session and tailored to your needs. Misunderstandings and difficult behaviours can be safely addressed here. Equitation Science recognises the important connection between ground and ridden work.

Once 'Under-Saddle', foundations and re-training will often be established in walk, giving you and your horse time to fine tune the signals, recognise correct responses and work on your timing.

ESI coaches will give you homework, support and direct you towards useful resources to enhance your training experience. An understanding of principles and processes will improve your relationship with your horse.

***“Fabulous, science -
based training for
horse and human
harmony”***

Kirily Isherwood
– ESI student



***“The transformation of
pressure to very light
aids is our first
responsibility”***

Andrew McLean, *The
Truth About Horses*

Who is your ESI coach?



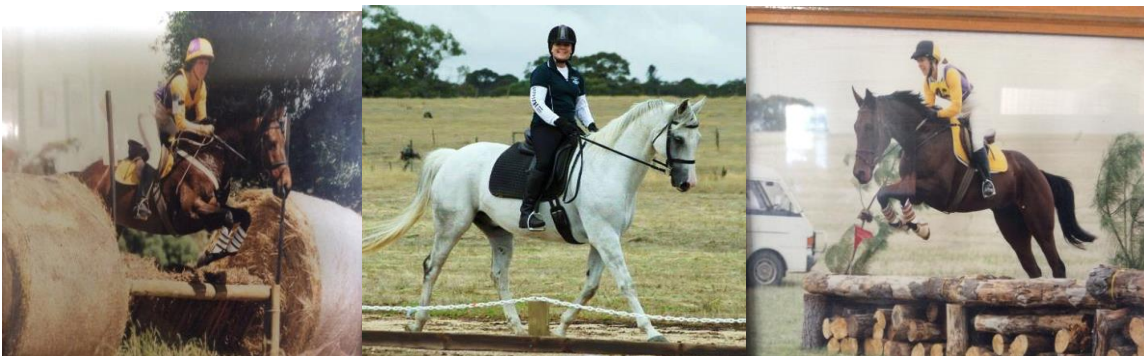
Nicki Stuart

Nicki Stuart owns Kersbrook Equestrian Centre in South Australia where she is the principal trainer, specialising in rider development and horse behaviour. She gained her Equestrian Australia Coaching qualification in 1996 and competed in dressage, show-jumping and eventing.

After being introduced to Equitation Science in 2000, Nicki found how positively its theory and techniques enabled her training and assisted her clients to produce reliable, relaxed horses. She has found immense benefit in being able to assess training methods and equine behaviour through the filter of learning theory.

Her holistic approach to training encompasses a keen interest in developing organised, effective, independent riders whose training is enhanced by evidence based techniques. Nicki is dedicated to improving horse welfare and fostering harmonious relationships between humans and horses.

You can view Nicki's equestrian resume here: [About - Kersbrook Equestrian Centre](#)



Phone 0407 559690

www.kersbrookequestrian.com.au

How to prepare?

Goals:

Take some time to reflect on your goals for you and your horse.

Questionnaire:

Complete and return the attached questionnaire.

Short course:

It is a prerequisite for work with an ES coach that horse owners complete the short course 'How Horses Learn'. This will help you to feel comfortable with new terms and enter your first lesson feeling confident of what to expect. Your exclusive code for a 30% discount at checkout is **KECHHL**

Found at: <https://www.esi-education.com/courses/how-horses-learn/>

On completion of the course, owners will understand how learning theory is applied in horse training.

On the day:

Bring your horse tacked up, with the headcollar under the bridle.

Wear your helmet and gloves.

Be prepared for training to take the time it needs on the day. Sessions may be shortened or re-directed for the horse's well-being.

All training will take time, patience and dedicated practice.

"Perhaps the greatest kindness you can do any horse is to educate him well" -
Tom Roberts, *The Young Horse*

Where to find more information

Kersbrook Equestrian Centre

www.kersbrookequestrian.com.au

Equitation Science International:

<http://www.esi-education.com/>

International Society of Equitation Science:

<https://equitationscience.com>

Facebook Pages:

- Equitation Science International
- Equitation Science South Australia
- Kersbrook Equestrian Centre