



Australian Government

ACMEQU421 Provide saddle fitting and adjustment services

Release: 1

ACMEQU421 Provide saddle fitting and adjustment services

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 describes the skills and knowledge required to select and fit saddlery equipment for individual horses and riders for a range of horse sport disciplines or work activities. It can apply to other domestic equines requiring saddlery equipment.

The unit applies to individuals who assess requirements and provide saddle fitting services for clients. They work autonomously, use judgment in the selection and use of equipment, and provide and communicate solutions for predictable and unpredictable problems.

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. Maintain currency of knowledge of saddlery equipment design	1.1 Identify design features and components of saddles used for a range of horse sport disciplines, work activities and levels of rider experience 1.2 Evaluate construction techniques, materials and durability of

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
	saddlery equipment 1.3 Assess safety features and issues associated with saddlery equipment 1.4 Apply techniques for assembling, cleaning and maintaining saddles 1.5 Review current science and research about improving saddle design for horse and rider comfort and safety
2. Evaluate saddlery requirements	2.1 Identify client saddlery requirements, confirming intended horse use, level of work/exercise, age and other relevant characteristics 2.2 Request information on concerns or problems related to saddle fit and horse behaviour 2.3 Clarify financial arrangements with client relating to saddle and service costs 2.4 Observe horse and assess conformation, movement, and fitness level relevant to selection of saddlery equipment 2.5 Assess physical characteristics and experience of rider, and relate to selection of saddlery equipment
3. Assess horse for saddlery fit	3.1 Select and fit personal protective equipment (PPE) 3.2 Assess and control risks associated with interacting with horses in close proximity 3.2 Approach and interact with horse using safe, low stress handling techniques 3.3 Examine horse for signs of pain, discomfort or inappropriate fit of existing saddle 3.4 Examine individual horse musculoskeletal features, taking relevant measurements, and making a template if required 3.5 Determine saddle tree angle and width to suit horse, ensuring channel clearance of spine and withers 3.6 Determine saddle length to suit thoracic region, avoiding the lumbar region and involuntary muscle and nerve reflex points 3.7 Determine panel requirements appropriate for horse and intended rider and use 3.8 Select and check existing or potential saddle/s suitable for individual horse, intended activity and client requirement, to be trialled

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. Fit saddlery equipment	4.1 Position and check placement of saddle to allow free movement of back and shoulder and clearance of spine 4.2 Girth horse, adjusting girth points to ensure saddle is secure with appropriate pressure 4.3 Check panel contact along length of horse's back to confirm even pressure 4.4 Check straightness and balance of saddle seat in relation to where rider sits 4.5 Select, fit and adjust stirrups to suit rider characteristics 4.6 Evaluate fit of saddle on horse while static with and without rider, identifying possible adjustments 4.7 Communicate proposed adjustments and expected outcomes for rider and horse, and seek approval to make changes 4.8 Observe horse movement, saddle stability and balance, and rider position, in different gaits, and make further adjustments if necessary, after consultation with rider 4.9 Determine and select add-on accessories for rider and horse safety and comfort
5. Check and adjust existing saddle	5.1 Evaluate suitability of existing saddle for current shape of horse, rider physical characteristics and intended use 5.2 Examine saddlery for wear, faults and viability of repairs 5.3 Provide advice on options for making adjustments to saddle for improved horse and rider comfort and safety 5.4 Make fitting adjustments, reflock padding for saddle balance and/or realign saddle tree, or refer client to appropriate manufacturer or repairer
6. Finalise service with client	6.1 Confirm selection of saddlery equipment with client 6.2 Complete horse and client records according to organisational practice 6.3 Finalise invoice, transaction or service arrangements 6.4 Provide client follow-up service as required or agreed

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
Writing	Complete workplace documentation using industry terminology in print-based and/or digital formats
Oral communication	- Use questioning and listening skills to elicit information and confirm and clarify understanding - Use language and tone appropriate for audience to convey information
Numeracy	Take measurements and estimate measurements with reasonable accuracy of horse and rider physical characteristics

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMEQU421 Provide saddle fitting and adjustment services	Not applicable	The unit has been created to address a skill or task 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 ACMEQU421 Provide saddle fitting and adjustment services

Modification History

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

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:

- investigated the range of current saddle designs and availability, and summarised key features, advantages and disadvantages of the following saddle types:
 - English style – general/all-purpose saddle
 - dressage saddle
 - jumping saddle
 - Australian stock saddle
 - Western style saddle
 - racing pads/exercise saddle
 - half breed saddle (cross between Australian stock saddle and Western saddle)
 - one other special purpose saddle
- assessed client needs and requirements for at least three horses of different sizes and shapes, and selected and correctly fitted an appropriate saddle for:
 - an all-purpose recreational riding activity
 - two different sport discipline or work activities
- assessed two existing saddles used for different horses and purposes, and made adjustments to the saddle to meet current horse and/or rider needs, including:
 - fitting adjustments
 - reflocking to balance the saddle
- used safe work practices around horses and assessed risks to riders, horses and self in relation to fitting gear.

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:

- different saddle designs and features related to riding discipline or purpose, including:
 - English style – general purpose saddle
 - dressage saddle
 - jumping saddle
 - Australian stock saddle
 - Western style saddle
 - racing pads/exercise saddles
 - half breed saddle (cross between Australian stock saddle and Western saddle)
 - special purpose saddles
- basics of saddle construction, including:
 - types and benefits and limitations of leather and synthetic materials
 - key aspects of manufacturing process
 - main types of saddle tree shapes
 - panel materials
- saddle components and their purpose, including (*denotes Western terminology):
 - saddle tree
 - pommel or swell*
 - cantle
 - seat
 - flaps
 - girth, cinch*, surcingle*
 - girth points
 - stirrups and stirrup leathers
 - panels and lining and padding types
 - knee or thigh rolls, blocks
 - accessories – monkey grip or horn*
- equine musculoskeletal anatomy related to saddle fitting, including:
 - neck – cervical spine
 - withers
 - shoulder/scapula and scapula cartilage
 - sternum
 - barrel – thoracic spine
 - last rib
 - rump – lumbar spine
 - main muscles – trapezius, latissimus dorsi, triceps and pectoralis muscles
 - cranial nerve
- criteria for assessing saddle fit, including:
 - rider seat, balance and centre of gravity
 - wither clearance
 - channel width

- panel contact
- girth point
- saddle length and straightness
- saddle tree angle and width
- dangers of unsafe saddlery
- rider characteristics to consider in selecting a saddle, including:
 - physical characteristics influencing seat size, load, stirrup placement
 - riding experience
 - intended use of horse – work activity or sport discipline
- indicators requiring further investigation of issues, including:
 - horse facial features indicating pain
 - horse moving down and away from pain when touched
 - disuse atrophy
 - swelling, bumps or deformities on spine
 - white or ruffled hair or saddle sores
 - horse bloating or biting when girthed
 - horse stiff and slow to warm up
 - horse having trouble going up and downhill
 - bucking, rearing, and resistance
 - bending, leading issues
- process and materials used for reflocking panels and adjusting saddle trees in existing saddles, including:
 - panel materials – air or Cair (trademark), latex, foam, pure wool, wool blend, polyester wadding, combination of materials
 - tools – long nose pliers, flocking iron, hook, masher, awls, needles and thread
 - techniques to flock a saddle, including removing or dropping a panel, spot flocking/stuffing padding through slits, basic unstitching and restitching
 - realignment of saddle trees using thermal or cold adjustment techniques
- safe equine interactions and handling techniques, including:
 - safety zones for interacting with equines
 - use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - safe body positioning working in close proximity
 - equine behaviour – herd behaviour and unpredictable reactions
 - safety of others, including bystanders
 - importance of using appropriate handling and restraint techniques and minimising stress to horse and risks to self and others
- techniques for working with clients, including clear communication, collaborative interactions and client confidentiality
- key requirements of biosecurity standards and workplace hygiene relating to gear
- key principles and practices of animal welfare relating to use and comfort of gear, and humane and ethical handling of horses.

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:
 - a range of saddles and associated equipment as specified in the performance evidence
 - personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate for handler and activity
 - live horses of varying size and shape, assessed as suitable for the experience and skill of the individual, as specified in the performance evidence
- relationships:
 - rider and/or client.

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

Companion Volumes, including Implementation Guides, are available at VETNet: -
<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=b75f4b23-54c9-4cc9-a5db-d3502d154103>