Modification history

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| Release | Comments |
| Release 2 | This version released with ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 4.0. |
| Release 1 | This version released with ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 1.0. |

| ACMSPE312 | Provide general care of rodents and rabbits |
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| Application | This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to identify rodents and rabbits and their behavioural and physical needs and provide daily care requirements.  This unit applies to individuals working in the animal care industry where it may be necessary to care for rodents and rabbits. This may include animal shelters, pet shops, zoos and animal technology facilities or similar workplaces.  The unit applies to individuals who work under broad supervision and provide and communicate solutions to a range of predictable problems.  All work must be carried out to comply with workplace procedures according to Commonwealth and state/territory health and safety and animal welfare regulations, legislation and standards that apply to the workplace.  No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication. |
| Prerequisite Unit | Nil |
| Unit Sector | Species Specific (SPE) |

| Elements | Performance Criteria |
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| Elements describe the essential outcomes. | Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. |
| 1. Identify rodents and rabbits | 1.1 Define the habitat, activity cycle and general features of rodents and/or rabbits commonly housed in a facility  1.2 Identify external features using industry terminology  1.3 Classify rodents and rabbits according to taxonomy  1.4 Define, interpret and document colours, markings and other identifying features |
| 2. Identify and evaluate behavioural and housing needs | 2.1 Identify indicators of animal comfort and normal behaviour  2.2 Recognise signs of distress and report to supervisor  2.3 Identify industry standards and guidelines for housing design, environmental factors and appropriate stocking densities  2.4 Evaluate current animal housing design in relation to the welfare of animals kept and legislation requirements  2.5 Identify behavioural enrichment activities for specific rodent or rabbit species |
| 3. Catch, handle and restrain rodents and/or rabbits | 3.1 Identify workplace health and safety risks associated with handling and restraining rodents and rabbits, and implement methods to minimise risks  3.2 Select and use appropriate equipment to catch, handle and restrain rodents and/or rabbits  3.3 Approach, catch and restrain rodents and/or rabbits safely using approved animal welfare management procedures |
| 4. Assist with health care needs | 4.1 Identify signs of good health in rodents and rabbits  4.2 Report signs of disease or other conditions to supervisor  4.3 Identify general health maintenance and preventative treatment procedures, and implement in accordance with level of job responsibility |
| 5. Feed and water rodents and/or rabbits | 5.1 Identify digestive system features and relate to rodent- and/or rabbit-specific feeding routines and diets  5.2 Identify preferred feed sources and assess samples for quality and suitability  5.3 Identify potential feeding hazards and implement risk control options  5.4 Prepare food in accordance with dietary needs  5.5 Distribute food and water according to schedule/feeding plan or animal requirements |
| 6. Maintain records | 6.1 Complete feed and treatment records noting food consumption, health and care activities  6.2 Report abnormalities to supervisor  6.3 Complete documentation relevant to licences and transport, where required |

| Foundation Skills  This section describes those language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential for performance in this unit of competency but are not explicit in the performance criteria. | |
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| Skill | Description |
| Reading | * Interpret product labels accurately |
| Get the work done | * Comply with relevant legislation requirements relating to rodents and rabbits * Use problem-solving skills to prioritise daily tasks |

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| Unit Mapping Information | | | |
| Code and title current version | Code and title previous version | Comments | Equivalence status |
| ACMSPE312 Provide general care of rodents and rabbits | ACMSPE312 Provide basic care of rodents and rabbits | Minor changes to clarify content  Assessment requirements revised | Equivalent unit |

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| Links | Companion Volumes, including Implementation Guides, are available at VETNet:  https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=b75f4b23-54c9-4cc9-a5db-d3502d154103 |

| TITLE | Assessment requirements for ACMSPE312 Provide general care of rodents and rabbits |
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| Performance Evidence | |
| An individual demonstrating competency must satisfy all the elements and performance criteria in this unit.  There must be evidence that the individual has:   * identified the physical and behavioural characteristics and needs of rodents and rabbits * provided care for a minimum of two rabbits or two rodents, or one rabbit and one rodent, including (for each): * demonstrated appropriate restraint and safe handling techniques * prepared and provided food and water * assisted with routine health care needs * maintained housing and bedding * maintained feed and treatment records for one rabbit or one rodent. | |

| Knowledge Evidence |
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| An individual must be able to demonstrate the knowledge required to perform the tasks outlined in the elements and performance criteria of this unit. This includes knowledge of:   * basic anatomical structures and physiological features of rodents and rabbits * basic identification and classification of common rodents and rabbits by breed, age and sex * general health maintenance and preventative treatment procedures for rodents and rabbits * housing, social and activity needs of rodents and rabbits and environmental impacts on health and wellbeing * indicators of the physical condition and signs of good health in rodents and rabbits * basic overview of the rodent grimace scale to identify pain * natural rodent and rabbit behaviour, including: * defensive and aggressive behaviours * submissive gestures * breeding seasons * species, breed, age and sex of the animals * day or night activity * characteristics associated with different species, including: * activity levels at certain times of day or night * social interaction * feeding behaviours * breeding season * enurination/spraying * enrichment needs, including: * food or food-related enrichment * physical enrichment items * nest building or bedding material * social enrichment * potential hazards and risks to animals and staff during feeding and cleaning of housing, including zoonoses * safe rodent and rabbit handling techniques and procedures, potential hazards and control measures, including personal protective equipment * types and impacts of food in rodent and rabbit diets, including natural dietary requirements for specific species * indicators of food quality, including nutritional value, freshness/shelf life, free from spoilage/pests * types of information that is reported and recorded in animal care workplaces * overview of Commonwealth and state/territory legislation and codes of practice related to captured wildlife, biosecurity (quarantine), health and safety, and animal welfare * the principles of animal welfare and basic overview of animal welfare assessment frameworks/models, including the Five Domains. |

| Assessment Conditions |
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| Assessment of skills must take place under the following conditions:   * physical conditions: * a workplace or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions * resources, equipment and materials: * live rabbits and/or rodents as specified in performance evidence * equipment and resources typically available in an animal care facility * specifications: * access to organisational policies and procedures, current legislation and relevant codes of practice * relationships: * interactions with supervisor.   Assessors of this unit must satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards. |

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