

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Animal Husbandry: An Introduction (Intermediate 1)

CODE DX0X 10

COURSE Rural Skills (Intermediate 1)

SUMMARY

This Unit is an optional Unit within the Rural Skills Course at Intermediate 1 and is designed to be taken as part of this Course. It is suitable for candidates with no previous land-based or employment experience. The Unit allows candidates to develop some of the basic skills and knowledge required to contribute towards the health and well being of animals. Candidates will have the opportunity to develop the basic skills of caring for animals including preparing and maintaining their accommodation as well as feeding them. They will also learn some of the important physical characteristics of animals. This Unit has been designed for delivery in context, for one or more categories of animal.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Identify basic characteristics of animals.
- 2 Assist with the preparation and maintenance of accommodation for animals.
- 3 Assist with the preparation and provision of food and water for animals.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

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: SH

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CORE SKILLS

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

Opportunities for developing aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in *Guidance on Learning and Teaching Approaches for 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

Identify basic characteristics of animals.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Correctly identify gender differences of animals.
- (b) Correctly identify signs of health of animals.
- (c) Correctly identify the breed of animals.
- (d) Correctly identify the life stage of animals.

OUTCOME 2

Assist with the preparation and maintenance of accommodation for animals.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Assist in setting up animal accommodation.
- (b) Assist in cleaning animal accommodation.
- (c) Demonstrate safe working practices.

OUTCOME 3

Assist with the preparation and provision of food and water for animals

Performance Criteria

- (a) Assist in the preparation of appropriate food for animals, following instructions.
- (b) Assist in the provision of food for animals.
- (c) Provide water in an appropriate manner for animals.
- (d) Demonstrate safe working practices.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

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EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

Performance evidence supported by an assessor observation checklist is required to show that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been achieved.

Evidence must be gathered in an appropriate context where live animals are kept in work settings or simulated work settings.

For each Outcome, evidence is required in relation to **one** category of animal. The animal(s) can be selected from the following:

- ◆ horses
- ◆ sheep
- ◆ cattle
- ◆ pigs
- ◆ game birds
- ◆ small 'cage' companion mammals
- ◆ domestic dogs
- ◆ domestic cats

The first section of the assessor observation checklist confirms that the candidate has identified:

- ◆ two physical characteristics that allow gender identification
- ◆ five signs of good health
- ◆ two breeds of the same category of animal (photographic identification is acceptable)
- ◆ two life stages selected from young, adolescent, adult, old, pregnant, lactating (photographic identification is acceptable)

The second section of the assessor observation checklist confirms that the candidate has assisted in:

- ◆ setting up accommodation for the animal(s)
- ◆ cleaning the accommodation for the animal(s)
- ◆ preparing food for the animals
- ◆ providing food for the animals
- ◆ providing water in an appropriate manner for the animals

The item for this Unit contains assessor observation checklists. The NAB illustrates the national standard required for this Unit. Centres who wish to devise their own assessments should refer to the NAB to ensure a comparable standard.

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 designed to allow the candidate to develop the basic skills required to contribute towards the health and well being of animals as well as developing a basic understanding of normal characteristics of animals.

This Unit can be delivered in the context of one or more of the following categories:

- ◆ horses
- ◆ sheep
- ◆ cattle
- ◆ pigs
- ◆ game birds
- ◆ small 'cage' companion mammals
- ◆ domestic Dogs
- ◆ domestic Cats

It is important that learning takes place involving live animals 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. Candidates should experience the proximity of animals, the outdoor working conditions and the associated effects on their senses (smells, dirt, ambient temperatures and noise levels) **It is important that the deployment of appropriate learning environments is preceded by a valid risk assessment by the centre, particularly identifying any protective clothing and equipment that the candidate may require and any regulations applying to the specific context.**

This Unit should be delivered using live animals and the use of textbooks is only appropriate as an introduction to working with animals.

In relation to Outcome 1, the candidate should not be expected to restrain the animal for the purpose of gender identification. In some species, where gender identification is difficult (eg some small companion animals), candidates are only expected to know the features that are used to identify gender. The breed of animal may be difficult to identify when dealing with animals in some contexts, eg commercial fattening cattle or sheep. In such cases, breeds can be learned using suitable photographic evidence. Life stage refers to the age and state of production of the animal from the following categories: young, adolescent, adult, old, pregnant, lactating. Centres should not use examples of life stages which are difficult to identify visually for that category of animal.

It may be beneficial in some contexts, to refer to the production systems in which animals are raised, for example beef cattle systems, dairy cattle systems.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Outcomes 2 and 3 should be delivered in the context of daily husbandry routines in a work setting or simulated work setting for the category of animal chosen. It is not expected that the candidate should be able to perform these tasks at a commercially acceptable speed and efficiency but that they should be able to assist in all aspects whilst showing a strong awareness for health and safety of all involved. It should be noted that for some categories, Outcome 2 and 3 may require to be delivered at a time of year when animals are housed in order to be realistic and assessable, eg cattle and sheep are normally only housed between the Autumn and the Spring of the year, with some sheep never being housed. The centre should bear this in mind when planning delivery.

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

It would be useful for all three of the Outcomes to have some theoretical classroom input prior to undertaking the practical activities. In Outcome 1, initial presentations can introduce categories of animal, how to recognise gender, appropriate nomenclature for genders and age groups, signs of health, breeds, types and life stages relevant to the species. However, it is important to stress the level of this award and it is not appropriate to examine any of these aspects in detail. Candidates should gain in particular an understanding of the animals that they are being asked to work with.

Learning and teaching in relation to Outcome 2 should include initial presentations introducing types of accommodation and accommodation requirements for the category of animal and appropriate maintenance routines would be useful. In relation to Outcome 3 initial presentations introducing appropriate foodstuffs and water delivery systems and their basic routine maintenance and use for that category of animal, as well as methods of providing food, would be appropriate

The candidates should be thoroughly briefed on health and safety practices before entering the work setting. The practical skills of Outcomes 1, 2 and 3 can then be demonstrated and practised. Ideally, partnerships with land-based colleges would be appropriate but training providers or employers may also offer suitable opportunities. Emphasis on experiential learning using live animals and a mentoring/coaching approach whilst the candidate assists with the husbandry routines would be appropriate.

For Outcomes 2 and 3, it may be useful to adopt an approach of emphasising not only the vocational skills development but also the development of employability skills in this Unit. This could be done by: setting incremental targets for candidates in terms of time for given tasks once they have developed reasonable competence; setting particular start times for tasks; monitoring the preparation and planning of the candidates; setting candidates a task as a group and allowing them to be responsible for the allocation of subsets of tasks to encourage team working; encouraging the consideration of economical use of resources. Candidates could be encouraged to review and evaluate tasks undertaken.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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Employability Skills

On completion of this Unit, the candidate will have had the opportunity to develop the following employability skills:

- ◆ acceptable time keeping and attendance
- ◆ planning and preparing for work
- ◆ working co-operatively with others
- ◆ awareness of efficient resource use
- ◆ following instructions*
- ◆ working safely*
- ◆ self review and evaluation

Achievement in a number of these employability skills (those marked with an asterisk*) will be clearly identified as a result of the evidence generated through the assessment activities for this Unit. There are opportunities in the Unit to develop the remaining skills.

Tasks undertaken in Outcomes 2 and 3 provide ideal opportunities to complete the candidate review sheets for the *Intermediate 1 Rural Skills: Employability Skills for Land-based Industries*.

Core Skills

In this Unit candidates will be involved in a range of practical tasks which may well involve working as part of a small team, and will involve some discussion with their assessor. These are good opportunities for developing aspects of

- ◆ Working with Others
- ◆ Communication (oral)
- ◆ Problem Solving

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Performance evidence supported by an assessor observation checklist is required to show that all Outcomes and Performance Criteria have been achieved.

The assessment for this Unit is laid out clearly in the Evidence Requirements section of the Statement of Standards of this specification. The standard to be applied is exemplified in the item for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit, they should be of a comparable standard.

CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

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. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (www.sqa.org.uk).