

Unit 4: Undertake Animal Handling and Safe Working

Unit code:	F/600/9391
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of the principles of animal handling and safe working and how these can be applied in practice. This unit is primarily aimed at learners within a centre-based setting looking to progress into the sector or to further education and training.

The learner will gain an understanding of the health and safety implications of handling, restraining and moving animals. The learner will display how to handle and restrain a number of animals. The learner will also carry out practical animal grooming for different animals.

● Unit introduction

Animal handling skills are essential for working with animals. Handling animals safely according to industry guidelines and health and safety legislation is extremely important for both prospective employers and for employee safety.

By completing this mainly practical unit, learners will be able to handle, move, restrain and groom animals safely and effectively. This includes a range of species such as small mammals, exotic animals and large animals.

These skills will form the basis for many different procedures and management techniques for animals. Learners must understand the basics before they practise using these skills to minimise any potential risks or hazards to the handler and the animals.

This unit will provide an interesting and largely practical basis for learners to develop their animal handling, restraint, grooming and movement techniques.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Be able to handle and restrain animals
- 2 Be able to move animals
- 3 Be able to groom animals
- 4 Understand how to work safely with animals.

Unit content

1 Be able to handle and restrain animals

Handling and restraining animals: methods of approach; handling and restraining methods; handling and restraining in line with health and safety and animal welfare legislation

Reasons for handling and restraining animals: transport to vets; health checking; administering medication; breeding; capture, sexing; feeding; training

Equipment: lead, collar, halter, catch poles, cat bags, crush cages, nets, snake hook, towel, pillow case, muzzle; suitable alternative equipment

2 Be able to move animals

Reasons for moving animals: transporting to vets; moving from an emergency situation; cleaning accommodation; moving from one accommodation to another; breeding

Transporting equipment and techniques: vehicles; cars; trucks; lorries; carriers; boxes; air travel; sea travel; relevant legislation and codes of practice eg Welfare of Animals (Transport) England Order 2006; suggested breaks for transporting; safety of animals and handlers when transporting animals

3 Be able to groom animals

Reasons for grooming: aesthetic; health eg de-matting; bonding with owner; parasite control; health checking; maintaining vision and hearing

Grooming techniques and equipment: brushes; baths; drying equipment eg electric dryers, towels, combs; brushes; scissors; clippers; cleaning agents eg shampoos; coat conditioners and finishing sprays; cloths; tables

4 Understand how to work safely with animals

Risks of working with animals: definition of risk: the likelihood of harm occurring; risks to pregnant women; risks to people with low immunity; importance of risk assessments and how to carry out, control measures that can be implemented

Hazards when working with animals: definition of hazard: the potential to cause harm; bites and scratches; allergens; zoonoses; stings; poison; physical injury from large animal, control measures that can be implemented

Safe working practices: PPE; security of area; risk assessment; knowledge of animal; knowledge of correct techniques for handling and restraint; hygiene; safe behaviour; noise levels, responsibilities of employers and employees under current health and safety legislation

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 plan for the handling and restraint of animals [CT, IE, RL, SM]	M1 discuss use of animal handling and restraint equipment suggesting appropriate alternatives where relevant	D1 evaluate handling and restraint techniques and equipment suggesting valid handling improvements
P2 assess the range of equipment used to handle and restrain animals [RL, CT, IE, EP]		
P3 carry out activities to handle and restrain animals safely and correctly in a way that complies with relevant legislation and minimises stress and injury [TW, SM, EP]		
P4 plan the movement of animals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ movement (from one cage/pen to another) ◇ transport (from one location to another) [CT, IE, RL, TW, EP]	M2 summarise how the movement and transport of animals for different purposes complies with relevant legislation and welfare codes of practice	D2 justify equipment used, making valid suggestions for alternative ways to move the animals and alternative equipment
P5 assess the equipment required to move animals [RL, CT, EP]		
P6 move animals in line with welfare codes and legislation [EP, TW, IE]		
P7 check animal health prior to grooming [SM, IE, CT, EP]	M3 explain use and purpose of bathing and grooming techniques	D3 evaluate grooming and safety processes carried out, making justified suggestions for improvement.
P8 carry out appropriate grooming for animals safely and correctly [TW, SM, EP]		

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
<p>P9 examine the key responsibilities of employers and employees under current health and safety legislation [IE, CT, RL]</p>	<p>M4 summarise health and safety policies when working with animals.</p>	
<p>P10 evaluate hazards and risks within the workplace [CT, IE, SM]</p>		
<p>P11 recommend measures to control hazards and risks in an animal care unit. [CT, IE, RL, SM]</p>		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers CT – creative thinkers	RL – reflective learners TW – team workers	SM – self-managers EP – effective participators
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Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Delivery of this unit will involve practical and written assessments, visits to suitable collections and will link to work experience placements.

Learners should be given opportunities to practise using animal handling and monitoring techniques with a variety of species from the following categories: exotic, small mammal, large mammal, rodent and bird. Emphasis should be on practical assessments where possible, with adequate time for learners to prepare for them.

All learners should have access to the animals, with the emphasis on health and safety and animal welfare at all times. This will involve careful planning to ensure that animals are not stressed or overused.

Learners should be encouraged to carry out independent research, to allow for guided development of research and independent thinking skills.

Tutors should also be encouraged to formulate links with external animal care organisations to provide a 'real' view of animal handling, moving, restraining and grooming skills. This could be via both visits to animal establishments and guest lectures from animal care professionals such as representatives, from animal health/management companies, nutritional experts, vets, vet nurses and groomers.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan gives **an indication of the volume of learning it would take the average learner** to achieve the learning outcomes. It is **indicative and is one way of achieving the credit value**.

Learning time should address all learning (including assessment) relevant to the learning outcomes, regardless of where, when and how the learning has taken place.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to the unit, animal care facilities.
Assignment 1: Handling and Restraining Animals (P1, P2, P3, M1, D1)
Practical activity: handling and restraining animals using a variety of equipment, for a variety of reasons.
Theory: handling and restraining animals and reasons for this.
Assignment 2: Moving Animals (P4, P5, P6, M2, D2)
Theory: moving animals – related legislation, and reasons for moving animals.
Practical activity: moving animals around and getting them ready for transport, checking them during and transport.
Theory: reasons for grooming animals, identifying types of equipment and how to use them.
Assignment 3: Grooming Animals (P7, P8, M3, D3)
Practical activity: bathing and grooming a variety of animals.
Theory: working safely with animals, risks and hazards and the differences.
Assignment 4: Safe Working (P9, P10, P11, M4)
Practical activity: risk assessments.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment

Theory: visits to animal care establishments to and compare and evaluate them and carry out risk assessments.

Unit review.

Assessment

For P1, P2 and P3, learners are required to plan and carry out the handling and restraint of animals and assess the range of equipment used for handling and restraint safely. Learners must cover handling and restraint in health check, veterinary attention and sexing contexts. Learners must cover a minimum of three different animal species. Learners could produce a handling guide detailing how to handle and restrain a named animal and the equipment used. They could then be assessed carrying out handling for a variety of reasons.

For M1, learners are required to discuss the safe use of handling and restraint equipment, and suggest alternatives where appropriate for a minimum of three different animal species. This could be assessed during practical handling sessions.

For D1, learners could produce an assignment or essay evaluating the equipment that can be used to handle and restrain animals which must include aggressive, injured, nervous and young animal situations. The use of diagrams and photographs should be encouraged.

For P4, P5, P6, learners need to plan and carry out the movement of animals, for the purpose of moving them from one enclosure to another and for the purpose of transporting them. Learners need to assess related equipment, and ensure animals are moved in line with welfare codes and legislation. Evidence could be in the form of a step-by-step guide to moving animals, the equipment used and relevant legislation. There would also need to be a practical element to the assessment, with learners being observed moving animals safely and in line with the legislation they have described in their plan/guide.

For M2, learners are required to summarise how the movement of animals for different purposes complies with different legislation and welfare codes of practice. This could be in the form of an essay.

For D2, learners must justify equipment used, and make valid suggestions for alternative ways to move animals and alternative equipment. This could be a short-answer test or written essay.

For P7 and P8, learners are required to health check and groom animals safely. This should be assessed practically, with learners being observed health checking and grooming a minimum of two different animal species. This should be carried out in a facility with adequate grooming equipment and space, with animal welfare being paramount at all times.

For M3, learners are required to describe reasons for grooming animals and summarise techniques for safe bathing and grooming. Evidence would be best presented as a written essay.

For D3, learners are required to evaluate grooming techniques used and make justified suggestions for improvement. This could be via the learner being observed giving feedback to another person, with the assessor intervening to ask questions.

For P9, P10 and P11 the emphasis is on safe working practices, with learners required to examine health and safety responsibilities of both employers and employees under current legislation. They also need to evaluate hazards and risks, and recommend measures to control these hazards and risks. This should be in the form of a health and safety poster for employers to display in their workplace or staff room.

For M4, learners should summarise how the health and safety policies of a given animal workplace are implemented when working with animals. This could be assessed through a written essay to summarise the policies.

Programme of suggested assignments

The following table shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, P3, M1, D1	Handling and Restraining Animals	You work for an animal collection. You are required to plan for and handle a range of animals safely and confidently and then complete an accompanying assignment on handling animals in a range of situations.	Practical. Assignment.
P4, P5, P6, M2, D2	Moving Animals	You need to produce and follow a plan for moving animals. You should evaluate your plan and make suggestions for alternatives.	Practical. Assignment.
P7, P8, M3, D3	Grooming Animals	You must health check, bath and groom animals and then evaluate someone else's grooming suggesting appropriate improvements.	Practical. Assignment. Observation.
P9, P10, P11, M4	Safe Working	You are required to evaluate risks and hazards in one area of the animal collection and investigate health and safety policies present, including the key health and safety responsibilities of employer and employee. You must recommend measures to prevent hazards and risks.	Posters. Health and safety report.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC land-based sector suite. This unit has particular links with:

Level 2	Level 3
Introduction to Animal and Plant Husbandry	Understand and Promote Animal Health
Introduction to Caring for Horses	Understand the Principles of Animal Nutrition
Maintain Animal Health and Welfare	Understand and Carry Out Farm Livestock Husbandry
	Undertake Kennel and Cattery Management
	Undertake Dog Grooming

Essential resources

Learners will need regular access to an animal care unit, although care should be taken not to stress animals or compromise their welfare.

Access to a variety of species and handling and restraining equipment is essential, and learners should have access to a range of up-to-date grooming equipment. The use of pro forma is essential when it comes to carrying out risk assessments at the centre, so these should be pre-prepared by the tutor.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Learners can be introduced to a range of professionals from different companies and organisations such as vets, RSPCA officers, welfare company representatives or breeders to broaden their knowledge and make the learning experience interesting and contextualised. This could be either guest lectures or off-site visits to different establishments. All sites should be checked for health and safety before any visits.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Alderton D – *You and Your Pet Bird* (Dorling Kindersley, 1995) ISBN 9780751301571

Brown M and Richardson V – *Rabbitlopaedia, First Edition* (Ringpress Books, 2000) ISBN 9781860541827

Dallas S – *Animal Biology and Care, Second Edition* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2006) ISBN 9781405137959

Evans J M and White K – *Catlopaedia* (Ringpress Books, 2006) ISBN 9781860540189

Evans J M and White K – *Doglopaedia* (Ringpress Books, 2002) ISBN 9781860540745

Girling S – *Veterinary Nursing of Exotic Pets* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2003) ISBN 9781405107471

Manning D – *Collins Exotic Pet Handbook* (Collins, 2003) ISBN 9780007142583

Meredith A and Johnson-Delaney C (editors) – *BSAVA Manual of Exotic Pets* (British Small Animal Veterinary Association, 2010) ISBN 9781905319169

Poole T – *UFAW Handbook on the Care and Management of Laboratory Animals: Terrestrial Vertebrates, 7th Edition* (Blackwell Science, 1999) ISBN 9780632051311

Raiti P and Girling S (editors) – *BSAVA Manual of Reptiles* (British Small Animal Veterinary Association, 2004) ISBN 9780905214757

Warren D – *Small Animal Care and Management, Second Edition* (Thompson Learning, 2000) ISBN 9780766814240

Websites

www.defra.gov.uk	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
www.pdsa.co.uk	PDSA
www.rspca.org.uk	The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
www.ufaw.org.uk	Universities Federation for Animal Welfare
www.waltham.com	Waltham

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

The following table identifies the PLTS opportunities that have been included within the assessment criteria of this unit:

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	planning for handling and moving, assessing ranges of equipment, moving animals, examining responsibilities related to health and safety, evaluating risks and hazards and recommending measures to control risks and hazards
Creative thinkers	planning for moving and handling animals, assessing the range of equipment used for handling and moving animals, examining roles of personnel when it comes to health and safety legislation
Reflective learners	planning for handling and moving animals, assessing equipment used for handling and moving animals, examining roles of personnel when it comes to health and safety legislation
Team workers	carrying out grooming and bathing animals, moving animals, planning the movement of animals, handling and restraining animals
Self-managers	planning for handling and moving animals, handling and restraining animals, bathing and grooming animals, evaluating hazards and risks within the workplace
Effective participators	carrying out bathing, grooming and health checks, moving animals, assessing equipment needed to move, handle and restrain animals.

Although PLTS opportunities are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	planning and carrying out research activities related to the unit and animal handling and restraint analysing information on animal health, grooming and related equipment and signs of illness
Creative thinkers	asking questions to extend their thinking during lectures and practical sessions trying out alternatives or new solutions to animal handling and safe working practices adapting ideas as circumstances change, eg changes to animal welfare legislation, risk assessments
Reflective learners	identifying opportunities for animal healthcare changes and their own achievements setting goals for themselves to achieve, eg conquering a fear of handling an animal reviewing progress in practical tasks and coursework
Team workers	working with others to carry out health checks, movement, handling and grooming on a range of animals reaching clear agreements regarding who is carrying out which task working together in an emergency situation

Skill	When learners are ...
Self-managers	<p>showing initiative and commitment with animals and their general care, movement and handling</p> <p>dealing with pressures in an emergency first aid situation</p> <p>managing emotions when it comes to animal welfare and healthcare</p>
Effective participators	<p>discussing issues of concern when health checking an animal or finding an animal in a less than ideal welfare situation</p> <p>identifying improvements to current animal welfare regimes and workplace's health and safety policies</p> <p>influencing others in their animal healthcare regimes and standards, grooming techniques and handling and restraining equipment.</p>

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	using Smartboards and PCs in class, using interactive materials for teaching and learning, researching subjects on the internet
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	
Troubleshoot	
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	using Smartboards and PCs in class, using interactive materials for teaching and learning, researching subjects on the internet
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	suggesting weights of food or animals to suit their needs, working out appropriate dosage of supplements per size of animal, and gathering and analysing weights of animals for health care evaluations
Identify the situation or problem and the mathematical methods needed to tackle it	
Select and apply a range of skills to find solutions	
Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage	
Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar routine contexts and situations	
Draw conclusions and provide mathematical justifications	

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	presenting information to the class
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching information for assignment work
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing assignments.