

Title	Monitor health and provide husbandry for rabbits and rodents		
Level	3	Credits	6

Purpose	<p>This unit standard is intended for people working in an animal care context.</p> <p>People credited with this unit standard are able to: identify the characteristics of rabbits and rodents; handle rabbits and rodents; care for healthy rabbits and rodents; describe health, ill health, and clinical signs requiring isolation of rabbits and rodents; carry out routine health procedures for rabbits and rodents; describe infectious diseases and parasites of rabbits and rodents, and their prevention and control programmes; and ideal rabbit and rodent housing.</p>
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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 All evidence presented in this unit standard must be in accordance with:
 - Equipment manufacturer's recommendations;
 - Workplace procedures;
 - New Zealand Standard NZS 4304:2002 *Management of Healthcare Waste*;
 - Relevant New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) standards;
 - 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;
 - Animal Welfare Act 1999;
 - Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996;
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 2015;
 - Resource Management Act 1991;
 - and any subsequent amendments.

- 2 **Definition**
Workplace procedures refer to the documented procedures for animal care, handling, and ethical behaviour codes required by the employer.

- 3 **Assessment**
 A live animal must be used for assessment of practical handling.
 For the purposes of assessment *rodents* refer to guinea pig, rat or mouse.

Outcomes and performance criteria

Outcome 1

Identify the characteristics of rabbits and rodents.

Performance criteria

- 1.1 Identify rabbits in terms of their breed characteristics.
Range at least one rabbit for each of four breeds.
- 1.2 Identify guinea pigs in terms of their breed characteristics.
Range at least one guinea pig for each of three breeds.
- 1.3 Identify rats and mice in terms of their coat markings.
Range at least two rats and two mice.
- 1.4 Identify rabbits and rodents in terms of their sex.
Range guinea pig, rabbit, and rat or mouse.

Outcome 2

Handle rabbits and rodents.

Performance criteria

- 2.1 Handle rabbits and rodents safely for routine activities in a secure environment.
Range catch, carry out of cage, cage.
- 2.2 Restrain rabbits and rodents safely for clinical examination.
Range clinical examinations may include but are not limited to – temperature, heart rate, eye examination, ear examination; evidence is required for at least three.
- 2.3 Describe procedures for handling fractious, pregnant, injured, aged, and unwell rabbits and rodents.

Outcome 3

Care for healthy rabbits and rodents.

Performance criteria

- 3.1 Feed and water a rabbit, guinea pig, and rat or mouse.
- 3.2 Maintain feeding equipment for a rabbit, guinea pig, and rat or mouse

- 3.3 Groom rabbits and guinea pigs.
- 3.4 Maintain grooming equipment.
- 3.5 Maintain animal housing for a rabbit, guinea pig, and rat or mouse.

Outcome 4

Describe health, ill health, and clinical signs requiring isolation of rabbits and rodents.

Range clinical signs include but are not limited to – movement, physical appearance, general demeanour, appetite, thirst, toileting.

Performance criteria

- 4.1 Describe clinical signs of normal health and associated behaviour.
- 4.2 Describe clinical signs of abnormal health and associated behaviour.
- 4.3 Describe clinical signs requiring isolation of animals.

Range evidence is required for at least two clinical signs.

Outcome 5

Carry out routine health procedures for rabbits and rodents.

Performance criteria

- 5.1 Describe normal biological data.

Range rabbits, guinea pigs, and mice or rats;
data includes but is not limited to – frequency of oestrus, ideal breeding age, gestation, litter size, longevity.

- 5.2 Describe the ideal condition of animals in terms of their physical appearance.

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

- 5.3 Carry out routine health procedures for one animal.

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

Outcome 6

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

Performance criteria

6.1 Describe infectious diseases in terms of their clinical signs, methods of transmission, prevention, and control programmes for a rabbit, guinea pig, rat or mouse.

Range may include but are not limited to – coccidiosis, myxamatosis, pasturella, ringworm, viral haemorrhagic disease; evidence is required for at least two diseases for each species.

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

Range external parasites – fleas, mites; guinea pig, rabbit, rat or mouse.

Outcome 7

Describe ideal rabbit and rodent housing.

Range rabbit, guinea pig, rat or mouse.

Performance criteria

7.1 Describe features of ideal 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.

Planned review date	31 December 2023
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Status information and last date for assessment for superseded versions

Process	Version	Date	Last Date for Assessment
Registration	1	8 August 1996	31 December 2019
Revision	2	16 December 1996	31 December 2019
Revision	3	16 November 1998	31 December 2019
Review	4	12 June 2000	31 December 2019
Revision	5	16 October 2002	31 December 2019
Review	6	26 July 2005	31 December 2019
Revision	7	25 June 2007	31 December 2019
Review	8	1 November 2018	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.