



**Australian Government**

**Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations**

# **ACMSPE302A Provide basic care of birds**

**Revision Number: 1**

## ACMSPE302A Provide basic care of birds

### Modification History

Not applicable.

### Unit Descriptor

<b>Unit descriptor</b>	<p>This unit of competency covers the process of identifying birds and their behavioural and physical needs, providing daily care requirements, assisting with behavioural requirements and basic preventative health measures.</p> <p>Licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements may apply to this unit in relation to the protection of native and some international birds. Therefore, it will be necessary to check with the relevant state or territory regulators for current licensing, legislative or regulatory requirements before undertaking this unit.</p>
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## Application of the Unit

<p><b>Application of the unit</b></p>	<p>The unit is applicable to those working in the animal care industry where it may be necessary to care for commonly kept avicultural birds. This may include animal shelters or rehabilitation organisations, pet shops, breeding establishments, zoos or similar workplaces. In some cases, birds may have been rescued from the wild and successful rehabilitation is required to restore bird health and wellbeing before releasing back to their natural environment.</p> <p>In addition to legal and ethical responsibilities, all units of competency in the ACM10 Animal Care and Management Training Package have the requirement for animals to be handled gently and calmly. The individual is required to exhibit appropriate care for animals so that stress and discomfort is minimised.</p>
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## Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

## Pre-Requisites

<p><b>Prerequisite units</b></p>		

## Employability Skills Information

<p><b>Employability skills</b></p>	<p>This unit contains employability skills.</p>
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## Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

<p>Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.</p>	<p>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.</p>
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## Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Identify commonly kept and available birds	<p>1.1. Profile of <i>birds</i> commonly held in facility, including habitat, nutrition, health and <i>behavioural characteristics</i>, is defined.</p> <p>1.2. External features are described using industry terminology.</p> <p>1.3. Birds are classified using industry-specific terminology.</p> <p>1.4. <i>Colours, markings and other identifying features</i> are defined, interpreted and documented.</p>
2. Identify and evaluate behavioural and housing needs	<p>2.1. Indicators of <i>bird comfort and normal behaviour</i> are identified and signs of distressed birds are recognised and reported to supervisor.</p> <p>2.2. Industry standards and guidelines for <i>housing design, environmental factors</i> and appropriate stocking densities are identified.</p> <p>2.3. <i>Enrichment needs</i> are identified and evaluated for specific bird species.</p> <p>2.4. Current bird housing design, including nesting requirements, is evaluated in relation to the <i>welfare of animals</i> kept and legislation requirements.</p>
3. Approach and handle birds	<p>3.1. <i>Occupational health and safety (OHS) risks</i> associated with handling and restraining birds are identified and methods used to minimise risks are demonstrated.</p> <p>3.2. <i>Equipment used to catch, handle and restrain birds</i> is prepared and evaluated.</p> <p>3.3. Birds are <i>approached and caught</i> while minimising risks to bird and others.</p> <p>3.4. Birds are restrained using a range of approved animal welfare management procedures.</p>
4. Assist with health care needs	<p>4.1. Signs of good health in birds are identified and recorded in animal health and treatment records.</p> <p>4.2. <i>Common health issues</i> are identified and signs of disease or other conditions are reported to supervisor.</p> <p>4.3. <i>General health maintenance and preventative treatment procedures</i> are identified and implemented in accordance with level of job responsibility, regulatory requirements and supervisor guidance.</p> <p>4.4. Options for activity and enrichment are identified, evaluated for impact on bird health and implemented</p>

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
	as directed by supervisor.
5. Feed and water birds	<p>5.1. <i>Digestive system features</i> are identified and related to bird-specific feeding routines and diets.</p> <p>5.2. Preferred <i>food sources</i> are identified and samples are assessed for quality and suitability.</p> <p>5.3. Potential <i>feeding hazards</i> are identified and risk control options defined.</p> <p>5.4. Feed is prepared in accordance with dietary needs.</p> <p>5.5. Feeds are distributed and consumption including abnormalities is reported in accordance with workplace routines.</p>
6. Maintain records	6.1. <i>Documentation</i> on the care and management of birds is completed in accordance with workplace procedures and legislation requirements.

## Required Skills and Knowledge

### REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.

#### Required skills

- complete relevant work-related documents and maintain accurate bird records
- comply with OHS, animal care, ethics and industry codes of conduct, regulations and legislations
- employ safe and environmentally responsible organisational systems and procedures when working with, restraining and handling birds
- maintain the highest standards of personal and workplace hygiene and infection control at all times to reduce the risk of infection and cross-infection
- measure, interpret and record bird weight and other relevant objective indicators of change in physiological status
- monitor bird health, condition and behaviour and recognise normal and abnormal signs
- prepare doses for treatments as directed and verified by supervisor
- provide basic first aid to birds as required under supervision
- provide food and food supplements in accordance with feeding plan and report bird eating and drinking abnormalities
- use equipment and materials correctly and in accordance with manufacturers' specifications
- literacy skills to read and follow organisational policies and procedures, including OHS and animal welfare; follow sequenced written instructions; and record information accurately and legibly
- oral communication skills/language to fulfil the job role as specified by the organisation, including questioning, active listening, asking for clarification and seeking advice from supervisor
- numeracy skills to estimate, calculate and record routine workplace measures
- interpersonal skills to work with others and relate to people from a range of cultural, social and religious backgrounds and with a range of physical and mental abilities
- problem-solving skills to assess appropriate practices and prioritise daily tasks
- use safe manual handling techniques and/or techniques
- use safe waste handling and disposal procedures.

#### Required knowledge

- anatomical and physiological terminology and glossary of terms
- anatomical structures and physiological features related to basic care requirements for birds
- awareness of natural bird behaviour relating to the characteristics of the species, age, health status, behavioural and social needs and the signs of distress, illness and undesirable behaviours

**REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

- basic bird care and hygiene principles
- basic bird first aid techniques
- housing, nesting, social and activity needs of birds and environmental impacts on health and wellbeing
- methods of transmission of disease and infection
- organisational policies and procedures regarding the care and health maintenance of birds
- personal protective clothing and equipment and when and how it should be used
- physical conditions and vital signs of birds
- potential hazards and risks to birds and staff during feeding and cleaning of housing
- relevant legislation, regulations and codes of practice, including OHS, animal welfare and ethics
- safe bird handling techniques and procedures, potential hazards and control measures
- terminology and language variations used by workplace staff and the public to describe birds, their gender, behaviour, status, health and treatments
- terminology used to describe and document health and behavioural signs, including desirable and undesirable features
- types of food and food supplements and their role in bird diets, including natural dietary requirements for specific species
- types of information that has to be reported and recorded in animal care workplaces
- workplace hygiene standards, disinfectants, cleaning agents, cleaning techniques and cleaning equipment and materials.



## Evidence Guide

### EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

#### Overview of assessment

#### Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

The evidence required to demonstrate competence in this unit must be relevant to workplace operations and satisfy all of the requirements of the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge and the range statement of this unit. Assessors should ensure that candidates can:

- identify the specific characteristics and needs of birds and apply these to the best practice industry standard of housing, socialising, feeding and health management
- classify and identify birds by age, sex, condition, colours, markings and other identifying features using industry terminology
- safely and humanely catch, handle and restrain birds
- report and document treatments, behaviours and other information on individual birds in accordance with animal welfare regulations, industry standards and workplace protocols and procedures.

The skills and knowledge required to provide basic care of birds must be transferable to a range of work environments and contexts and include the ability to deal with unplanned events.

#### Context of and specific resources for assessment

Assessment of this unit is to be practical in nature and will most appropriately be assessed against the types of processes required in the industry sector in which candidates are working or in a situation that reproduces normal work conditions. Workplaces can include animal shelters or rehabilitation organisations, pet shops, breeding establishments, zoos, veterinary practices or similar workplaces.

There must be access to a range of birds as well as relevant information, equipment and/or resources to enable one to demonstrate competence. Assessment must cover a minimum of three commonly available bird

<b>EVIDENCE GUIDE</b>	
	species.
<b>Method of assessment</b>	<p>To ensure consistency in one's performance, competency should be demonstrated, to industry defined standards, on more than one occasion over a period of time in order to cover a variety of circumstances and responsibilities over a number of assessment activities.</p> <p>The assessment strategy must include practical skills assessment. Suggested strategies for this unit are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written and/or oral assessment of candidate's required knowledge</li> <li>• observed, documented and first-hand testimonial evidence of candidate's application of practical tasks</li> <li>• simulation exercises that reproduce normal work conditions</li> <li>• third-party evidence</li> <li>• workplace documentation</li> <li>• portfolio.</li> </ul> <p>This unit may be assessed in a holistic way with other units of competency relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role.</p>
<b>Guidance information for assessment</b>	<p>Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands (e.g. literacy and numeracy demands) and the needs of particular target groups (e.g. people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people with a language background other than English, youth and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds).</p>

## Range Statement

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
<p>The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.</p>	
<p>Commonly available <i>birds</i> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgerigar</li> <li>• Canary</li> <li>• Cockatiel</li> <li>• Duck</li> <li>• Finch</li> <li>• Grass Parrot</li> <li>• Pigeon</li> <li>• Quail</li> <li>• Rainbow Lorikeet</li> <li>• Ringneck Parakeet.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Behavioural characteristics</i> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• behaviour characteristics can vary according to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the breeding season</li> <li>• the species, breed, age and sex of the birds</li> <li>• the time of day or night</li> </ul> </li> <li>• behaviour characteristics associated with different species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activity levels, at certain times of day or night</li> <li>• feeding, foraging and nesting</li> <li>• fight or flight</li> <li>• social interaction</li> <li>• feeding behaviours</li> </ul> </li> <li>• defensive behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• defending territory, other birds or food</li> <li>• aggression or hiding/retreating.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><i>Colours, markings and other identifying features</i> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• age, sex and size</li> <li>• feather colour and colour pattern and texture</li> <li>• eye colour</li> <li>• gender and mutation differences</li> <li>• markings, patterns and permanent scars</li> <li>• microchip, tattoos and markings and leg bands.</li> </ul>
<p>Indicators of <i>bird comfort and</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• daily observation and visual examination is the best way to establish the appearance of a healthy</li> </ul>

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
<i>normal behaviour</i> may be identified through:	bird and at the same time allows detection of changes from normal. These observations will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activity level</li> <li>• assessment of body condition</li> <li>• excessive self-scratching or self-mutilation</li> <li>• feather plucking</li> <li>• posture and attitude</li> <li>• response to stimuli</li> <li>• appetite and dietary history</li> <li>• observing feathers and faecal matter for any abnormalities.</li> </ul>
<i>Housing design and environmental factors</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• environmental:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• biological control of waste</li> <li>• cleaning routines and methods</li> <li>• correct humidity levels</li> <li>• day/night cycle lighting</li> <li>• drainage and weather protection</li> <li>• general bird housing security</li> <li>• housing furniture</li> <li>• ventilation, temperature, heating and cooling requirements</li> </ul> </li> <li>• housing design:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• housing options:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• indoor</li> <li>• outdoor</li> <li>• free flight</li> <li>• aviary</li> <li>• walk-through</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• housing requirements:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• brooders and perches</li> <li>• compatibility of species housed together</li> <li>• food and water distribution</li> <li>• location considerations</li> <li>• longevity and sturdiness of materials</li> <li>• maintains ambient temperature conditions for the specific species</li> <li>• required floor area, vertical and/or horizontal space for specific species</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• security considerations</li> <li>• suitability for specific species</li> <li>• species-specific options for birds to hide or rest</li> <li>• substrate appropriate to the specific species</li> <li>• designs that allow species-specific activity, feeding or socialising</li> <li>• social options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• solitary</li> <li>• pairs</li> <li>• single sexed groups</li> <li>• polyandrous/polygynous groups</li> <li>• mixed species.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Enrichment needs</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• food or food-related enrichment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extras to daily base diet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fruit and vegetables</li> <li>• mixed prepared treats</li> <li>• pellets</li> <li>• worms and insects</li> </ul> </li> <li>• giving birds opportunities to scratch and forage for food on the ground</li> <li>• giving birds food that requires processing (e.g. breaking nuts open for food)</li> <li>• operant feeders</li> </ul> </li> <li>• physical enrichment items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chewing materials</li> <li>• hollow logs and branches</li> <li>• mirrors and toys</li> <li>• nest-boxes and building material</li> <li>• perches, roosting shelves and brooding sites</li> <li>• plants and foliage</li> <li>• ponds and/or muddy areas large enough for bathing</li> <li>• retreats</li> <li>• rocks or artificial rocks</li> <li>• shredded paper or leaf litter</li> <li>• sufficient space for running or flying activity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• social enrichment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interaction with other birds or animals that</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
	<p>personalities match and enjoy each other's company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• levels of contact with other birds of the same species or breed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Welfare of animals</b> requirements may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adequate housing, nutrition, water (fresh and clean) and stock levels</li> <li>• compliance to appropriate state or territory legislation and regulations</li> <li>• enrichment opportunities</li> <li>• the absence of pests and vermin</li> <li>• the compatibility of species and breeds.</li> </ul>
<p><b>OHS risks</b> when working with animals may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animal bites, kicks, scratches and crush injuries</li> <li>• biological hazardous waste and sharps disposal</li> <li>• handling of chemicals and medicines</li> <li>• gas leakage</li> <li>• inhalation of aerosol particles</li> <li>• intraocular contamination</li> <li>• manual handling, including carrying, lifting and shifting</li> <li>• needle pricks and cuts from other sharps</li> <li>• release of infective agents (animal and human)</li> <li>• slippery or uneven work surfaces</li> <li>• zoonoses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equipment used to catch, handle and restrain birds</b> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animal handling gauntlets</li> <li>• catching nets</li> <li>• gloves</li> <li>• hood or dark cover</li> <li>• towel or paper towel.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Methods used to approach and handle</b> birds may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• confining to small area before attempting to catch</li> <li>• encouraging bird to approach by offering a treat</li> <li>• enticing bird into a smaller enclosure</li> <li>• handling techniques for birds should always consider the most appropriate technique to minimise stress and any accidental injuries.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Common health issues</b> may include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• behavioural disorders</li> <li>• environmental hazards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exposure to the elements</li> <li>• inadequate activity</li> <li>• temperature extremes</li> <li>• ventilation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feed-related, caused by no fresh and clean water or access to daily base food (e.g. finches having a container full but not digging past the husks)</li> <li>• infectious diseases caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bacteria, virus, fungus and mould</li> </ul> </li> <li>• internal and external parasites</li> <li>• non-infectious diseases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• chemical toxicities and allergies</li> <li>• genetic disorders</li> <li>• metabolic</li> <li>• neoplastic</li> <li>• nutritional imbalances and disruptions</li> <li>• physical traumas.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>General health maintenance and preventative treatment</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• routine health check-up</li> <li>• control of internal parasites</li> <li>• insect control both on bird and in environment</li> <li>• temperature, heat and light requirements for specific species</li> <li>• quarantine/isolation</li> <li>• routine observation of waste elimination and faecal examination</li> <li>• clean and appropriate dry formulas</li> <li>• water quality.</li> </ul>
<i>Digestive system features</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anatomical features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mouth structures</li> <li>• digestive chemicals and bacteria</li> <li>• alimentary canal and stomach</li> <li>• intestines, rectum and cloaca</li> </ul> </li> <li>• physiological features: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eating processes</li> <li>• nutrient requirements, absorption and storage methods</li> <li>• waste elimination</li> </ul> </li> <li>• feeding patterns and natural dietary requirements for individual species</li> <li>• potential digestive system malfunctions or problems</li> <li>• water needs.</li> </ul>
<i>Food source</i> considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• diets created to fulfil the known dietary requirement of the particular species</li> </ul>

<b>RANGE STATEMENT</b>	
include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• food sources:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seeds, pellets and powders</li> <li>• fruits and vegetables</li> <li>• grasses and nuts</li> <li>• worms and, insects, fruits, vegetables, nuts and grasses</li> <li>• dietary supplements.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Feeding hazards</b> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• animal movement and handling</li> <li>• shelf life of foodstuffs</li> <li>• manual handling and general food preparation, storage and distribution equipment</li> <li>• contamination of foodstuffs from vermin, bacteria, fungus, virus and other sources</li> <li>• organic and other dusts</li> <li>• excessive noise</li> <li>• possibility of zoonotic infection.</li> </ul>
<b>Documentation</b> on the care and management of birds may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accident and incident records</li> <li>• chemical and veterinary supplies register</li> <li>• detailed and accurate records for each bird:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• species and sex of bird</li> <li>• identification and history</li> <li>• feeding, health and treatment records</li> </ul> </li> <li>• diary, rosters and task completion and timeframe records</li> <li>• equipment use, damage and repair register</li> <li>• OHS safe work method statements, material safety data sheets (MSDS) and other records</li> <li>• provisions records of current stock and items used and items required</li> <li>• stock control records:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bird stock</li> <li>• supplies and equipment stock.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Unit Sector(s)

<b>Unit sector</b>	Species specific
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## Competency field

<b>Competency field</b>	
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## Co-requisite units

<b>Co-requisite units</b>		