

Title	Monitor health, provide husbandry for, handle, and transport rodents		
Level	3	Credits	3

Purpose	People credited with this unit standard are able to: identify the characteristics of rodents; describe handling procedures, and handle and transport rodents; care for healthy rodents; describe health, variations to normal health and behaviour, and clinical signs requiring isolation of rodents; describe biological data and ideal condition of rodents, and carry out routine health procedures for rodents; describe infectious diseases and parasites of rodents, and their prevention and control programmes; and ideal rodent domestic housing.
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Classification	Animal Care and Handling > Animal Care
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Available grade	Achieved
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Guidance Information

1 Legislation, standards, and codes relevant to this unit standard include but are not limited to:

- Animal Welfare Act 1999;
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015;
- Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996;
- Resource Management Act 1991;
- New Zealand Standard NZS 4304:2002 *Management of Healthcare Waste*, available at <https://www.standards.govt.nz/shop/nzs-43042002/>;
- Relevant New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) standards, available at <https://www.nzva.org.nz/>;
- Relevant National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) Codes of Welfare, available at www.mpi.govt.nz, under Animal Welfare;
- Relevant National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) guidelines at www.mpi.govt.nz under Animal Welfare; and any subsequent amendments.

2 Definitions

An *animal facility* refers to a facility such as an animal boarding facility, a veterinary clinic, a pet shop, or an animal welfare facility.

Rodents refer to guinea pig, rat, mouse.

Workplace procedures refer to the documented procedures for animal care, handling, transport, and ethical behaviour codes required by the employer and must be consistent with equipment manufacturer's recommendations.

- 3 For the purposes of assessment:
- a live rodent is not required to be used for assessment of practical handling and transport. Assessment may be carried out using a model in a simulated situation.
 - evidence must be presented in accordance with workplace procedures.
 - the learner is expected to be involved in the care of rodents in an animal facility or other commercial setting over at least three days. The days are not required to be consecutive.

Outcomes and performance criteria

Outcome 1

Identify the characteristics of rodents.

Performance criteria

1.1 Identify guinea pigs in terms of their breed characteristics.

Range evidence of at least one guinea pig for each of three breeds is required.

1.2 Identify rats and mice in terms of their coat markings.

Range evidence of at least two rats and two mice is required.

1.3 Identify rodents in terms of their sex.

Range guinea pig, rodent, and rat or mouse.

Outcome 2

Describe handling procedures, and handle and transport rodents.

Range guinea pig, and rat or mouse.

Performance criteria

2.1 Handle rodents safely for routine activities in a secure environment.

Range catch, carry out of cage, cage.

2.2 Restrain rodents safely for clinical examination.

Range clinical examinations may include but are not limited to – temperature, heart rate, eye examination, ear examination; evidence for at least three is required.

2.3 Describe procedures for handling fractious, pregnant, injured, aged, and unwell rodents and rodents.

2.4 Transport rodents safely within the animal facility.

Outcome 3

Care for healthy rodents.

Range guinea pig, rat or mouse.

Performance criteria

- 3.1 Feed and water a rodent.
- 3.2 Maintain feeding equipment for a rodent.
- 3.3 Groom a rodent.
- 3.4 Maintain grooming equipment.
- 3.5 Maintain housing for a rodent.

Outcome 4

Describe health, variations to normal health and behaviour, and clinical signs requiring isolation of rodents.

Range clinical signs include but are not limited to – movement, physical appearance, general demeanour, appetite, thirst, toileting; guinea pig, rat or mouse.

Performance criteria

- 4.1 Describe clinical signs of normal health and associated behaviour.
- 4.2 Describe clinical signs of variations to normal health and associated behaviour.
- 4.3 Describe clinical signs requiring isolation of rodents.

Range evidence of at least two clinical signs is required.

Outcome 5

Describe biological data and ideal condition of rodents, and carry out routine health procedures for rodents.

Performance criteria

- 5.1 Describe normal biological data for rodents.

Range guinea pig, rat or mouse;
data includes but is not limited to – frequency of oestrus, ideal breeding age, gestation, litter size, longevity.

5.2 Describe the ideal condition of a rodent in terms of their physical appearance.

Range one of – guinea pig, rat, mouse;
physical appearance of – body condition, skin, coat, eyes, ears,
mouth.

5.3 Carry out routine health procedures for rodents.

Range examine teeth, clip claws, administer oral medication, apply topical
medication.

Outcome 6

Describe infectious diseases and parasites of rodents, and their prevention and control programmes.

Range one of – guinea pig, rat or mouse.

Performance criteria

6.1 Describe infectious diseases of rodents in terms of their clinical signs, methods of transmission, prevention, and control programmes.

Range evidence of at least two diseases for each species is required.

6.2 Describe external parasites of rodents in terms of their clinical signs, methods of transmission, prevention, and control programmes.

Range external parasites – fleas, mites.

Outcome 7

Describe ideal rodent domestic housing.

Range guinea pig, rat or mouse.

Performance criteria

7.1 Describe features of ideal rodent domestic housing.

Range features include but are not limited to – materials, size, siting,
safety features, security, environmental enrichment, internal
features, bedding, waste disposal, isolation facility.

Replacement information	
	This unit standard and unit standard 32805 replaced unit standard 5149.

Planned review date	31 December 2026
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Status information and last date for assessment for superseded versions

Process	Version	Date	Last Date for Assessment
Registration	1	26 August 2021	N/A

Consent and Moderation Requirements (CMR) reference	0228
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This CMR can be accessed at <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/search/index.do>.

Comments on this unit standard

Please contact the Primary ITO standards@primaryito.ac.nz if you wish to suggest changes to the content of this unit standard.