

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Health Care for Small Animals: An Introduction
(Intermediate 1)

CODE DV0C 10

COURSE

SUMMARY

This Unit is intended to introduce aspects of health monitoring and routine health care of common small animals.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Observe and report on the behaviour of a variety of small animals.
- 2 Perform regular checks on the condition of a variety of small animals under supervision.
- 3 Perform routine tasks on and administer health care products to a variety of small animals under supervision.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

There are no formal entry requirements for this Unit; entry is at the discretion of the centre.

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 1 level (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 4*)

**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*

Administrative Information

Superclass: SP

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CORE SKILLS

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

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 the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Observe and report on the behaviour of a variety of small animals

Performance Criteria

- (a) Observe a range of small animals.
- (b) Describe the behaviour of a range of small animals.
- (c) Report changes in behaviour of a range of small animals.

OUTCOME 2

Perform regular checks on the condition of a variety of small animals under supervision

Performance Criteria

- (a) Handle and examine animals safely.
- (b) Examine a variety of small animals for signs of poor condition.
- (c) Report and describe changes in condition noted on examination.

OUTCOME 3

Perform routine tasks on and administer health care products to a variety of small animals under supervision

Performance Criteria

- (a) Perform routine health care tasks safely on a range of small animal species under supervision.
- (b) Administer common health care products to a range of small animal species according to manufacturers' safety instructions under supervision.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

Performance evidence of observing behaviour in at least two species over a period of time.

Outcome 2

Performance evidence of performing checks on condition of at least two species.

Outcome 3

Performance evidence of performing health care tasks in at least two species. Performance evidence of administering health care products to at least two species.

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 intended to introduce skills in the basic care of small animals. The candidates should be able to observe and recognise normal behaviour patterns in small pets and be able to describe changes in their behaviour. Candidates should be able to perform checks on condition and recognise and report on abnormalities. Candidates should acquire a degree of competency in the administration of prophylactic health care products to small animals.

In this Unit the term “small animals” refers to dogs; cats; rabbits; guinea pigs; ferrets and small rodents.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

The candidates should be encouraged to observe animals. The description of behaviour should include: activity, appetite; thirst; exercise pattern; social; excretion and ambulation. Normal behaviour patterns such as eating and drinking behaviour, excretory behaviour and activity patterns are important. The time spent on these activities should also be noted. Candidates should be encouraged to note also the demeanour of the animals and their respiratory rates. Checklists or diaries would be useful for candidates to assist in recording of activity for comparison over a period of time. Observations should take place over a period of at least 4 weeks and should include periods of deliberate monitoring for at least 10 minutes at any one time. Casual observations at other times could then be added.

Candidates should reach a level of competency which allows them to be able to answer questions such as those posed by health care professionals taking a history of the animal.

Outcome 2

Candidates should be able to safely perform routine checks on the condition of small animals. Checks would include: coat; eyes; ears; nose; mouth; dental; nails/claws, pain, discharges and soiling. The examination should be carried out with the minimum of distress to the animal and ensure the safety of both animal and examiner. Appropriate restraint equipment could be used where required. The examination should be coupled with behavioural observations in order to build a more complete profile of the animal’s health. Performing regular checks should be encouraged in order that candidates learn to distinguish normal from abnormal signs of health and behaviour both for the species and for the individual animal. Checklists would be useful for recording findings. Candidates should reach a level of competency which allows safe examination to take place with minimal stress to the animal. Appropriate aids should be used for restraint where applicable. Reporting should extend to oral description of changes recognised and their duration.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcome 3

Candidates should be able to safely perform routine health care tasks such as grooming; bathing; dematting; cleaning eyes/ears and nail clipping in co-operative individuals. These tasks should be carried out under appropriate supervision. Again, the tasks should be carried out with the minimum of distress to the animal and ensure the safety of both animal and carer. Appropriate restraint equipment could be used where required. Repetition of tasks would encourage candidates to recognise the requirement for regular performance to ensure maintenance of the animal's health. Candidates should also reach a level of competence in the application of routine health care products such as shampoos; eye/ear drops; wormers and flea preparations (endoparasiticides and ectoparasiticides). A range of products (sprays, liquids, tablets etc) should be used in order for the candidate to appreciate the types of application available and their effective administration. Administration should be carried out according to manufacturers' safety directions and protective clothing worn where indicated. Simulated preparations are acceptable as the mechanism of application is of importance rather than the specific preparation. Candidates should not necessarily be expected to treat aggressive or nervous animals but should be able to effectively treat co-operative individuals.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

The candidate could be presented with a practical exercise to observe behaviour in two species of small animal. The assessment could be carried out with the aid of a checklist or diary completed by the candidate showing evidence of accurate recording of behaviour over a prescribed period of time. Oral questioning could be used to evaluate the competence of the candidate in describing the behaviour.

Satisfactory achievement of this Outcome will be based on the candidate satisfying the requirements of the performance evidence checklist.

Outcome 2

The candidate could be presented with a practical exercise to perform checks on condition for two species of small animal. Oral questioning could be used to evaluate the competence of the candidate in describing the changes in health status.

Satisfactory achievement of this Outcome will be based on the candidate satisfying the requirements of the performance evidence checklist.

Outcome 3

The candidate could be presented with a practical exercise to perform a minimum of two different health care tasks, using a different species of small animal for each, and to administer a minimum of one health care product to another different species.

Satisfactory achievement of this Outcome will be based on the candidate satisfying the requirements of the performance evidence checklist.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).