



**Australian Government**

**Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations**

# **HLTMT408C Assist with forensic autopsy techniques**

**Release: 1**

## **HLTMT408C Assist with forensic autopsy techniques**

### **Modification History**

Not Applicable

### **Unit Descriptor**

#### **Descriptor**

This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required for a mortuary technician to prepare for and assist with forensic autopsy techniques including autopsies for sudden or suspicious deaths, the dissection of particular body parts and the collection and storage of evidence samples

### **Application of the Unit**

#### **Application**

Work performed requires a broad knowledge base and the ability to apply solutions to a defined range of unpredictable problems

Individuals take responsibility for their own outputs and limited responsibility for quantity and quality of output of others

All tasks are conducted in accordance with organisation policies and procedures including OHS and infection control guidelines

### **Licensing/Regulatory Information**

Not Applicable

## Pre-Requisites

### Pre-requisite unit

This unit must be assessed after successful achievement of pre-requisite:

- HLTMT304C Assist with autopsy

## Employability Skills Information

### Employability Skills

This unit contains Employability Skills

## Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements define the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

The Performance Criteria specify the level of performance required to demonstrate achievement of the Element. Terms in italics are elaborated in the Range Statement.

## Elements and Performance Criteria

### ELEMENT

### PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Prepare deceased person for autopsy

- 1.1 Follow *checking processes* correctly
- 1.2 Confirm details of *case type*
- 1.3 Obtain and prepare relevant *equipment*
- 1.4 Correctly prepare, fix and label specimen containers
- 1.5 Correctly use *personal protective equipment*
- 1.6 Obtain body and check identification
- 1.7 Liaise with *medical officer* as appropriate

**ELEMENT****PERFORMANCE CRITERIA****2. Assist with special dissections**

- 2.1 Follow procedures and medical officer's instructions for *special dissections*
- 2.2 Undertake and record *measurements*
- 2.3 Collect *pathological and toxicological specimens and samples for evidence* under supervision
- 2.4 Undertake organ retention and specimen documentation in line with *relevant legislation* and *organisation policy and procedure*
- 2.5 Securely store samples for evidence in accordance with organisation policy and procedure
- 2.6 *Reconstruct, clean and restore* body to acceptable condition for viewing
- 2.7 Prepare body for storage and return for refrigeration storage

**3. Operate *medical imaging equipment***

- 3.1 Identify and collect medical imaging equipment
- 3.2 Include labels in the image
- 3.3 Complete *documentation* according to organisation policy and procedures
- 3.4 Frame image appropriately
- 3.5 Produce accurate and clear images
- 3.6 Retrieve images in a timely manner
- 3.7 Maintain medical imaging equipment according to manufacturers' specifications

**4. Clean autopsy room**

- 4.1 Clean and safely store equipment
- 4.2 Sterilise equipment as required
- 4.3 Clean work area according to infection control policy and procedures
- 4.4 Safely dispose of waste according to organisation policy and procedures

## Required Skills and Knowledge

### REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

This describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level required for this unit.

#### *Essential knowledge:*

The candidate must be able to demonstrate essential knowledge required to effectively do the task outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage the task and manage contingencies in the context of the identified work role

This includes knowledge of:

- Anatomy, physiology and pathology relevant to the role of the Mortuary Technician in a forensic setting
- Cleaning techniques
- Cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation of equipment
- Mode of infectious disease transmission
- Principles of photography
- Relevant basic medical terminology
- Relevant organisation policies and procedures
- Steriliser operation, if required
- Workplace occupational health and safety in a mortuary

#### *Essential skills:*

It is critical that the candidate demonstrate the ability to:

- Appropriately interpret job requirements
- Organise work areas and medical gas equipment
- Select appropriate emergency and personal protective equipment
- Identify potential risks, hazards to handling and storage of medical gas equipment
- Use all medical gas equipment safely and appropriately

In addition, the candidate must be able to effectively do the task outlined in elements and performance criteria of this unit, manage the task and manage contingencies in the context of the identified work role

This includes the ability to:

- Apply problem solving skills, including an ability to use available resources and manage a daily routine
- Check to ensure dissection equipment is sharp and safe for use

## REQUIRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Communicate effectively with medical officer performing autopsy
- Correctly label, identify, transport and store specimens
- Correctly use personal protective equipment
- Demonstrate body reconstruction and restoration techniques following autopsy
- Follow correct documentation procedures for organ retention, specimen recording and for photography

*continued ...*

### *Essential skills (contd):*

- Follow infection control and occupational health and safety policy and procedures
- Follow organisation waste management practices, including correctly and safely dispose of clinical and other wastes and taking into account opportunities to address waste minimisation, environmental responsibility and sustainable practice issues
- Follow safe working procedures during autopsies
- Maintain records for evidence purposes
- Operate medical imaging equipment effectively
- Remove and accurately measure and weigh fluids and organs
- Use accurate special dissection techniques
- Use autopsy equipment correctly and safely
- Use numeracy skills including the ability to complete basic arithmetic calculations, and undertake measurements of volumes and weight
- Use oral communication skills required to fulfil job roles in a safe manner and as specified by the organisation, including skills in:
  - asking questions
  - providing clear information
  - listening to and understanding workplace instructions
  - clarifying workplace instructions when necessary
  - using effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills with a range of internal and external persons
- Use reading and writing skills required to fulfil job role in a safe manner and as specified by the organisation at a level of skill required that includes reading workplace policy and procedure manuals and documenting administrative and clinical information

## Evidence Guide

### EVIDENCE GUIDE

The evidence guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the

## EVIDENCE GUIDE

Performance Criteria, Required Skills and Knowledge, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for this Training Package.

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

- The individual being assessed must provide evidence of specified essential knowledge as well as skills
- This unit will be most appropriately assessed in the workplace under the normal range of workplace conditions
- Consistency of performance should be demonstrated over the required range of situations relevant to the workplace
- Where, for reasons of safety, space, or access to equipment and resources, assessment takes place away from the workplace, the assessment environment should represent workplace conditions as closely as possible

*Method of assessment*

- Observation of work activities
- Written tasks
- Relevant formal and informal education/training courses
- Interviews/questioning
- Feedback from medical officer

*Resource implications:*

- Access to an autopsy room where assessment can take place
- Autopsy equipment
- Relevant organisation policy, guidelines, procedures and protocols
- Relevant legislative requirements

## EVIDENCE GUIDE

- Access and equity considerations:*
- Workers should have an understanding of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture and history and an ability to work with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and communities
  - Assessors and trainers must have a knowledge of and take into account the influence of cultural and historic factors relating to health for those working with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and communities
- Access and equity considerations:*
- All workers in the health industry should be aware of access and equity issues in relation to their own area of work
  - All workers should develop their ability to work in a culturally diverse environment
  - In recognition of particular health issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, workers should be aware of cultural, historical and current issues impacting on health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
  - Assessors and trainers must take into account relevant access and equity issues, in particular relating to factors impacting on health of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and communities

## 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. Add any 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.

## RANGE STATEMENT

- Checking processes may include:*
- Ensuring consent or Coroner's Order to autopsy has been received
  - Identification of deceased
  - Infectious status of deceased
  - Potential hazards (e.g. chemical, radiation, etc) which may be encountered during the autopsy
  - Removal of implants and prostheses
  - Identification of known or suspected high risk cases
  - Confirmation of documentation with medical officer
  - Identification and recording of scars, tattoos and distinctive features
- Case types may include:*
- Disaster victim identification (DVI)
  - Suspicious deaths - homicides, suicide
  - Sudden death - accident
  - Coroner's cases
- Equipment may include:*
- Autopsy table
  - Trolleys
  - Surgical instruments
  - Scales
  - Specimen containers
  - Necropsy saw
  - Body bags
  - Cleaning equipment
  - Camera
  - Tape recorder
- Personal protective equipment may include:*
- Face protection
  - Eye protection
  - Gown
  - Apron
  - Surgical suits
  - Gloves
  - Protective footwear
  - Respirators

**RANGE STATEMENT**

*Medical officer may refer to:*

- Pathologist
- Government medical officer
- Other medical practitioner

*Special dissections may include:*

- Face masking
- Dissections to neck
- Removal of teeth
- Dissections to Jaws
- Sub-Cutaneous dissections

*Measurements may include:*

- Length
- Weight
- Volume

*Pathological and toxicological specimens and samples for evidence may include:*

- Tissue
- Blood
- Urine
- Bile
- Cerebrospinal fluid
- Stomach contents
- Liver
- Other fluids
- Chemicals

*Relevant legislation may include:*

- Relevant State and Territory Legislation concerning organ retention

## RANGE STATEMENT

*Organisation policy and procedure may relate to:*

- Checking processes
- Identification
- Documentation and record keeping
- Organ retention
- Boundaries of the work role of the Mortuary Technician
- Specimen collection and preparation
- Medical Imaging
- Photography
- Photographic documentation
- Reconstruction and restoration of bodies
- Evisceration procedures
- Cleaning of autopsy room and equipment
- Sterilisation of equipment
- Waste management

*Reconstruction and restoration of bodies may include:*

- Cleaning cavities
- Packing of absorbent material
- Blocking orifices
- Replacement of organs
- Suturing incisions
- Insertion of prostheses
- Washing and drying body

*Medical Imaging equipment may include:*

- Photography equipment
- Digital imaging equipment

*Documentation may include:*

- Register of images
- Request for medical imaging
- Authorisation to use medical images

**RANGE STATEMENT**

*Infection control policy and procedures may include:*

- Personal hygiene
- Cleaning procedures
- Cleaning of surfaces and equipment
- Use of cleaning chemicals
- Use of personal protective equipment
- Cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation of equipment
- Operation of sterilisers, if required
- Standard and additional precautions
- Disposal of clinical and other wastes

*Waste may include:*

- Clinical wastes
- Infectious waste
- Human tissue
- General waste

*Occupational health and safety policy may include:*

- Manual handling
- Use of equipment
- Storage of equipment
- Use of personal protective equipment

**Unit Sector(s)**

Not Applicable