

Unit 6: Manage Animal Accommodation

Unit code: H/600/9366
QCF Level 3: BTEC National
Credit value: 5
Guided learning hours: 30

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to provide learners with an understanding of the principles of animal accommodation 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 further education and training.

The learner will be able to plan and select suitable accommodation for animals. They will be able to prepare animal housing and maintain it in a suitable condition. The learner will evaluate animal accommodation, report the findings and make recommendations.

● Unit introduction

Planning for and maintaining an animal's accommodation is a vital part of their general care. This can be at a physical level in terms of the aesthetics of the accommodation, or the theory behind what should make up the accommodation and why, including compliance with relevant animal welfare legislation.

In this unit learners will develop the practical skills of preparing and maintaining animal accommodation, and the theoretical knowledge to enable them to advise others and make a difference when it comes to planning animal accommodation.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know how to plan the accommodation of animals
- 2 Be able to prepare and maintain accommodation for animals
- 3 Be able to monitor and evaluate accommodation for animals.

Unit content

1 Know how to plan the accommodation of animals

Planning accommodation: size; location; complying with legislation and the five animal needs; access to water; electricity; cleaning equipment; siting eg away from natural predators; pest control; materials used; health and safety; security; fixtures and fittings; temperature; environmental impact; sustainability of plans

Accommodation types: vivarium; kennel; hutch; stable; barn; terrarium; cage; aquarium; isolation; quarantine; arcs; coops; aviaries

2 Be able to prepare and maintain accommodation for animals

Prepare accommodation: addition of necessary fixtures and fittings; types of substrate; bedding; temperature; introducing new animals; enrichment

Maintain accommodation: cleaning; equipment used to clean; hazard spotting; repair and maintenance; reporting problems; frequency of maintenance; health and safety

3 Be able to monitor and evaluate accommodation for animals

Monitor accommodation: checking for hazards and risks; check health and wellbeing of animals; reporting problems; enrichment opportunities; meeting health and safety requirements

Evaluate accommodation: cost of accommodation; suitability for animals; suitability for location; suitability for owner/carer; reporting problems; recommendations for changes or improvements

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:
<p>P1 identify animal requirements in accordance with animal welfare requirements and the five animal needs [CT, SM, IE, RL]</p>	<p>M1 explain in detail how animal welfare and five needs are met in animal accommodation planning undertaken</p>	<p>D1 evaluate animal accommodation plans for sustainability, legislative compliance and environmental impact, making justified suggestions for improvement</p>
<p>P2 prepare plans for animal accommodation [CT, IE, EP, RL]</p>		
<p>P3 describe the environmental factors to consider, and animal requirements, when planning accommodation for animals [CT, SM, IE, RL]</p>		
<p>P4 prepare suitable accommodation for animals [TW, EP]</p>	<p>M2 summarise the need for animal enrichment within their accommodation making some suggestions for improvement.</p>	<p>D2 evaluate in depth the use of enrichment and the suitability of accommodation in a current animal collection, making justified suggestions for improvement.</p>
<p>P5 maintain suitable accommodation for animals. [TW, EP, RL]</p>		
<p>P6 carry out monitoring appropriate to the accommodation and animals [IE, RL, SM]</p>		
<p>P7 evaluate the suitability of accommodation for animals including construction materials, fixtures, fittings and bedding [IE, RL, SM]</p>		
<p>P8 report findings from monitoring and make recommendations. [CT, IE, EP, 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	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

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.

In order to successfully complete this unit, learners should have opportunities to plan, maintain and monitor animal accommodation for 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 learners given adequate time to prepare for them.

All learners should have access to the animals, with the emphasis being on health and safety and animal welfare at all times. Careful planning is needed 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 formulate links with external animal care organisations to give learners a 'real' view of animal accommodation. This could be via visits to animal establishments and guest lectures from animal care professionals such as representatives from animal housing companies, animal experts, zoo keepers, vets and veterinary nurses.

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 unit, animal care facilities and Assignment 1: Planning Accommodation (P1, P2, P3, M1, D1).
Practical activity: accommodation maintenance and planning and evaluating existing accommodation.
Theory: accommodation design and legislation, sustainability of animal accommodation.
Practical activity: making animal accommodation sustainable.
Theory: monitoring, recording and evaluation of accommodation for suitability.
Practical activity: enrichment – creating, designing and providing accommodation for animals.
Theory: enrichment and its effect on animals' physical and mental wellbeing.
Assignment 2: Preparing, Monitoring and Maintaining Accommodation (P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, M2, D2)
Practical activity: monitoring and recording animal accommodation.
Unit review.

Assessment

For P1, learners need to identify animal requirements in accordance with animal welfare legislation for a minimum of three different animal species. This could be assessed through a whole assignment covering P1, P2 and P3, where learners draw up plans for a given animal's accommodation in poster form (P2), and highlight how each element of their design meets animal welfare legislation such as the five animal needs and takes account of environmental factors (P3). This could be extended for M1, showing a deeper understanding of planning accommodation for different species, taking into account the suitability of the designs for animal requirements and with a detailed summary of the five animal needs.

Along similar lines, for D1, learners could evaluate existing animal accommodation designs, for example in a zoo or an animal collection such as a centre's own animal care facility. Learners' evaluation must cover compliance with relevant legislative requirements, long-term sustainability and environmental impact factors and make suggestions for improvement. For the distinction grade, suggestions must be justified.

For P4, learners need to prepare suitable accommodation for a minimum of two different animal species and, for P5, maintain this accommodation. For P6, they need to carry out monitoring appropriate to the accommodation and the animals within it. P7 requires learners to evaluate the suitability of the accommodation and, for P8, they need to report the findings from their monitoring and make recommendations.

These could all be combined into one assignment or practical assessment where learners look after a particular section or group of animals in the centre's animal care facility, and cover the preparation, maintenance, monitoring, recording and evaluation of the suitability of the accommodation. Evidence could be presented as an annotated storyboard made up of photographs of learners working. It could also be supported by work placement reports if learners are carrying out these activities there.

For M2, learners need to summarise the needs of animals in more detail, focusing on enrichment. Learners could produce a written assignment or poster that summarises the need for enrichment for a minimum of three different animal species and then makes suggestions for enrichment for the named animals.

To achieve D2, learners should evaluate in depth the use of enrichment programmes for animals and the suitability of accommodation in a current animal collection. Learners need to make justified suggestions for improvement. Ideally, assignments would be set before a visit to an animal collection such as a zoo or wildlife park, and learners could use the visit to gather research information on accommodation types and enrichment.

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	Planning Accommodation	You work for an animal collection. You have been asked to design new accommodation plans for one mammal, one exotic and one bird species kept at the collection. You must evaluate the plans for sustainability, legislative compliance and environmental impact recommending improvements where relevant and explain how the animals' welfare needs will be met including the five animal needs. You need to produce detailed designs and discuss them.	Posters for the accommodation designs. Assignment.
P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, M2, D2	Preparing, Monitoring and Maintaining Accommodation	You have been given a section of animals to look after for a period of time. You need to monitor, maintain and prepare their accommodation and create a photo storyboard and description of what you have carried out. You must evaluate the need and use of enrichment and suitability of the accommodation, making suggestions for improvement.	Photo storyboard. Assignment with diagrams and labels. Observation records. Witness statements if learners have carried this out on a work experience placement.

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
Maintain Animal Accommodation	Element CU39.1 Plan the accommodation of animals Element CU39.2 Monitor and evaluate the accommodation of animals
Understand the Principles and Practices of Animal Establishments	Understand and Promote Animal Health
	Understand the Principles of Animal Nutrition
	Understand and Interpret Animal Behaviour and Communication

Essential resources

For this essentially practical unit, learners must have adequate and regular access to a variety of animals, their accommodation and the associated maintenance equipment. This requires careful planning so that animals are not overused and their health and wellbeing is not compromised. Learners need access to a variety of species, ideally a mixture of the following: exotics, birds, large and small mammals, and fish.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

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

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

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

Brown M and Richardson V – *Rabbitlopaedia* (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, 1998) 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 9781905319369

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, 2nd 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	identifying animal requirements preparing plans describing environmental factors affecting accommodation design
Creative thinkers	identifying animal requirements preparing plans for accommodation
Reflective learners	identifying animal requirements preparing plans for accommodation describing environmental factors
Team workers	preparing suitable accommodation for animals maintaining accommodation
Self-managers	identifying animal requirements describing environmental factors
Effective participators	preparing plans for accommodation preparing suitable accommodation for 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 evaluating and carrying out extended thinking
Creative thinkers	asking questions to extend their thinking during lectures and practical sessions trying out alternatives or new solutions to animal accommodation design and enrichment adapting ideas as circumstances change, eg changes to animal welfare legislation
Reflective learners	identifying opportunities for animal accommodation changes and their own achievements setting goals for themselves, eg conquering a fear of handling an animal reviewing progress in practical tasks and coursework
Team workers	working with others to carry out planning and monitoring of animal accommodation and group activities in class reaching clear agreements regarding who is carrying out which task during practicals working together when maintaining animal accommodation

Skill	When learners are ...
Self-managers	<p>showing initiative and commitment with animals and their healthcare</p> <p>dealing with pressures in an emergency animal situation such as an escape or attack</p> <p>managing emotions when it comes to animal welfare and healthcare</p>
Effective participators	<p>discussing issues of concern when checking an animal's accommodation or finding an animal in a less than ideal welfare situation</p> <p>identifying improvements to current animal welfare regimes including their accommodation needs</p> <p>influencing others in their animal accommodation maintenance regimes and standards.</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 facilities in centres, completing coursework, 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	
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	

Skill	When learners are ...
Mathematics	
Understand routine and non-routine problems in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts and situations	suggesting weights of animals and medication to suit their needs, working out appropriate dosage of supplements per size of animal, and gathering and analysing weights of animals for healthcare 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	
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	making presentations.
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	