Modification history

Release	Comments
Release 1	This version released with ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Version 4.0.

ACMNEW4X5	Work in the animal-assisted services sector
Application	This unit of competency describes the skills and knowledge required to work as an animal handler and team member in conducting animal-assisted services. It involves organising animal care, access to facilities and interactions with people. Services may involve working with individual participants (clients, students, patients), professional educators and/or health care practitioners supporting people with a range of disabilities or special needs. This unit applies to individuals who are required to manage an animal and animal-human interactions during animal-assisted services. They analyse information and exercise judgement to complete a range of skilled activities; demonstrate in depth knowledge in a specific technical area and communicate solutions to a range of problems. All work must be carried out to comply with workplace procedures according to 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.
Prerequisite Unit	Nil
Unit Sector	Companion Animal Sector (CAS)

Elements	Performance Criteria
Elements describe the essential outcomes.	*Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.*
1. Establish working relationship for animal-assisted service	1.1 Identify client specific goals in consultation with the client 1.2 Confirm role of the animal-assisted service and the range of support services or activities involved 1.3 Identify key personnel, responsibilities and reporting requirements related to the service 1.4 Confirm the role and activities required are within scope of own training and competency 1.5 Establish compliance, contractual or working relationships required to conduct the animal-assisted service
2. Establish arrangements with team members	2.1 Identify the roles of team members and the activities or services to be provided by the animal-handler 2.2 Identify the participants to be supported and their specific needs and goals 2.3 Determine the role of the animal in the support services to be provided in consultation with relevant team members 2.4 Check that the animal to be involved in intended activity has been assessed as suitable for the support activities to be provided 2.5 Confirm and clarify planned activities for group or individual sessions including implementing client consent procedures

Elements	Performance Criteria
Elements describe the essential outcomes.	*Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.*
3. Organise access for animal to facility	3.1 Obtain permissions or organise relevant certification documentation for animal as required 3.2 Ensure animal meets health, care and hygiene requirements of service provider and/or facility, including risk assessment and risk management 3.3 Organise transport and access logistics for facility prior to planned activity 3.4 Ensure availability of water, retreat areas and other requirements for animal welfare and care 3.5 Identify, minimise and control risks associated with animal-human interactions
4. Prepare for animal-human interaction	4.1 Prepare animal for interaction with people in group or individual sessions 4.2 Explain role and instructions for interacting with animal to team members 4.3 Encourage and facilitate interaction between animal and team members during activities
5. Manage animal during planned activities	5.1 Monitor and respond to animal body language, signals and emotional states during activities 5.2 Monitor animal to prevent burn out and fatigue from involvement in activities 5.3 Proactively plan stress relief and prevention strategies specific to animal species 5.4 Objectively assess the animal's suitability for each session and document according to workplace requirements
6. Review program	6.1 Monitor and document client, animal and team progress, including contractual and working relationships 6.2 Document client progress and create exit strategy as required 6.3 Refer client to suitable services, as 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 information from a range of sources related to disabilities and identify relevant and key information
Oral communication	• Use questioning, active listening and reading of non-verbal cues to support effective communication with clients and stakeholders

Unit Mapping Information

Code and title current version	Code and title previous version	Comments	Equivalence status
ACMNEW4X5 Work in the animal-assisted services sector	Not applicable	New unit	No equivalent unit

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

TITLE	Assessment requirements for ACMNEW4X5 Work in the animal-assisted services sector

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:

- handled and managed an animal in an animal-assisted service, in one of the following categories, on at least two occasions.
    - animal-assisted therapy (involving a qualified, medical or allied health worker)
    - animal-assisted learning (involving a learning professional)
    - animal-assisted activities (involving visitation services to a range of facilities)
    - assistance animal

In doing so, the individual must have:

- worked and communicated effectively as a team member
- managed care of animal and organised access to facility
- prepared the team members for safe and supportive animal-human interactions
- completed documentation and reporting requirements using industry terminology.

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:

- types of animal-assisted support services and team member roles, including:
    - animal-assisted therapy (involving a qualified, medical or allied health worker)
    - animal-assisted learning (involving a learning professional)
    - animal-assisted activities (visitation services to a range of facilities)
    - assistance animal in training
- animal-assisted services, including;
    - terminology
    - assistance animal requirements, including legal definition covered by the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act
    - assistance animal public access test and accreditation requirements for relevant state/territory jurisdiction
- range of stakeholders, including:
    - professionals - medical, health/allied health; teachers/learning specialists and/or case workers
    - participant - student, client, patient, individual with disability or special needs
    - support person - family member, carer
    - animal handlers/trainers
    - organisations
- types of disabilities and/or special needs of individuals that can be supported through animal-assisted services, including:
    - physical support
    - health care support
    - mental health support
    - learning support
    - special needs related to companionship and wellbeing
- reporting requirements related to animal-assisted service program design, implementation and review, including client confidentiality, privacy and consent procedures
- overview of cultural or religious beliefs, health issues or personal preferences that can impact on human-animal interactions
- animal behaviour, including the types of activities animals can undertake or be trained to carry out
- species-specific health, and hygiene requirements, including:
    - zoonoses - transmission pathways, prevention and treatment
- principles of animal welfare humane species-specific handling and training techniques
- overview of human-animal bonds and interaction that supports the health and wellbeing of both human and animals

Knowledge Evidence

basic husbandry care required for relevant species and considerations for accessing facilities with animals.

Assessment Conditions

Assessment of skills must take place under the following conditions:
- physical conditions:
    - skills must be demonstrated in a workplace setting or an environment that accurately represents workplace conditions
- resources, equipment and materials:
    - live animals assessed as suitable for intended animal-assisted service to be provided in the performance evidence
    - equipment and resources for the handling and transport of animals
- relationships:
    - team members specified in the performance evidence.

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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