



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

ACMCAS409A Provide training advice to companion animal owners

Revision Number: 1

ACMCAS409A Provide training advice to companion animal owners

Modification History

Not applicable.

Unit Descriptor

Unit descriptor	This unit of competency covers the process of developing, conducting and reviewing training plans and programs for companion animals for their owners. No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.
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Application of the Unit

Application of the unit	This unit is applicable to those working in the companion animal industry sector where training may be required to modify undesirable behaviour traits for a range of breeds and species. Training may be conducted in group or one-on-one sessions with animals and their owners (clients) and may take place in public open spaces, in private residences or at agreed alternative venues. In addition to legal and ethical responsibilities, all units of competency in the ACM10 Animal Care and Management Training Package have the requirement for animals to be handled gently and calmly. The individual is required to exhibit appropriate care for animals so that stress and discomfort is minimised.
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Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Prerequisite units		

Employability Skills Information

Employability skills	This unit contains employability skills.
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Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.	Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.
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Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Determine clients' needs	1.1. Training needs are discussed and determined in conjunction with clients. 1.2. Short and medium-term goals are set in conjunction with clients. 1.3. Initial assessment of animals is conducted. 1.4. Referral to an animal behaviourist or other relevant persons is offered as required.
2. Develop training plans	2.1. Behavioural traits and conditioning strategies for a range of breeds is researched. 2.2. Training strategies to achieve desirable behaviours for a range of breeds are determined. 2.3. Training plans are developed to achieve desirable behaviours for a range of breeds.
3. Conduct training	3.1. Appropriate training equipment is selected and used in accordance with training plan. 3.2. Initial training is explained to clients and conducted in accordance with training plans. 3.3. Training is conducted in accordance with industry best practice standards, including animal welfare and ethics requirements. 3.4. Training equipment is maintained, hygienically cleaned and stored in accordance with organisation policies and procedures and relevant manufacturers' guidelines.
4. Conduct ongoing assessments	4.1. Progress of animals is reviewed in accordance with training plans and discussed with clients. 4.2. Training plans are reviewed and modified accordingly. 4.3. Training records are maintained in accordance with industry standards.
5. Instruct client in ongoing management	5.1. Strategies to achieve short and medium-term conditioning objectives are discussed with clients. 5.2. Advice on longer-term objectives is provided to clients. 5.3. Advice is provided to clients on training plans, including dietary requirements, behavioural enrichment, exercise and maintenance.

Required Skills and Knowledge

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.

Required skills

- develop, review and update animal training strategies and plans for a range of breeds
- employ appropriate communication skills to determine animals' and clients' needs and provide advice and assistance as required
- employ safe and environmentally responsible organisational systems and procedures when working with and handling a variety of animal breeds
- identify and implement a variety of scientifically-recognised behaviour modification techniques, including the effect of positive and negative reinforcement
- maintain the highest standards of hygiene and infection control at all times to reduce the risk of infection and cross-infection
- maintain records and complete relevant workplace documents
- research and determine training strategies to achieve desirable behaviours for a range of breeds
- supervise the training of animals in accordance with training plans
- use and maintain training equipment, including restraint devices
- literacy skills to read and follow organisation policies and procedures, including occupational health and safety (OHS) and infection control procedures; follow sequenced written instructions; record accurately and legibly information collected; select and apply procedures to a range of defined tasks and read, develop and document animal training strategies and plans
- oral communication skills/language to fulfil the job role as specified by the organisation, including questioning techniques, active listening and asking for clarification
- numeracy skills to estimate, calculate and record routine and more complex workplace measures and data
- interpersonal skills to work with others and relate to people from a range of cultural, social and religious backgrounds and with a range of physical and mental abilities
- problem-solving skills to use available resources and prioritise daily tasks
- use safe manual handling techniques and/or equipment
- use safe waste handling and disposal procedures.

Required knowledge

- animal dietary, exercise and maintenance requirements
- basic animal anatomy and physiology related to companion animal behaviour management requirements
- behaviour modification techniques and conditioning strategies

REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- humane training techniques for a range of animals and training requirements
- organisation policies, procedures and requirements, including OHS and emergency procedures
- principles of animal welfare and ethics
- range of animals and breeds, their common behavioural traits and temperaments
- range of animal training equipment and its use
- relevant OHS and animal welfare legislative requirements and codes of practice
- relevant recordkeeping systems
- safe animal handling and restraint techniques and procedures
- safe work practices
- training strategies and plans
- workplace hygiene standards, disinfectants, cleaning agents, cleaning techniques and cleaning equipment and materials.

Evidence Guide

EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

Overview of assessment

Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit

The evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit must be relevant to workplace operations and satisfy all of the requirements of the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge and the range statement of this unit. Assessors should ensure that candidates can:

- train animals in accordance with animals' abilities, the clients' needs and environmental considerations
- handle and restrain animals appropriately and humanely
- identify and implement a variety of scientifically-recognised behaviour modification techniques, including the effect of positive and negative reinforcement
- select, use and maintain appropriate and humane training equipment
- communicate effectively with clients to determine animal and client needs and provide advice and assistance as required
- maintain records and follow-up with clients as required.

The skills and knowledge required to provide training advice to companion animal owners must be transferable to a range of work environments and contexts and include the ability to deal with unplanned events.

Context of and specific resources for assessment

Assessment of this unit is to be practical in nature and will most appropriately be assessed in companion animal organisations that provide training advice to companion animal owners or in a situation that reproduces normal work conditions.

There must be access to a range of companion animal breeds and species as well as relevant information, equipment and/or resources to enable one to demonstrate

EVIDENCE GUIDE	
	competence.
Method of assessment	To ensure consistency in one's performance, competency should be demonstrated, to industry defined standards, on more than one occasion over a period of time in order to cover a variety of circumstances, cases and responsibilities, and over a number of assessment activities. The assessment strategies must include practical skills assessment. Suggested strategies for this unit are: • written and/or oral assessment of candidate's required knowledge • observed, documented and first-hand testimonial evidence of candidate's application of practical tasks • simulation exercises that reproduce normal work conditions • third-party evidence • workplace documentation • portfolio. This unit may be assessed in a holistic way with other units of competency relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role.
Guidance information for assessment	Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands (e.g. literacy and numeracy demands) and the needs of particular target groups (e.g. people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, people with a language background other than English, youth and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds).

Range Statement

RANGE STATEMENT

The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.

Behavioural traits of animals may include:

- normal behaviour in various contexts:
 - breeding and parental
 - eliminative
 - grooming
 - ingestive
 - resting
 - social
- undesirable behaviour:
 - aggression
 - anxiety
 - compulsive disorders
 - facility and equipment destruction
 - fearfulness
 - self-mutilation.

Training strategies may include:

- activities to achieve desensitisation
- classical, operant and counter conditioning
- techniques that are targeted for certain breeds or species
- use of positive and negative reinforcement and, when appropriate, punishment
- using an appropriate number of repetitions
- using learning session timeframes that are appropriate for age, breed, species and stage of training
- using logical staging of training to ensure animal can achieve short and medium-term training aims.

Training plans may include:

- a written report and ideally illustrations or video demonstrations for clients detailing a series of humane training exercises recommended to assist them in achieving their training goal
- suggested management of an animal during a

RANGE STATEMENT	
	training program.
<i>Training equipment</i> may include:	• items to assist in desensitising animal if required • leads, collars, restraints, head halters and other restraint devices • props and jumps • scent, hunting and retrieving items if required • treats and toys.
<i>Animal welfare and ethics requirements</i> may include:	• avoiding equipment that may cause harm • avoiding the use of punishment and negative reinforcement and discussing their effects on learning with clients • consideration of the animals' breed, age and exercise and housing requirements • consideration of the animals' previous experience, current learning ability and concentration span • referring animals that appear stressed or whose behaviour is abnormal to a veterinarian for advice • referring owners to specialists if problems encountered are beyond trainer's expertise • setting realistic training goals and timeframes • the correct use of restraints and training devices.

Unit Sector(s)

Unit sector	Companion animal services
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Competency field

Competency field	
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Co-requisite units

Co-requisite units		