## ACMGEN3X03 Maintain cleaning, hygiene and sterility standards in animal care workplaces

#### Unit outcomes

This unit describes the knowledge and skills required to maintain cleaning, hygiene and sterility standards in animal care workplaces. It includes applying infection prevention and biosecurity principles within the workplace and using cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising processes correctly and safely.

Graduates completing this unit will be able to appropriately maintain general and specific purpose work areas, equipment and instruments by selecting and applying appropriate cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising processes, handling and applying chemicals safely, and using low stress handling and restraint techniques when moving animals.

They will understand the reasons for specific hygiene and sterility procedures and their importance in preventing contamination, reducing disease transmission and maintaining human and animal health and welfare.

This unit supports roles in veterinary nursing and general animal care including in a broad range of animal care workplaces such as shelters, and veterinary practices.

**Licensing, legislative, regulatory requirements**

No licensing, legislative or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.

#### Knowledge

* **principles of cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising for infection prevention and control**
* **basic biological, chemical, physical or procedural contamination risks** and potential consequences in an animal care workplace
* **purposes and sequences of cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising** including requirements for different workplace areas and appropriate application of general cleaning, disinfecting or sterilising processes, including for minimising cross-contamination
* potential effects on animals of incorrect use or use of non-animal friendly cleaning and disinfecting products and equipment
* procedures for preparing, operating and monitoring sterilisation equipment
* purposes, dilutions, contact/dwell times, storage, and safe handling requirements of cleaning agents, disinfectants and sterilants
* hygiene policies, protocols and schedules, including workflow sequencing, zoning and movement patterns and cleaning and sterilisation documentation and traceability
* waste management and handling of hazardous or biological materials, including sharps, contaminated waste, biohazard materials and chemical waste
* low stress animal handling and restraint techniques

#### Skills

* perform routine and specific purpose cleaning, hygiene and sterilisation tasks for facilities and equipment in accordance with workplace procedures and infection-control principles
* use cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising agents correctly, including measuring, diluting, applying, storing and disposing of chemicals safely
* prepare and pack instruments and equipment for sterilisation and correctly operate sterilisation equipment
* clean and maintain animal housing, bedding, cages and holding areas in line with species needs and animal welfare considerations
* follow WHS and environmental requirements, including using safe manual handling techniques when moving equipment, chemicals, animals, cages and materials, accessing and interpreting safety data sheet (SDS) information, using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and disposing of waste.

#### Application of knowledge & skills

This unit applies to work carried out by individuals in animal care workplaces who support infection-control systems through routine cleaning, hygiene and sterilisation duties. Individuals apply broad factual and technical knowledge of infection-control principles, cleaning methods, decontamination processes and sterilisation requirements to maintain clean, safe and hygienic environments for animals, staff and clients.

They use judgement to select appropriate cleaning or sterilisation methods for different areas, instruments or equipment, and they follow established workplace protocols to complete tasks accurately and in the correct sequence. Individuals identify contamination risks, breaches in hygiene or equipment irregularities and respond within the scope of their role by adjusting procedures, isolating items or seeking guidance from supervisors. They handle chemicals, contaminated materials and sterile items safely, adhere to WHS and animal-welfare requirements, and maintain accurate cleaning and sterilisation records.

Work is performed under general supervision, with accountability for following established protocols. Individuals exercise autonomy in managing routine or predictable cleaning and hygiene tasks, while issues requiring technical assessment, equipment servicing or clinical decisions are referred to appropriately qualified personnel.

#### Pre-requisite unit

Nil

#### Unit sector

General Animal Care (GEN)

#### Foundation skills

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| **Learning** | **Reading** | **Writing** | **Oral communication** | **Numeracy** |
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**Assessment Requirements**

**Performance evidence**

Individuals must apply the knowledge and skills specified in the unit of competency to:

* perform routine cleaning, including disinfecting and sterilising equipment or surfaces as necessary, in an animal care workplace on a minimum of three occasions
* perform specific purpose cleaning, disinfecting and sterilisation procedures on a minimum of two occasions, for at least one specific purpose area from the list below:

clinical examination or treatment room

surgical suite or theatre

isolation area

* maintain clean and hygienic animal housing for a minimum of three different animals, including handling and restraining animals appropriately.

**Knowledge evidence**

To demonstrate the application of the knowledge specified in this unit of competency, individuals must have knowledge of:

* **principles of cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising for infection prevention and control**
* **types, sources and potential consequences of contamination risks in an animal care workplace, including:**

**biological**

**chemical**

**physical**

* **differences between cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising and their application in animal care workplaces**
* **equipment, instruments, surfaces and materials** andtype of cleaning or decontamination required
* areas within animal care workplaces requiring specific cleaning, disinfecting and sterilising procedures and precautions, including:

clinical areas such as treatment and examination rooms, surgical suites, laboratories

isolation areas for contagious or infectious animals

animal housing

food or treatment preparation areas

high-touch areas such as waiting areas

staff areas

* cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation equipment, tools and materials including techniques for use, sequence of application and maintenance
* WHS and environmental legislative requirements and workplace procedures including:

cleaning and disinfecting of animals’ housing and equipment

disposal of waste including animal, biological and chemical

washing, drying and sterilising soiled linen and clothing

use, storage and maintenance of cleaning equipment and materials

use and storage of cleaning agents and chemical disinfectants

use of PPE

manual handling

* hazards associated with the use, misuse, spillage and disposal of chemicals
* purposes and applications of SDS
* procedures for sterilising equipment and instruments including use of:

steam (autoclave)

ethylene Oxide (EtO)

chemicals

* safe, low stress animal handling and restraint techniques

**Assessment conditions**

Skills must be demonstrated in an animal care workplace or an environment that accurately represents real workplace conditions.

Assessment must ensure access to:

* a range of cleaning equipment, tools and materials typically available in an animal care workplace
* cleaning agents, disinfectants and relevant SDS
* PPE
* **animal housing** typical of the animal care workplace, such as cages, crates, pens, kennels, stalls, hutches or enclosures used for different species
* workplace policies and procedures related to maintaining the cleanliness, hygiene and sterility of the workplace and safe handling and storage of chemicals
* range of real animals

Assessors of this unit must satisfy the requirements for assessors in applicable vocational education and training legislation, frameworks and/or standards.

#### Unit mapping information

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| **Code and title current version** | **Code and title previous version** | **Equivalence status** | **Comments** |
| ACMGEN3X03 Maintain cleaning, hygiene and sterility standards in animal care workplaces | ACMVET202 Carry out daily practice routines | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET203 Assist with surgery preparation  PCs and elements replaced by knowledge, skills and application as per ASK template.  Unit sector changed from Veterinary Nursing (VET) specific to General (GEN) for broader application to other animal care environments beyond veterinary practices.  E1, PC2.2 and PE and KE associated with routine and non-routine cleaning and disinfection routines and disposal of waste included in this unit  Indicative AQF level of unit increased from 2 to 3 to reflect increased emphasis on application of knowledge of role of cleaning and decontamination and associated skills for infection prevention and control. |
| ACMGEN3X03 Maintain cleaning, hygiene and sterility standards in animal care workplaces | ACMVET203 Assist with surgery preparation | Not equivalent | Unit merged with ACMVET202 Carry out daily practice routines  PCs and elements replaced by knowledge, skills and application as per ASK template.  Unit sector changed from Veterinary Nursing (VET) specific to General (GEN) for broader application to other animal care environments beyond veterinary practices.  PC2.1, E4 and PE and KE associated with cleaning and disinfecting operating areas and sterilising equipment and instruments included in this unit  Indicative AQF level of unit increased from 2 to 3 to reflect increased emphasis on application of knowledge of role of cleaning and decontamination and associated skills for infection prevention and control. |

### Overview information

#### Modification History

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| --- | --- |
| **Release** | **Comments** |
| 1 | This unit of competency was first released in ACM Animal Care and Management Training Package Release 7.0. |

**Mandatory workplace requirements:**

Assessment of performance evidence may be in a workplace setting or an environment that accurately represents a real workplace.