



Australian Government

ACMBEH407 Conduct animal behavioural assessments

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 assess animal behaviour for suitability for a range of purposes, which may include adoption/rehoming, rehabilitation, training or suitability for specific purposes or activities, including assistance animals. It typically applies to dogs and cats but may be applied to other species.

This unit applies to individuals who work with animals and conduct behavioural assessments using tools and criteria relevant to the workplace. 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. Prepare for animal behavioural assessment	1.1 Identify animal and investigate and collate available existing information about the animal

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
	1.2 Review collated information and identify factors that may impact the quality of the behavioural assessment 1.3 Plan approach to the behavioural assessment, including type and method for gathering information 1.4 Organise environment, correctly fit personal protective equipment (PPE), and liaise with relevant personnel, as required 1.5 Check assessment environment for potential hazards, and minimise or control risks, as required, to people and animal 1.6 Conduct a pre-assessment of current state of animal health, physical and mental welfare, and background information to determine if appropriate to conduct assessment at this time 1.7 Refer animal with health issues to veterinarian for advice
2. Conduct animal behavioural assessment	2.1 Prepare animal according to workplace procedures 2.2 Observe animal behaviour in a range of appropriate contexts, noting context-appropriate and undesirable species or breed-specific behaviour 2.3 Record objective descriptions of animal behaviour using workplace criteria, tools and formats
3. Review behavioural information for animal	3.1 Collate and review all available information about individual animal 3.2 Identify and review factors that may have compromised the quality of the behavioural information collected 3.3 Identify behaviours likely to affect the suitability of the animal for the intended purpose or activity 3.4 Check and confirm the behavioural assessment outcomes 3.5 Refer to suitable personnel for confirmation of findings, where required according to workplace procedures
4. Finalise animal behavioural assessment	4.1 Use workplace tools and decision making criteria to determine behavioural needs of the animal 4.2 Determine and process follow up actions needed for individual animal according to behavioural assessment and workplace procedures 4.3 Complete all documentation accurately and file according to workplace procedures

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 relevant regulations, workplace procedures, criteria and tools for conducting animal behavioural assessments
Writing	Use industry terminology accurately to complete records for internal and external purposes
Oral communication	Use open-ended questioning and active listening in discussions with owners/caretakers

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMBEH407 Conduct animal behavioural assessments	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 ACMBEH407 Conduct animal behavioural assessments

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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:

- identified and reviewed at least two different assessment tools relevant to the workplace or species, identifying strengths and limitations of each
- conducted a behavioural assessment for four individual animals, documenting objective descriptions of each animal's behaviour and the decision making process, for:
 - two animals that require minimal further action or behaviour management
 - one animal that requires a structured program on a specific area identified from the assessment outcome
 - one animal that requires a more rigorous program on a specific area that necessitates referral to other suitable personnel
- handled or interacted with each animal in a safe, low stress manner, using appropriate equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) where required
- completed all required workplace documentation for each assessment conducted.

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 behavioural characteristics of animals relevant to workplace, including:
 - recognising body language and signs of likely emotional states
 - context-appropriate versus maladaptive or undesirable behaviour
- general signs of animal condition, welfare and health status
- identification of animals, including physical features, microchipping or relevant documentation
- types of and reasons for conducting behavioural assessments, including:
 - rehoming or adoption

- activity-specific or work roles
- potential sources of behavioural information on individual animals, including:
 - owners/carers, including those who may be surrendering animals
 - finders (of stray animals)
 - staff/volunteers
 - veterinarians
 - observations from play groups/socialisation and husbandry activities
- methods for collecting behavioural information, including observations, interviews and surveys
- factors to consider that can impact behavioural assessments, including:
 - physical and social context
 - animal's health and wellbeing
 - current emotional state
 - presence or absence of individual with existing social bond with animal
- animal behaviour and assessment theory, including:
 - principles of animal behaviour and communication
 - animal personality and coping behaviours
 - objective observation of context and behaviours
 - features of best practice behavioural assessments
 - limitations of common assessment tools
- behaviours that may indicate an increased likelihood that the assessment conditions are compromised, or the animal is not in a fit welfare state to undertake the assessment, including:
 - fearful responses to people, other animals and/or specific stimuli
 - reactivity, including to assessment environment
 - signs of stress
 - signs of pain or ill health
- safety working with animals, including:
 - hazard identification
 - risk assessments – environmental and behaviour
 - safe environments for individual and/or groups of animals
 - species-specific equipment – muzzles, collars, leads, towel wraps or crates
 - correct fit and use of PPE
 - infection control and zoonoses
 - strategies for personal psychological health and safety
- workplace procedures for:
 - conducting assessments, including for individual and/or groups of animals, single and/or multi-stage processes and types of information to be gathered
 - species-specific low stress and defensive handling techniques
- key principles of animal welfare

- key features of current state and local government regulations or requirements relating to:
 - specific species or breeds
 - registration, microchipping and containment
 - health and welfare requirements
- requirements of relevant record-keeping system.

Assessment Conditions

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

- physical conditions:
 - an animal care facility or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions
- resources, equipment and materials:
 - live animals to be assessed as specified in the performance evidence
 - equipment for conducting the animal behaviour assessments, including PPE, as required
- specifications:
 - workplace tools/format for conducting the animal behaviour assessments.

Assessors of this unit must satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards.

Links

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<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=b75f4b23-54c9-4cc9-a5db-d3502d154103>