



Australian Government

ACMBEH403 Evaluate animal conditioning methodology and program design

Release: 1

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Modification History

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

Application

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to research, evaluate and select animal conditioning methodologies to design and implement a training or behaviour management and/or modification program. It involves in-depth knowledge of animal behaviour, learning theory and the application of scientifically validated, ethical conditioning 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 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.

Pre-requisite Unit

Nil

Unit Sector

Behaviour and Training (BEH)

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. Investigate current	1.1 Research and analyse general principles of animal behaviour and

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
information on animal behaviour	species-specific communication 1.2 Investigate animal behavioural indicators of different emotional states, psychological arousal, and coping strategies, and apply to relevant species 1.3 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 management and/or modification
2. Research and evaluate animal conditioning methodologies	2.1 Research current, scientifically validated approaches to conditioning animals 2.2 Evaluate the impact of different levels of intrusiveness used in animal training and behaviour management and/or modification methodologies against the principles of animal welfare and ethics, and effectiveness 2.3 Compare and contrast current decision making guidelines for animal trainers in selecting the least intrusive and most effective conditioning methodologies 2.4 Evaluate the benefits, limitations and risks associated with resources and equipment used for conditioning and training
3. Design a conditioning program for behaviour management and/or modification	3.1 Observe and record objective information about behaviour of an animal 3.2 Determine a conditioning program for behaviour management or modification need in the context of the owner/caretaker requirements 3.3 Determine goals and develop indicators of success for individual animal 3.4 Design a conditioning program for behaviour management and/or modification, based on current, scientifically validated training methodology, to meet identified goals 3.5 Seek and incorporate feedback on the conditioning program for behaviour management and/or modification from a mentor or more experienced trainer
4. Implement and review the conditioning program for behaviour	4.1 Conduct training or behaviour management and/or modification program according to prepared program

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
management and/or modification	4.2 Record observations of animal behaviour and progress against established goals 4.3 Assess changes in animal behaviour against success indicators developed for the program 4.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make changes to the program and/or goals as 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.

Skill	Description
Reading	Interpret complex information in technical/scientific texts
Writing	Document plans using sequenced structure and industry terminology
Oral communication	Convey and clarify technical/scientific information to others using industry terminology

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMBEH403 Evaluate animal conditioning methodology and program design	Not applicable	Unit created to address an emerging skill required by industry	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 ACMBEH403 Evaluate animal conditioning 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 conditioning for behaviour management and/or modification, involving different levels of intrusiveness, against the principles of animal welfare and ethics, and effectiveness
- designed and documented a conditioning program for behaviour management and/or modification 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 conditioning program for behaviour management and/or modification.

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:

- 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
- features of current, scientifically validated animal conditioning methodologies, including:
- impact of physical health conditions, pain and compromised welfare on animal behaviour
- features of current, scientifically validated animal conditioning methodologies, including:
 - positive reinforcement conditioning
 - alignment with learning theory and animal welfare
 - levels of intrusiveness in conditioning for behaviour management and/or modification approaches
- features of outdated approaches to animal conditioning, and possible consequences
- key features, benefits and limitations of guidelines for animal trainers, including:
 - Least Intrusive Effective Behaviour Intervention (LIEBI model)
 - Least Intrusive, Minimally Aversive (LIMA) training
 - Hierarchy of Procedures for Humane and Effective Practice
- key concepts of animal learning and conditioning, 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, intermittent, variable ratio, variable interval
- positive reinforcement conditioning and training techniques, including:
 - luring
 - targeting
 - capturing and shaping (prompted and free)
- safe, low stress handling techniques and humane equipment/restraints
- use of personal protective equipment for safety and infection control.

Assessment Conditions

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

- physical conditions:
 - a workplace 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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