National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Feeding Horses and Ponies (SCQF level 5)

CODE F6AH 11

SUMMARY

This Unit allows candidates to develop some of the basic knowledge and skills in relation to feeding horses and/or ponies in a realistic work setting and gaining an understanding of their dietary requirements. This Unit has been designed for delivery in a realistic work setting environment. The Unit is suitable for candidates who want to develop or further develop their skills in equine studies.

OUTCOMES

1 Describe and explain the basic dietary requirements of horses and ponies.
2 Describe and supply appropriate food presentations for horses and ponies.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, it would be beneficial if candidates had previous experience and knowledge of working with horses at a basic level.

This may be evidenced by possession of:

- *Animal Husbandry: An Introduction* (SCQF level 4) in the context of horses or similar qualification or experience

When taken as part of the national progression award in rural skills, it would be advisable for candidates to undertake the *Equine Handling and Accommodation* Unit before undertaking this Unit.

Administrative Information

Superclass: SH

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CREDIT VALUE

1credit at SCQF level 5 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*).

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

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

The Unit provides opportunities for candidates to develop aspects of the following Core Skills:

- *Working with Others* (SCQF level 5)
- *Communication* (SCQF level 5)

These opportunities are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit Specification.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Feeding Horses and Ponies (SCQF level 5)

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.

OUTCOME 1

Describe and explain the basic dietary requirements of horses and ponies.

Performance Criteria

(a) The basic nutrients required in the diet of horses and ponies are identified.
(b) The functions of the basic nutrients in the diet of horses and ponies are explained correctly.
(c) The nutrient balance of different lifestage and types of horses and ponies are explained correctly.

OUTCOME 2

Describe and supply appropriate food presentations for horses and ponies.

Performance Criteria

(a) Appropriate food presentations for horses and ponies are described according to their physiological and behavioural requirements.
(b) The advantages and disadvantages of different food presentations are correctly identified.
(c) Food is correctly prepared for horses and ponies.
(d) Food is provided to horses and ponies in a safe and effective manner.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Performance evidence supported by an assessor observation checklist together with written and/or oral evidence is required to show that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been achieved.

In relation to Outcome 1 written and/oral evidence should include:

- a list of all the essential nutrient groups required in the diets of horses and ponies including; protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins, minerals, water.
- a short description of the function of each of these groups including vitamins and minerals. This should be kept to the main vitamins and minerals and not be an in-depth description and include; Vitamin; D, A, K and E and Vitamin C and the B group of vitamins. Minerals; calcium, phosphorous and magnesium.
- a short description of the relative (greater or less compared to an adult 'maintenance' diet) requirements of each of these nutrient groups for the following types of horses and ponies: pregnant, lactating, old, working (hard), underweight, overweight.

In relation to Outcome 2 written and/oral evidence should include:

- a description of appropriate food presentations for: racehorse, leisure horse, child's first pony and include descriptions of at least two different roughage presentations and two different concentrate ration presentations.
- a description of at least one advantage and one disadvantage for each of the food presentations described.

The performance evidence will be supported by an observation checklist which demonstrates that the candidate has safely and effectively carried out the following:

- prepared and supplied concentrate rations for three horses and/or ponies
- prepared and supplied roughage rations for at least two different types of roughage presentation

National Unit Specification: support notes

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This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes 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 an optional Unit in the National Progression Award Rural Skills at SCQF level 5 but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

The Unit is designed to allow the candidate to develop the basic skills and knowledge relating to the feeding of equine animals.

It is important that the practical aspects of the learning takes place involving live horses or ponies in either a work setting or simulated work setting. Partnerships with Land-based colleges, training providers or employers are likely to provide the most appropriate settings.

It is important that the deployment of appropriate learning environments is preceded by a valid risk assessment, particularly identifying any protective personal equipment which the candidate may require.

Suitable topics are shown below.

Outcome 1

The basic nutrients should be considered at the gross level in relation to basic physiology and consider the functions of them all at this level only. For example protein is for growth, repair, enzymes and can be an energy source. At the level of vitamins, the learner should learn about the important vitamin groups (fat and water soluble vitamins) and a basic knowledge of their function on the body. They should learn about macro-minerals (essentially calcium, phosphorus, magnesium mainly and perhaps 3-4 of the micro-minerals) but this should not go into a detailed examination.

The lifestage requirement is to make it clear to candidates the relative levels of some nutrient for different groups and should only be discussed in terms of relative amounts to the adult ‘maintenance’ level horse or pony — there is not a requirement to have knowledge of absolute levels in daily recommended amounts at this level, nor to be able to undertake any nutritional calculations. The lifestages to be considered included pregnant, lactating, young, old, working, overweight and underweight horses and ponies. Candidates should develop an understanding of the relative metabolisms of childrens’ ponies as compared to competition horses, again only at the gross level.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Feeding Horses and Ponies (SCQF level 5)

Outcome 2

Appropriate food presentations should consider frequency and types of both concentrate and roughage rations which are appropriate for different types of horses and ponies and give consideration to their natural physiological behaviours of being a grazing herbivore that would spend around 16 hours per day eating and the requirement to supply food presentations which allow stabled animals to meet their physiological requirements. The context should extend to concentrate rations which are cubed, mixes or straight cereals mixed and the candidate should learn about the advantages and disadvantages of these different presentations in terms of cost, convenience and nutritional balance.

Roughage rations and their appropriate presentations should consider hay, haylage and dried grass as well as presentations in nets, ring feeders and floor feeding, again giving consideration to the advantages and disadvantages of the different presentations. The candidate should also develop a basic awareness of grass as the primary roughage source but this should not extend to the differences in sward types and the care of pasture for horses.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It would be useful for all of the Outcomes to have some classroom based theoretical/guidance input prior to undertaking the practical activities, with particular reference to the issues of health and safety. It is important that candidates can identify appropriate safe practice, including the use of appropriate personal protective clothing and equipment (PPE) before undertaking any of the practical tasks. This may be done by using a coaching approach to risk assessment at the beginning of practical sessions.

Outcome 1 and the theoretical aspects of Outcome 2 may benefit from a project–based approach with group work allowing candidates to research the different nutrients and food presentations, thus promoting an independence of learning and working with others.

Outcome 2 practical tasks are probably best approached from a practical demonstration, practice, review methodology allowing for experiential learning. Some research into alternative feeding routines may be required where a practical approach is not possible due to resource issues

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

In this Unit candidates will be involved a range of practical and written tasks which may well involve working as part of a small team. These offer good opportunities for developing aspects of:

- *Working with Others*
- *Communication* (Oral and Written)

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 Performance Criterion (a) and (b) could be assessed using a holistic assignment based approach to include all the Evidence Requirements. This may be presented electronically or in hard copy.

Outcome 2 Performance Criterion (c)–(d) could be assessed practically using an appropriate observation checklist to cover all the Evidence Requirements.

Opportunities for the use of 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 e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003), SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005).*

DISABLED CANDIDATES AND/OR THOSE WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website **www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements**