



Australian Government

ACMSPE322 Provide general care of rodents or rabbits

Release: 1

ACMSPE322 Provide general care of rodents or rabbits

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 identify rodents and/or rabbits and their behavioural and physical needs, and provide daily care requirements.

This unit applies to individuals working in the animal care industry where it may be necessary to care for rodents and/or rabbits. This may include animal shelters, pet shops, zoos and animal technology facilities or similar workplaces.

The unit applies to individuals who work under broad supervision and provide and communicate solutions to a range of predictable 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

Species Specific (SPE)

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. Identify rodents and/or rabbits	1.1 Define the habitat, activity cycle and general features of rodents and/or rabbits commonly housed in a facility

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 Identify and describe external features using industry terminology 1.3 Classify rodents and/or rabbits according to taxonomy 1.4 Define, interpret and document colours, markings and other identifying features
2. Identify and evaluate behavioural and housing needs	2.1 Identify indicators of animal comfort and normal behaviour 2.2 Recognise signs of distress and report to supervisor 2.3 Identify industry standards and guidelines for housing design, environmental factors and appropriate stocking densities 2.4 Evaluate current animal housing design in relation to the welfare of animals kept and legislation requirements 2.5 Identify behavioural enrichment activities for specific rodent and/or rabbit species
3. Catch, handle and restrain rodents and/or rabbits	3.1 Identify workplace health and safety risks associated with handling and restraining rodents and/or rabbits 3.2 Implement methods to minimise safety risks and use appropriate personal protective equipment 3.3 Select and use appropriate equipment to catch, handle and restrain rodents and/or rabbits 3.4 Approach, catch and restrain rodents and/or rabbits safely using low stress handling techniques to minimise risks to the animal and others
4. Assist with health care needs	4.1 Identify signs of good health in rodents and/or rabbits 4.2 Report signs of disease or other conditions to supervisor 4.3 Identify general health maintenance and preventative treatment procedures and implement in accordance with level of job responsibility
5. Feed and water rodents and/or rabbits	5.1 Identify digestive system features and relate to rodent-specific and/or rabbit-specific feeding routines and diets 5.2 Identify preferred feed sources and assess samples for quality and suitability 5.3 Identify potential feeding hazards and implement risk control options 5.4 Prepare food in accordance with dietary needs

Elements	Performance Criteria
<i>Elements describe the essential outcomes.</i>	<i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.</i>
	5.5 Distribute food and water according to schedule, feeding plan or animal requirements
6. Maintain records	6.1 Complete feed and treatment records, noting food consumption, health and care activities 6.2 Report abnormalities to supervisor 6.3 Complete documentation relevant to licences and transport, where required

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 key information and quantities specified on product labels
Numeracy	Measure quantities of food and health treatments accurately

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMSPE322 Provide general care of rodents or rabbits	ACMSPE312 Provide basic care of rodents and rabbits	Minor changes to performance criteria for clarity 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 ACMSPE322 Provide general care of rodents or rabbits

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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 the physical and behavioural characteristics and needs of rodents and/or rabbits
- provided care for a minimum of two rabbits or two rodents, or one rabbit and one rodent, including for each:
 - demonstrated appropriate restraint and safe handling techniques
 - prepared and provided food and water
 - assisted with routine health care needs
 - maintained housing, bedding and enrichment
 - maintained feed and husbandry records.

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:

- basic anatomical structures and physiological features of rodents and/or rabbits
- basic identification and classification of common rodents and/or rabbits by breed, age and sex
- general health maintenance and preventative treatment procedures for rodents and/or rabbits
- housing, social and activity needs of rodents and/or rabbits, and environmental impacts on health and wellbeing
- indicators of physical condition of and signs of good health in rodents and/or rabbits
- basic overview of the rodent grimace scale to identify pain
- natural rodent and/or rabbit behaviour, including:
 - defensive and aggressive behaviours
 - submissive gestures

- breeding seasons
- species, breed, age and sex of the animals
- day or night activity
- characteristics associated with different species, including:
 - activity levels at certain times of day or night
 - social interaction
 - feeding behaviours
 - breeding season
 - enurination or spraying
- enrichment needs, including:
 - food or food-related enrichment
 - physical enrichment items
 - nest building or bedding material
 - social enrichment
- potential hazards and risks to animals and staff during feeding and cleaning of housing, including zoonoses
- safe, low stress rodent and/or rabbit handling techniques and procedures, potential hazards and control measures, including personal protective equipment
- types and impacts of food in rodent and/or rabbit diets, including natural dietary requirements for specific species
- indicators of food quality, including nutritional value, freshness, shelf life, free from spoilage and pests
- types of information reported and recorded in animal care workplaces
- key requirements of Commonwealth and state/territory legislation, licensing and codes of practice related to captive animals, biosecurity and quarantine, health and safety and animal welfare
- principles of animal welfare and basic overview of animal welfare assessment frameworks or models, including the Five Domains.

Assessment Conditions

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

- physical conditions:
 - an animal care workplace or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions
- resources, equipment and materials:
 - live rodents and/or rabbits as specified in performance evidence
 - equipment and resources typically available in an animal care facility, including personal protective equipment
- specifications:

- organisational policies and procedures, current legislation and relevant codes of practice
- relationships:
 - supervisor.

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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