



Australian Government

ACMEQU205 Apply knowledge of horse behaviour

Release: 1

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Modification History

Release	Comments
Release 1	This version released with ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 1.0.

Application

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to develop basic knowledge of horse behaviour, read horse body language and minimise risk to self and others when interacting with horses.

The unit applies to individuals who are new or inexperienced in handling, working with and/or riding horses. Individuals at this level work under supervision.

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

Work health and safety and animal welfare legislation relevant to interacting with horses applies to workers in this industry. As requirements vary between industry sectors and state/territory jurisdictions, users must check with the relevant authority for specific requirements.

NOTE: The terms ‘occupational health and safety’ (OHS) and ‘work health and safety’ (WHS) generally have the same meaning in the workplace. In jurisdictions where the national model WHS legislation has not been implemented, RTOs must contextualise the unit of competency by referring to current OHS legislative requirements.

Pre-requisite Unit

Nil

Unit Sector

Equine (EQU)

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>

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1. Identify basic horse behaviour	1.1 Outline the natural instincts, sensory perceptions and social behaviour of horses 1.2 Recognise how horse senses can influence their behaviour and reactions 1.3 Identify environmental conditions that can unsettle horses 1.4 Distinguish ways horses can respond to different people and different situations
2. Observe and interpret basic body language of horses in different situations	2.1 Distinguish a range of horse body language 2.2 Recognise body language, including posture, facial features and vocalisation, indicating a horse is relaxed in its surroundings 2.3 Recognise body language, including vocalisation, posture and facial features, indicating a horse is unsettled or in a state of agitation in its surroundings
3. Examine how horses learn and respond to different handling cues	3.1 Recognise how pressure-release training works, including how horses learn to 'go', 'slow', 'turn' and 'stop' 3.2 Distinguish different ways to reward a horse 3.3 Identify a range of common cues used when handling horses 3.4 Observe how new cues are learned by the horse
4. Identify areas of personal risk around horses	4.1 Identify situations and behaviour that lead to common accidents and injuries when interacting with horses 4.2 Recognise human body language and behaviour to avoid around horses 4.3 Identify positive actions and behaviour that handlers or riders can take to minimise risks interacting with horses
5. Minimise risk to self and others around horses	5.1 Listen carefully to supervisor instructions and ask questions or raise concerns with the supervisor about the suitability of the horse selected for handling or riding 5.2 Select personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for tasks, fit correctly and wear during activities with horses 5.3 Assess hazards and potential risks to self, others and the horse, and take steps to minimise risks 5.4 Interpret and respond appropriately to horse body

Elements	Performance Criteria
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	language prior to approaching, and maintain awareness of horses at all times 5.5 Use body language and behaviour to achieve safe and positive responses from horses

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
Oral communication	Use industry terminology to describe horse behaviour, body language and cues
Navigate the world of work	- Know own responsibilities and obligations when working with horses - Demonstrate a duty of care to self and others when working with horses

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMEQU205 Apply knowledge of horse behaviour	Not applicable	New unit	No equivalent unit

Links

Companion Volumes, including Implementation Guides, are available at VETNet: - <https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=c6399549-9c62-4a5e-bf1a-524b2322cf72>

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 ACMEQU205 Apply knowledge of horse behaviour

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Performance Evidence

An individual demonstrating competency in this unit must satisfy all of the elements and performance criteria of this unit.

There must be evidence that the individual has:

- observed and interpreted horse behaviour and body language of at least three different horses on separate occasions
- identified hazards and determined how to minimise risk to self and others when interacting with horses in at least three different workplace areas, environments or scenarios.

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:

- features of horse instinct and behaviour, including:
 - social organisation, need for space and companions
 - attachment, separation anxiety
 - flight and fear responses, arousal
- features of horse senses, including vision, touch, smell, hearing and vocalisation
- how to read horse body language, including posture and body position, facial features, ears, legs and tail
- how to read horse body language to identify:
 - flight response
 - threatened or defensive behaviour
 - stress, agitation or unsettled behaviour
- situations where horse behaviour may cause harm to handlers or other horses, including:
 - approaching from a horse's blind spot
 - around other horses
 - leading through gateways or restricted spaces

- safe handling zones when interacting with horses
- basic features of how horses learn:
 - cues
 - repetition and reward
 - exposure to new situations and activities
- basic handling and/or riding cues that assist in the control of horses
- types of rewards used for horses, including pressure release, food, scratch and rub, and rest
- potential hazards and risks associated with interacting with horses
- strategies to minimise and control common risks associated with interacting with horses.

Assessment Conditions

Assessment of skills must take place under the following conditions:

- physical conditions:
 - a safe workplace or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions
- resources, equipment and materials:
 - opportunities to observe and interpret live horses displaying different behavioural states and body language in different environments.

Training and assessment strategies must show evidence of the use of guidance provided in the *Companion Volume: User Guide: Safety in Equine Training*.

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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