



Australian Government

ACMEQU412 Interpret and address horse behaviour and welfare

Release: 1

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Modification History

Release	Comments
Release 1	This version released with ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 5.0.

Application

This unit of competency covers the skills and knowledge required to interpret and apply knowledge of horse behaviour, cognition and learning to ensure that the behavioural needs and welfare of horses are met while maintaining a safe working environment. It covers all breeds and intended uses and environments, and can be applied to other domestic equines.

The unit applies to individuals who have an independent or management role working with horses and require a detailed understanding of horse behaviour to make decisions and communicate solutions for welfare, care, handling, education and management.

Commonwealth and state/territory health and safety and animal welfare legislation, regulations and codes of practice relevant to interacting with horses apply to workers in this industry. Requirements vary between industry sectors and jurisdictions.

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>
1. Investigate horse behaviour	1.1 Observe and handle horses to recognise normal, undesirable and other variations of behavioural signs in individual horses 1.2 Identify likely causes of undesirable and variations to normal

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
	behaviour 1.3 Assess risks and issues associated with horse behaviour, and implications for managing, handling and educating 1.4 Evaluate current, evidence-based learning principles and techniques used for horse education or managing behaviour
2. Apply knowledge of horse behaviour to managing or educating horses	2.1 Determine suitable evidence-based methods and techniques for educating or managing behaviour in individual horses 2.2 Develop strategies and individual plans for managing horse behaviour 2.3 Communicate information about behavioural challenges and education level of individual horses to handlers, and/or riders, drivers and clients 2.4 Reinforce safe handling techniques and strategies to minimise risks associated with horse behaviour and level of education to handlers, and/or riders, drivers and clients
3. Review horse welfare	3.1 Analyse regulations, codes of practice and animal welfare frameworks relevant to horses 3.2 Assess the welfare of individual horses using a recognised animal welfare assessment framework 3.3 Evaluate outcomes of welfare assessment and likely impact on horse behaviour
4. Improve practices to address horse behaviour and welfare	4.1 Evaluate impact of current environment, work and management practices on horse behaviour and welfare 4.2 Develop and implement work practices to address horse behaviour and welfare 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
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Skill	Description
Learning	Undertake independent research to inform own work practices
Reading	Analyse textual information that presents different viewpoints to inform decision making about horse behaviour and welfare
Writing	Edit and adapt existing documentation to incorporate updated content in print-based or digital format
Oral communication	Adapt communication style to explain information to people with diverse views or unfamiliarity with concepts

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMEQU412 Interpret and address horse behaviour and welfare	ACMPHR401 Interpret equine behaviour	Title changed Unit sector changed to EQU Minor updates including reordering to Elements and Performance Criteria for clarity Foundation Skills table and Assessment Requirements updated	Equivalent

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 ACMEQU412 Interpret and address horse behaviour and welfare

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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, including body language and facial expressions, for two different horses, including one that is ridden
- developed and documented a behaviour management plan for two horses displaying different variations to normal behaviour using appropriate techniques
- assessed the welfare of the two horses above using a recognised animal welfare framework assessment tool
- communicated information about the behaviour and welfare of the two horses above to a handler and/or rider, driver or client
- documented at least two procedures covering workplace practices that incorporate knowledge of horse behaviour and welfare.

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:

- behavioural needs and patterns of domestic horses, including:
 - handled and unhandled horses
 - herd behaviour
 - individual stabled or yarded horses
 - gender
 - level of education
- horse survival needs, including physical environment and health, interactions with humans, other species
- horse behaviour, including:
 - body language and vocalisations

- evolutionary basis of horse behaviour and its impact on the behavioural needs of horses
- affective/emotional states, including fear, anxiety, hunger, fatigue
- behaviours and conditions typically linked to strong fight-or-flight response
- high-risk behaviours (biting, kicking, panicking, extreme flight response)
- concept and formats for documenting an ethogram
- key features of current research in horse behaviour, cognition and learning
- key animal welfare frameworks and application to horses, including Five Freedoms, Five Domains Model, or Quality of Life indicators
- application of research to the management, handling, housing and education of horses
- identification of situations requiring specialist advice on horse behaviour
- effect of the environment, housing, handling, education and management decisions on the behaviour and welfare of horses
- key requirements of codes of practice and legislation relating to:
 - work, health and safety, including safely interacting with horses and use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - animal welfare, including safe, humane and ethical care of horses, and concept of social licence to operate
 - relevant local government regulations in rural, semi-rural and semi-urban locations.

Assessment Conditions

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

- physical conditions:
 - an equine workplace or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions
- resources, equipment and materials:
 - live horses and/or videos of live horses to observe a range of behaviours
 - format or template for documenting an ethogram
 - animal welfare framework assessment tool.

The *Companion Volume: User Guide: Safety in Equine Training* provides advice and sample templates to assist assessors with the risk assessments that should be undertaken to help ensure the safety of all involved in the assessment.

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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