

# Accredited Registers Programme

## Notification of Change

### Summary of proposed changes

Notification of change from: **Athena Herd Foundation CIC**

Once accredited any relevant changes that a register wishes to make will need to be assessed by the Authority to ensure ongoing compliance with the [Standards for Accredited Registers](#). Part of this assessment includes a review of information received from anyone sharing their experience. Below is a summary of the proposed changes for consideration.

<p><b>Summary of Proposed Changes</b></p>	<p><a href="#">Athena Herd Foundation</a> is a professional body that operates an Accredited Practitioner Register (<a href="#">Athena Register</a>) for Equine Practitioners (EPs). EPs work in a range of contexts, including therapeutic and corporate development. Many EPs will also be trained in other disciplines, such as counselling and psychotherapy. These practitioners will blend a range of therapeutic approaches when working with service users. Counselling and psychotherapy are accessed by individuals privately, and through other services such as health and education.</p> <p>Further to the above we also submit additional proposed changes to register additional roles that we have been approached to consider by our network. These cover practices with other animals and horticultural work, reflecting the broader outdoor nature of the work often undertaken by those working with horses.</p> <p>There are also equine facilitators who do not have prior learning or experience with counselling or psychotherapy. They may or may not have training in other practices such as life coaching, particularly if their work is orientated towards corporate environments. In these settings, equine facilitators offer a specialist form of personal development, with aims that include enhanced business performance.</p> <p>Athena currently registers the following roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equine facilitated practitioner</li> <li>Equine assisted practitioner</li> <li>Equine practitioner</li> <li>Equine interactions</li> <li>Equine facilitated learning</li> <li>Equine assisted learning</li> </ul>
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**Athena is proposing to introduce the following new titles:**

- Equine Facilitated/Assisted Psychotherapist/Therapist (generically referred to here as “EFP”s)
- Equine Facilitated/Assisted Occupational Therapist (generically referred to here as “EFOT”s)
- Animal Assisted Psychotherapist/Therapist (generically referred to here as “AAT”s)
- Horticultural Therapist (generically referred to here as “HT”s)

By adding these roles to the Register, Athena aims at permitting practitioners and registrants to register their practice under other specific “titles” where it is appropriate to do so. Athena explains that the change is being requested because there are already appropriately qualified practitioners providing services under titles covered by EFP and EFOT. In effect, these are not “new” titles but ones which are already extensively in use in this context.

In the same way, the roles AAT and HT, are already practised and recognized in the UK. Neither are covered under the remit of any existing accredited register. A number of practitioners engaging with Athena are looking to obtain accredited cover for these activities.

According to Athena, there are existing externally regulated qualifications and university-based courses that are already training these practices and practitioners. These qualifications are, therefore, supported by robust qualifications. Adding them to the Athena Register would not only help clarify and formalise titles that are already in common use, but also recognise and ratify formally the use of these titles.

Athena further asserts that by directly including these therapist-related titles under the Register’s remit, it aims to resolve the current uncertainty and inconsistency in the marketplace, where essentially too many people are just offering therapy because they own a horse or a pet. These practices are being delivered without any form of oversight or governance and as such are leaving the public unprotected and risk bringing disrepute to the practice.

An additional benefit to this change, if successfully implemented, is its potential to further build confidence in other regulators, registers and commissioning bodies in the promotion and engagement of these practices.

When these changes are approved then Athena commits to extending the governing bodies to include appropriate expertise in the different practice(s).

	<p>Athena proposes that in keeping with the current Standards of Education and Training, registration for the new roles requires an appropriate minimum Level 4 qualification (or completed Certificate of Proficiency), as well as an appropriate regulated qualification of a minimum Level 4 in any associated therapeutic practice. The aim is to strengthen these definitions in the context of these new roles.</p> <p>In addition, in the context of EFOT registration, Athena will ensure there is a defined certified knowledge of equine anatomy and physiology. This represents an important additional resource for these practitioners, to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of both service users and horses is maintained.</p> <p>Athena is clear that the existing Certificate of Proficiency will also need to be amended to reflect these new roles. EFP, AAT and HT will be incorporated as additional options.</p> <p>However, EFOT will not be considered under the Certificate of Proficiency until appropriate definitions for practice can be established to ensure protection of the public and service users.</p> <p>By adding these roles to its Register, Athena aims at permitting practitioners and registrants who use related counselling and psychotherapy modalities to register their practice under other specific “titles” where it is appropriate to do so.</p> <p>As with previous standards, there will be no granting of these proposed titles without appropriate and agreed definitions in place.</p> <p>Athena has now established a committee to oversee the Register’s recognised Standards in Education and Training. In establishing this committee there will be recruitment that appropriately represents these proposed roles.</p>
<b>Main standards which may be affected</b>	1, 2, 3, 4, 7,
<b>Proposed Timescales</b>	Athena would like to make these changes as soon as possible but have no specific timelines.