



Australian Government

ACMEQU407 Educate horses in initial handling

Release: 1

ACMEQU407 Educate horses in initial handling

Modification History

Release	Comments
Release 1	This version released with ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 3.0.

Application

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required for individuals to undertake ‘starting’ or ‘beginning’ education for a horse to develop their initial handling skills. The education program is conducted on the ground prior to developing the horse’s skills to be ridden, driven or other intended purpose. The unit is applicable for all classes of horses and can be customised for other domestic equids, including donkeys and mules.

The unit applies to individuals with previous and considerable horse handling experience and sound skills and knowledge of horse behaviour and learning theory. They have responsibility for educating horses for a range of disciplines or purposes. They work independently within organisational guidelines, deal with predictable and unpredictable situations and apply problem-solving skills to achieve outcomes.

All work must be carried out to comply with workplace procedures, according to 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

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. Assess education needs of the horse	1.1 Establish client needs and requirements for individual horse 1.2 Assess level of education and temperament of the horse to be educated, and potential safety risks 1.3 Assess conformation, condition and health of the horse to determine readiness and suitability for education program 1.4 Prepare a plan to educate the horse based on its individual needs, application of equine behaviour, current equine learning theory and intended purpose
2. Prepare safe environment to commence groundwork	2.1 Prepare safe, secure and controlled facilities to commence horse groundwork education 2.2 Identify hazards and assess and control potential risks to safety of handler/s and horse/s 2.3 Select and correctly fit own personal protective equipment (PPE) 2.4 Determine if the assistance of another handler is required based on risk assessment
3. Introduce horse initial handling on the ground	3.1 Develop calm and obedient behaviour by gaining trust and confidence of horse through appropriate handling and feeding 3.2 Introduce a halter and lead rope, and educate the horse to be caught, led and tied up safely 3.3 Accustom the horse to being groomed and hosed 3.4 Accustom the horse to have its legs handled and all feet picked up 3.5 Familiarise the horse with tack, equipment and aids used in education exercises 3.6 Teach the horse to focus attention on handler and respond consistently in different contexts to aids, cues and communication relating to forward and backward movement, changing direction, halting and stopping 3.7 Build horse confidence within a controlled environment, progressing to unfamiliar and/or open environments when ready
4. Educate horse to load and unload on transport	4.1 Assess risks associated with transport vehicle and location for loading and unloading horse 4.2 Familiarise horse with transport vehicle and prepare for transport 4.3 Select suitable horses to assist with habituating the horse to be in close proximity to other horses

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
	4.4 Teach horse to enter and exit a transport vehicle using positive reinforcement methodologies 4.5 Build horse confidence in loading and unloading and to be transported safely in a secured vehicle
5. Apply reward-based horse education methodology	5.1 Apply education techniques consistently to reinforce horse learning 5.2 Recognise and apply positive reinforcement to the horse for progress towards desired behaviours 5.3 Comply with animal welfare and safety requirements at all times 5.4 Confirm horse has been educated to meet client needs and requirements

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
Learning	Actively source current, evidence-based information on equine education and learning theory to determine own education practices
Navigate the world of work	- Take responsibility for complying with regulatory and workplace requirements, including health and safety and animal welfare, within own role and area of work - Follow safe, ethical and humane horse handling practices
Interact with others	Work collaboratively and communicate effectively with others to plan programs and report on horse performance and progress
Get the work done	Analyse problems and risks, devise solutions and reflect on approaches taken

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title	Code and title	Comments	Equivalence status
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current version	previous version		
ACMEQU407 Educate horses in initial handling	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=b75f4b23-54c9-4cc9-a5db-d3502d154103>

Assessment Requirements for ACMEQU407 Educate horses in initial handling

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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:

- carried out activities to educate three horses in initial handling according to a plan prepared for each individual horse
- demonstrated safe horse handling skills and appropriate education techniques to ensure their own and others' safety and the welfare of the horse at all times.

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:

- safe work practices when interacting with horses, including:
 - assessing and controlling risks
 - safe horse handling techniques
 - safe zones around horses
 - duty of care for others
 - use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for activity
 - safe and suitable transport vehicles and towing requirements for horses
 - codes of practice and workplace procedures for housing, transport and interactions with horses
- horse wellbeing, including:
 - managing stress, fatigue, heat and injuries
 - overview of animal welfare assessment frameworks, including Five Domains and Five Freedoms models
- key indicators for assessing conformation, condition and health of horses relating to education program
- equine behaviour, including:

- body language and vocalisation
- affective states, including fear, anxiety, hunger, fatigue
- temperament and characteristics of different breeds and classes of horses
- behaviours and conditions typically linked to strong fight or flight response, including:
 - fearful, nervous, timid, anxious behaviour
 - aggressive responses to people and/or other equines
 - fears of specific stimuli
- risks to people from equine behaviour, including biting, kicking, rearing, striking
- key features of current research on equine cognition, intelligence, ethology and learning abilities relevant to training horses
- techniques to shape or modify horse behaviour
- safe environments and controlled areas, including arenas or fenced tracks
- range of tack, equipment and aids used in education exercises for horses, including rug, halter and lead rope
- key features of horse education plan, including objectives, stages and timeframes
- key forms and features of transport vehicles, including configuration and access for loading and unloading.

Assessment Conditions

Assessment of skills must take place under the following conditions:

- physical conditions:
 - a workplace or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions, including round yards or enclosed arenas suitable for educating horses in initial handling
- resources, equipment and materials:
 - variety of horses – appropriately uneducated for the purpose of the education activities in the performance evidence
 - PPE correctly fitted and applicable to activity for the individual
 - appropriate tack and gear required for education program
 - horse transport vehicle
- relationships:
 - assistant handler, if required.

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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