



Australian Government

ACMADT403 Train dogs using operant and classical conditioning techniques

Release: 1

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Modification History

Release	Comments
Release 1	This version released with ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 6.0.

Application

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to train dogs using operant and classical conditioning techniques. It includes discussing dog health and welfare needs with handlers.

This unit applies to individuals who conduct sessions to train dogs in desirable behaviours for domestic and public access environments. These individuals analyse information and exercise judgement to complete a range of skilled activities to develop and communicate solutions for a range of dog behavioural goals.

All work must be carried out to comply with Commonwealth and state/territory health and safety and animal welfare regulations.

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

Pre-requisite Unit

Nil

Unit Sector

Assistance Dog Training (ADT)

Elements and Performance Criteria

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
1. Interpret dog behaviour and identify optimal conditions for	1.1 Identify key aspects of dogs' behaviour by observing their posture, facial expression, body language, stress signals and energy levels

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
dog training	1.2 Interpret signs that indicate fear, anxiety and arousal levels 1.3 Identify optimal conditions for dog behavioural training 1.4 Consider dog training activities suitable to the age of the dog
2. Prepare to train dogs	2.1 Identify suitable training activities that entail both dog training and training the dog and handler team 2.2 Select, check and ensure the handler uses appropriate equipment for the dog and themselves 2.3 Identify and follow appropriate biosecurity requirements, legislation, regulations, workplace health and safety and animal welfare codes of practice 2.4 Identify suitable dog behaviour training techniques, focusing on positive rewards-based reinforcement that is force-free and fear-free, while incorporating negative punishment and the underpinning theoretical principles of dog training
3. Implement dog training using operant and classical conditioning techniques	3.1 Train dogs using voice and/or hand signals for tasks using operant and classical conditioning techniques and according to animal welfare codes of practice 3.2 Instruct handlers to use operant and classical conditioning techniques to train their dog using suitable methodologies and practices 3.3 Introduce dogs to a public access environment in a confined area 3.4 Train dogs with their handler to handle distractions in more open areas 3.5 Train dogs with their handler on basic to specialist skills 3.6 Observe dog and handler practices to assess team performance and suggest appropriate behavioural modifications if required 3.7 Assess dogs' behaviour in public access situations 3.8 Maintain records of training processes and dogs' progress
4. Discuss maintenance of health and welfare of dogs	4.1 Discuss dogs' lifestyle and lifelong needs regarding their housing and nutrition with handlers 4.2 Discuss the monitoring and maintenance of dogs' health, condition and physical, emotional and mental health needs with handlers

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.

Skill	Description
Reading	Source information and interpret information on dog operant and classical conditioning techniques from approved sources
Writing	Complete records and documents relevant to dog training using vocabulary, grammatical structure and conventions appropriate to text and audience
Oral communication	Provide accurate advice using language appropriate to dog handlers

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMADT403 Train dogs using operant and classical conditioning techniques	Not applicable	This unit has been created to address a skill or task required by industry that is not covered by an existing unit	Newly created

Links

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

Assessment Requirements for ACMADT403 Train dogs using operant and classical conditioning techniques

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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:

- used operant and classical conditioning techniques to train a total of four dog and handler teams, assessing one behaviour in two sessions either one-to-one or in class group settings, and ensuring progress in suitable methodologies, allowable public settings and response to human verbal and/or visual cues
- discussed maintenance of health and welfare of dogs with four dog handlers
- maintained records of dog training processes and progress in all of these instances.

Knowledge Evidence

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:

- legislation, codes of practice, regulations and welfare requirements that apply to dog welfare
- operant and classical dog conditioning techniques, including:
 - extinction options (used only after reading a dog's emotions to monitor if a dog is ready considering fear and anxiety levels)
 - shaping behaviours
 - fading techniques
 - stretching the ration
 - positive reinforcement and negative punishment
 - reward schedules
- theoretical principles of dog training, including:
 - conditioning principles and appropriate methods of rewarding dogs for exhibiting required behaviour

- ethical and positive training methods that reinforce behaviour and maintain the working skills, happiness, enthusiasm and psychological welfare of the dog
- responses that dogs should give to verbal or visual cues
- behaviours associated with the age of a dog
- relevant dog physiology, including:
 - olfactory perception
 - eyesight
 - physical dexterity
- criteria to determine a dog's progress:
 - dog breeds and breed types, and associated characteristics and temperaments
 - a dog's emotional maturity
 - a dog's temperament
 - dog and handler team or partnership interactions and requirements
- public access requirements
- awareness of how to enrich a dog's physical, emotional and mental health and lifestyle needs
- stress signals displayed by dogs, including:
 - sniffing
 - lip licking
 - individual dog body language that denotes stress
- biosecurity requirements
- provision for appropriate veterinary care and preventative health treatments
- workplace health and safety procedures and principles, including:
 - manual handling of dogs
 - using training equipment safely
 - risk and control strategies
 - location of emergency equipment during training
- equipment that may be used in dog training, including:
 - collars, head halter, martingales
 - leads and leashes
 - balance harnesses
 - working jackets, coats and identification vests
 - markers and clickers
 - modified grooming equipment
 - toys
 - treat pouches
 - personal protective equipment (PPE) for handler if required.

Assessment Conditions

Assessment of the skills in this unit of competency must take place under the following conditions:

- physical conditions:
 - skills must be demonstrated in an environment that accurately represents assistance dog training workplace conditions
- resources, equipment and materials:
 - equipment used in dog training as required for Performance Evidence
- specifications:
 - workplace policies and procedures
- relationships:
 - dog and handler training teams.

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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