



## Higher National Unit specification

### General information

**Unit title:** Specialist Animal Care: Avian (SCQF level 7)

**Unit code:** HC46 34

**Superclass:** SP

**Publication date:** March 2016

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

### Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable learners to gain a knowledge and understanding of the care of the common species of birds kept in the UK. It will also develop an understanding of the legislation that governs this area. The Unit is intended for learners who wish to pursue a career in the animal care industry.

### Outcomes

On successful completion of the Unit the learner will be able to:

- 1 Describe the anatomy and physiology of birds.
- 2 Explain and apply the care requirements of birds.
- 3 Describe the influence of current legislation on the keeping of birds in the UK.

### Credit points and level

1 Higher National Unit credit at SCQF level 7: (8 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7)

### Recommended entry to the Unit

Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. Learners would benefit from practical knowledge of avian care, this could be demonstrated by achievement of Unit D7EL 11 *Small Animal Husbandry: Avian Care* or equivalent.

## **Higher National Unit Specification: General information (cont)**

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### **Core Skills**

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes for this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

### **Context for delivery**

If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

### **Equality and inclusion**

This Unit specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Further advice can be found on our website [www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

## Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards

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Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Learners should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

### Outcome 1

Describe the anatomy and physiology of birds.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Bird species
- ◆ External anatomical features
- ◆ Skeletal system
- ◆ Respiratory system
- ◆ Digestive system
- ◆ Cardiovascular system
- ◆ Skin and special senses
- ◆ Urogenital system

### Outcome 2

Explain and apply the care requirements of birds.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Environmental and housing requirements
- ◆ Feeding requirements
- ◆ Disease conditions and health problems
- ◆ Disease control
- ◆ Zoonoses
- ◆ Health and Safety
- ◆ Routine maintenance

### Outcome 3

Describe the influence of current legislation on the keeping of birds in the UK.

#### Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Current legislation
- ◆ Current Statutory Enforcement Bodies

## Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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### Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Learners will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

#### For Outcome 1:

- ◆ identify two species from each of the following groups of birds:
  - Psittacines
  - Passerformes
  - Anserformes
  - Raptors
  - Columbiformes
  - Galliformes
  - Soft bill.
  
- ◆ for one bird species describe how each of the following systems work:
  - Skeletal system (to include structure, functions and adaptations for flight)
  - Respiratory system (to include choana, syrinx and air sacs)
  - Digestive system (to include beak types, digestive type and digestive tract)
  - Cardiovascular system (to include renal portal system)
  - Skin and special senses (to include feathers, preen gland, eyes and ears)
  - Urogenital system (to include urinary and reproductive systems).

The assessment should be conducted under closed-book, supervised conditions.

#### For Outcome 2:

- ◆ explain the different housing and environmental requirements for two species of birds, one species from an aviary and one that requires another type of housing such as caged or other enclosure. The explanation must cover heating and lighting requirements.
- ◆ explain the feeding requirements of at least three species of birds including at least one raptor, one psittacine and one other species from the groups identified in Outcome 1.
- ◆ describe the clinical signs or manifestations associated with one of each of the following disease conditions and health problems:
  - Bacterial infection
  - Viral Infection
  - Fungal infection
  - Endoparasites
  - Ectoparasites
  - Nutritional deficiency
  - Behavioural problem.
- ◆ explain the use of the following procedures in the management of disease control, zoonoses and health and safety:
  - Vaccination
  - Disinfection
  - Quarantine
  - Isolation
  - Slaughter.

## Higher National Unit specification: Statement of standards (cont)

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The assessment should be conducted under closed-book, supervised conditions.

Performance evidence is required of the learner's ability to:

- ◆ perform, on at least three separate occasions, the practical skills associated with the routine maintenance of a bird enclosure including:
  - feeding routines
  - cleaning
  - disinfection
  - husbandry.

### **For Outcome 3:**

- ◆ describe the influence of current legislation on the keeping of three different species of bird. Species should be selected from at least two of the groups identified in Outcome 1.
- ◆ describe the advisory and policing role of current statutory enforcement bodies related to the keeping of birds.

The assessment should be conducted under closed-book, supervised conditions.



## Higher National Unit Support Notes

**Unit title:** Specialist Animal Care: Avian (SCQF level 7)

Unit Support Notes are offered as guidance and are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

### Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is intended for learners who are working in or seeking a career in the animal care industry or for learners who have an interest in the specialist care of birds. The teaching and learning should be delivered in this context.

#### Outcome 1

This Outcome considers bird species from various bird groups and covers avian anatomy and physiology. Learners will develop their knowledge of the external aspects and internal features of birds.

#### Outcome 2

This Outcome covers general husbandry, nutrition, housing and the health and disease of a range of species of bird. A sample of the birds identified in Outcome 1 could be chosen. Some categories, such as the soft bill group, are very large and diverse. A selection of species from each group could be covered to ensure the learner understands the different husbandry requirements of each group.

The different types of feed for all the different bird groups and the methods of preparing and giving food should be covered. The advantages and disadvantages of some types of diet, for example those for psittacines and raptors, could be discussed.

An awareness of aviary design and the different types of accommodation needed for different species should be covered along with environmental factors such as heating and lighting.

Health and disease should cover the diseases and conditions of major importance and examples under the key areas could include:

- ◆ Bacterial infection: psittacosis and avian tuberculosis, bumblefoot and salmonellosis
- ◆ Viral infection: Newcastle disease, pigeon pox
- ◆ Fungal infection: aspergillosis
- ◆ Endoparasites: ascarids, capillaria, syngamus trachea
- ◆ Endoparasites: red mite (*dermanyssus gallinae*), lice and ticks
- ◆ Nutritional diseases: vitamin and mineral deficiencies
- ◆ Behavioural conditions: feather plucking and feather picking
- ◆ Other: egg binding, hypoglycaemia in Raptors, poisoning (lead and pesticide)

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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### Outcome 3

This Outcome covers important aspects of current legislation relevant to the keeping of the bird species covered. Legislation should be up to date and should incorporate any changes introduced at a later date. At the time of publication of this Unit the following legislation would be relevant:

- ◆ Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
- ◆ The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- ◆ The Animal Health Act 1981
- ◆ The Abandonment of Animals Act 1996
- ◆ The Pet Animals Act 1951
- ◆ Importation of Birds, Poultry and Hatching Eggs Order 1997
- ◆ Prevention of Avian Flu Directive 2005/94/EC

Learners should also be made aware of the role of the current statutory enforcement bodies such as DEFRA.

### Guidance on approaches to delivery of this Unit

This Unit is likely to be part of a Group Award designed to provide learners seeking to develop a career in the animal care industry. It could also be a stand-alone Unit for those wishing to improve their knowledge and understanding of birds. There is a practical component to this Unit. Learners will have to undertake the routine maintenance of an aviary or enclosure to demonstrate that they have the practical skills to complement the theoretical knowledge gained in this Unit. Learners could be given the opportunity to gain practical experience of feeding at least some of the different species of bird.

Health and safety procedures should always be followed, for example when considering handling and zoonoses.

Photographs, videos, slides, visits to specialist facilities and presentations by visiting speakers could all enhance this Unit. This will reinforce learning and widen candidate experience.

Access to an aviary is required for the practical aspects of this Unit.

### Guidance on approaches to assessment of this Unit

Evidence can be generated using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable to learners.

This Unit could be assessed via three closed-book, supervised assessments, one for each Outcome with an additional practical assessment which could be evidenced through an observation checklist. The use of mixture of live specimens, diagrams and photographs could aid the assessment process.

## Higher National Unit Support Notes (cont)

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The practical component requires learners to perform the task on at least three occasions and this will require centres to make the necessary arrangements with the learner for access to an aviary. It may be possible, with the use of an appropriate checklist, to use witness testimony to confirm learner achievement of the practical tasks.

Centres are reminded that prior verification of centre-devised assessments would help to ensure that the national standard is being met. Where learners experience a range of assessment methods, this helps them to develop different skills that should be transferable to work or further and higher education.

### Opportunities for e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all learner evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. The most up-to-date guidance on the use of e-assessment to support SQA's qualifications is available at [www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment](http://www.sqa.org.uk/e-assessment).

### Opportunities for developing Core and other essential skills

There may be opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Communication* and *Working with Others* at SCQF level 5 in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components.

Learners maintenance of written notes and records of field trips, visits and guest speakers to aid their preparation for assessment, may provide the opportunity to develop the written component of the Core Skill of *Communication*. The practical activity may require learners to liaise with peers and with others within and outwith the delivering centre. This may provide the opportunity to develop the Core Skill of *Working with Others*.



## History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

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## General information for learners

### Unit title: Specialist Animal Care: Avian (SCQF level 7)

This section will help you decide whether this is the Unit for you by explaining what the Unit is about, what you should know or be able to do before you start, what you will need to do during the Unit and opportunities for further learning and employment.

The Unit has three main areas. To begin with you will study the anatomy and physiology of birds. This will assist you in the later Outcomes and is especially useful when studying health and disease.

The second Outcome is avian husbandry and covers handling, nutrition, accommodation, health and disease. There will be an emphasis on health and safety, especially in the areas of handling and zoonosis. In addition to the assessments of your knowledge and understanding you will have to undertake practical experience in the care of birds and demonstrate that you have gained the relevant practical skills. The practical experience may be arranged through your Course Tutor.

In the third Outcome you will gain knowledge of the current legislation in the relevant areas which is an essential component of many animal related jobs.

You are advised to gain as much practical experience as possible. Visits or voluntary work would allow you to increase both your practical skills and knowledge and understanding of the many different aspects of bird care. Aviaries and zoos could offer valuable experience. To complete this Unit successfully you will have to achieve a satisfactory level of performance in the class based and practical assessments.

The Core Skill of *Communication* at SCQF level 5 may be developed when producing written notes and records of field trips, visits and guest speakers to aid preparation for assessment. Practical activities may require you to liaise with peers and with others within and outwith your centre which may provide opportunities to develop the Core Skill of *Working with Others*.