

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Accommodation and Handling of Small Animals: An Introduction (Intermediate 1)

CODE DV0E 10

COURSE

SUMMARY

This Unit is part of the optional section of the SPA in Rural Skills. It may also be delivered as a free-standing Unit.

This Unit is intended to provide a practical introduction to the accommodation and handling requirements of small animal species.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Prepare accommodation for small animals.
- 2 Maintain accommodation for small animals.
- 3 Handle small animals.
- 4 Ensure small animals have sufficient opportunity to exercise.

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 (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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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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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

UNIT Accommodation and Handling of Small Animals: An Introduction (Intermediate 1)

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

Prepare accommodation for small animals

Performance Criteria

- (a) Select and prepare safe and appropriate accommodation for small animal species.
- (b) Accommodation fixtures and contents are appropriate for the species.
- (c) Potential hazards are correctly identified and reported.
- (d) Access to the accommodation is safe and secure.

OUTCOME 2

Maintain accommodation for small animals

Performance Criteria

- (a) Clean accommodation to appropriate standards using approved methods.
- (b) Dispose of waste as directed.
- (c) Maintain safety of small animals and handler during the cleaning procedure.
- (d) Report damage and hazards as detected during the cleaning operation.
- (e) Maintain cleaning equipment in hygienic and working order.
- (f) Monitor environmental conditions in the accommodation.

OUTCOME 3

Handle small animals

Performance Criteria

- (a) Catch small animals in their accommodation.
- (b) Transfer small animals to appropriate containers for moving.
- (c) Restrain small animals for examination safely.
- (d) Ensure the safety of small animals and handlers throughout the procedure.

OUTCOME 4

Ensure small animals have sufficient opportunity to exercise

Performance Criteria

- (a) Identify suitable exercise areas for small animals.
- (b) Exercise animals using programs suitable for the species and category of small animal.
- (c) Monitor exercise periods to ensure the safety of small animals and the efficient use of time.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

Performance evidence to identify and prepare suitable accommodation for at least three small animal species including fixtures and contents. This should include taking into account group size where more than one animal is kept in the accommodation.

Outcome 2

Performance evidence to maintain clean accommodation over a period of time for at least three small animal species, including appropriate disposal of waste. Performance evidence to ensure equipment is maintained in appropriate order. Oral questioning to ensure candidate is aware of appropriate disposal procedures for dead animals. Performance evidence to monitor and record environmental temperatures and cleanliness over a period of time in accommodation of at least one species.

Outcome 3

Performance evidence of catching at least three different species of animal in accommodation.
Performance evidence of ability to safely transfer at least two different species to containers.
Performance evidence to demonstrate safe restraint of at least two species for clinical examination.
Oral questioning to demonstrate knowledge of restraint equipment.

Outcome 4

Performance evidence of ability to identify suitable exercise areas for at least two different species and to safely and effectively exercise at least two different species of animal at appropriate intervals and duration.

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 allow candidates the opportunity to gain practical competence in the selection and maintenance of appropriate accommodation for a range of species of small animal (and group where applicable). The candidates should also reach a level of competence in the handling and exercising of a range of species safely and with the minimum of distress to the animal. Candidates are not expected to devise programmes but should be fully competent in the carrying out of routine tasks within an animal establishment such as kennels or pet shop.

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

Candidates should be able to identify appropriate types and sizes of accommodation for a range of small animal species. Types of accommodation would include kennels, runs and cages. Although a general idea of appropriate size for a single animal/group should be appreciated the candidate is not expected to have an in depth knowledge of legal requirements at this stage. Candidates should be aware of appropriate fixtures and contents for a species such as shelving, provision of sheltered areas to hide, areas for burrowing etc as required. Candidates should also be able to identify hazards within the accommodation and ensure access is safe and secure, preventing escape or theft.

Outcome 2

Candidates should be able to carry out cleaning routines effectively, safely and at appropriate frequency. Candidates should also recognise the difference between daily cleaning routines and more thorough techniques employed at intervals such as when animals are being moved in and/or out of the accommodation. The degree of cleanliness of the accommodation should also be monitored and reported. Waste disposal should be in accordance with instructions, although a thorough knowledge of the law is not expected at this stage by the candidates. Legal requirements will change but at time of writing included Controlled Waste Regulations 1992 and Special Waste Regulations 1996. Hygiene should be emphasised to ensure health and safety of both handler and animals during the procedure. Animals should be moved to temporary holding where required during the procedure and only moved back in at a safe interval. PPE should be worn as appropriate. The candidate should appreciate the general importance of hygiene but a detailed knowledge of zoonoses is not expected at this level. Candidates should be able to monitor temperature in the accommodation or immediate environment and report fluctuations. Again no understanding of legal requirements is expected but accurate recording is important.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Candidates should also be made aware of techniques to avoid potential injury whilst cleaning accommodation of aggressive and competitive animals.

Outcome 3

Candidates should be able to catch animals within their cages or kennels in a calm and effective manner which causes the minimum of distress to the animal and causes least risk of injury to handler or animal. Animals should be safely transferred to cages/baskets for moving where appropriate, again ensuring safety and minimising distress at all times. Candidates should be competent in the restraint of an animal whilst it is being examined by a third party. An awareness of types of restraint equipment is useful to candidates but they are not expected to be fully competent in coping with aggressive or nervous animals at this stage.

Outcome 4

Candidates should be able to identify areas suitable for exercising of animals whilst ensuring the security of the animal and its safety. They should recognise that group exercise situations present extra hazards and require additional monitoring. Hazards such as the proximity of other animals should be identified but unsuitable or unhygienic surfaces should also be recognised. Exercise should be carried out in an area which is neither too big or small for the species involved. Exercise routines should be carried out in accordance with programs devised by others eg 30 minutes twice daily on the lead for a dog or two hours daily in a run for a rabbit. The candidates are not expected at this stage to be involved in the selection of the programme but should be able to carry out instructions on a programme selected by others. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme lies with others at this stage but candidates should be able to monitor whether the animal is making use of the exercise opportunity for the whole extent of its duration. Candidates should also be aware of equipment which could be utilised to enhance the effectiveness of the exercise programs eg extending leads

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Outcome 1

The candidate could be presented with a practical exercise to identify different types of animal accommodation and be required to choose appropriately for three given species. At least one of the species could be kept in a small group. Candidates could then be asked to prepare the accommodation with appropriate food/water containers, bedding, toys and environmental enhancements as indicated.

Outcome 2

The candidate could be presented with a practical exercise to effectively clean accommodation and safely dispose of waste for at least three small animal species according to instructions. The exercises should be carried out with due regard for safety of the animals and handler. Oral questioning could be used to establish how the candidate would dispose of deceased animals. Candidates should also be asked to measure and record environmental temperatures and monitor accommodation cleanliness over a period of at least four weeks for at least one type of accommodation and species.

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Outcome 3

The candidate could be presented with a practical exercise to demonstrate safe and effective catching techniques for three different small animal species (all three should not be small rodents). These animals could then be transferred to safe accommodation for moving eg boxes or cages.

Candidates could be presented with an exercise to restrain two species of animal for safe clinical examination by a third party. Oral questioning could be used to establish candidate's knowledge of restraint equipment which could be used.

Outcome 4

Candidates could be presented with a practical exercise to identify suitable exercise areas for two different species of animal and to carry out exercise regimes over a period on at least four occasions for these species in accordance with pre-devised programmes.

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).