Modification history

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

| ACMNEW4X2 | Evaluate animal training methodology and program design  |
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| Application | This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to research, evaluate and select animal training methodologies to design and implement a training or behaviour modification program. It involves in-depth knowledge of animal behaviour, learning theory and the application of scientifically validated, ethical training methodologies and techniques. This unit applies to individuals who are required to train or modify the behaviour of animals in a range of contexts and workplaces. They work autonomously and apply specialist knowledge and skills to provide solutions for a predictable and unpredictable 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 | Behaviour and training (BEH) |

| 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. Investigate current information on animal behaviour  | 1.1 Research general principles of animal behaviour and species-specific communication 1.2 Investigate animal behavioural indicators of different emotional states, psychological arousal, and coping strategies and apply to relevant species1.3 Identify behavioural indicators of compromised physical health and welfare 1.4 Investigate species-specific animal cognition and developmental stages 1.5 Explore behaviour assessment theory and relevance to animal training or behaviour modification  |
| 2. Research and evaluate animal training methodologies  | 2.1 Research current, scientifically validated approaches to training/conditioning animals2.2 Evaluate the impact of different levels of intrusiveness used in animal training and behaviour modification methodologies against the principles of animal welfare and ethics, and effectiveness2.3 Compare and contrast current decision making guidelines for animal trainers in selecting the least intrusive and most effective training methodologies 2.4 Evaluate the benefits, limitations and risks associated with training equipment |
| 3. Design a training or behaviour modification program | 3.1 Observe and record objective information about behaviour of an animal 3.2 Determine a training or behaviour modification need in the context of the owner/caretaker requirements3.3 Determine goals and develop indicators of success for individual animal 3.4 Design a training or behaviour modification program, based on current, scientifically validated training methodology, to meet identified goals 3.5 Seek and incorporate feedback on the training or behaviour modification program from a mentor or more experienced trainer |
| 4. Implement and review the training or behaviour modification program | 4.1 Conduct training or behaviour modification program according to prepared program4.2 Record observations of animal behaviour and progress against established goals4.3 Assess changes in animal behaviour against success indicators developed for the program4.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make changes to the program and / or goals as required |

| Foundation SkillsThis 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 complex information in technical/scientific texts
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| Writing | * Document plans using sequenced structure and industry terminology
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| Oral communication | * Convey and clarify technical/scientific information to others using industry terminology
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| Unit Mapping Information |
| Code and title current version | Code and title previous version | Comments | Equivalence status |
| ACMNEW4X2 Evaluate animal training methodology and program design | Not applicable | Unit created to address an emerging skill required by industry | Newly created 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 ACMNEW4X2 Evaluate animal training methodology and program design |
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| Performance Evidence |
| An individual demonstrating competency must satisfy all of the elements and performance criteria in this unit.There must be evidence that the individual has:* prepared an ethogram for two animal species
* evaluated two approaches to animal training and behaviour modification, involving different levels of intrusiveness, against the principles of animal welfare and ethics, and effectiveness
* designed and documented a training or behaviour modification program for one animal, including:
* decision making process for selecting the training methodology and level of intrusiveness
* program goals
* indicators of success
* equipment or tools
* annotations and responses to feedback provided by a mentor or more experienced trainer.
* implemented and evaluated the training or behaviour modification program
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| 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:* species-specific animal behaviour including:
* key concepts of ethology and features of ethograms
* body language and communication, including vocalisations and gross and fine body movements
* personality and common coping strategies including proactive and reactive behaviours
* information about senses and perception
* core emotional states and motivations for behaviour
* objective behavioural observation, recording and interpretation, and anthropomorphism
* impact of physical health conditions, pain and compromised welfare on animal behaviour
* features of current, scientifically validated animal training/conditioning methodologies, including:
* positive reinforcement/rewards-based training
* alignment with learning theory and animal welfare
* levels of intrusiveness in training or behaviour modification approaches
* features of outdated approaches to animal training and possible consequences
* key features of guidelines for animal trainers, including:
* Least intrusive effective behaviour intervention (LIEBI model)
* Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive Training (LIMA)
* Hierarchy of Procedures for Humane and Effective Practice
* key concepts of animal learning and conditioning/training, including:
* associative learning - operant and classical conditioning, including extinction, desensitisation and counter-conditioning and differential reinforcement
* non-associative learning - habituation and sensitisation
* primary and secondary reinforcers
* schedules of reinforcement, including continuous, variable ratio, variable interval
* positive reinforcement training techniques, including:
* luring
* targeting
* capturing and shaping (prompted and free)
* safe, low stress handling techniques and humane equipment/restraints.
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| Assessment Conditions |
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| Assessment of skills must take place under the following conditions:* physical conditions:
* skills must be demonstrated in a workplace setting or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions
* resources, equipment and materials:
* live animal as specified in the performance evidence
* access to resources on animal behaviour, learning theory and current, scientifically validated training methodologies
* relationships:
* mentor or experienced trainer.

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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