

320 Task C Guide

Training an Animal

What is this task about?

In this task, you will put your training programme into practice by training an animal to achieve a specific goal.

You will implement your training plan, record evidence of your sessions and review how successful the programme has been.

Remember: Your training programme **must be approved by your tutor before you begin training.**

The training goal **does not have to be fully achieved** to pass this task, but you must demonstrate safe, appropriate training methods and evaluate your progress.

What do I need to do?

There are **four stages** to this task.

Stage 1 - Prepare Your Training Programme

Before you start training, make sure your programme includes:

Animal details

- Name
- Species
- Breed
- Age
- Sex

Training goal

Choose one clear behaviour.

Examples:

- Sit
- Stay
- Recall
- Target training
- Loose lead walking
- Trick training

Learning theory

Explain which learning theory you will use.

Example: Positive reinforcement (Operant Conditioning)

Equipment

List everything you will need.

Examples:

- Clicker
- Treat pouch
- Harness
- Lead
- Long line
- Target stick
- Toys
- High-value treats

Rewards

What will motivate the animal?

Examples:

- Food
- Praise
- Toys
- Play
- Affection (if appropriate)

Training environment

Where will training take place?

For example:

- Quiet room
- Garden
- Secure field
- Training area

Session details

Include:

- Length of each session
- Number of sessions each week
- Rest periods
- Safety considerations

Stage 2 - Implement the Training Programme

Carry out your planned training sessions.

Remember to:

- ✓ Keep sessions short.
- ✓ Use consistent cues.
- ✓ Reward correct behaviour immediately.
- ✓ Be patient.
- ✓ Finish on a positive note.
- ✓ Always prioritise animal welfare.

Stage 3 - Record Your Evidence

You must provide evidence of your training.

Examples include:

- Photographs
- Video clips
- Observation records
- Training diary
- Session notes

For each session record:

- Date
- Behaviour practised
- What went well
- Any problems
- Progress made

Example Training Log

Session 1

Goal:

Teach "Sit".

Reward:

Chicken treats.

Outcome:

The dog sat with a food lure several times.

Next step:

Reduce the lure and encourage a verbal cue.

Stage 4 - Review Your Training Programme

Once training has finished, review how successful it was.

Ask yourself:

- Was the goal achieved?
- Did the animal make progress?
- Which methods worked best?
- Were the rewards motivating?
- Was the equipment suitable?

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- Were there any challenges?
- Would you change anything next time?

Remember:

Even if the goal wasn't fully achieved, you can still produce an excellent evaluation.

Evaluate the Results

Discuss:

What worked well?

Examples:

- The animal stayed motivated.
- Positive reinforcement was effective.
- Training sessions were consistent.

What could be improved?

Examples:

- Sessions could have been shorter.
- Higher-value rewards may have improved motivation.
- Fewer distractions would have helped.

Did the training programme work?

Explain:

- Why?
- Why not?
- What evidence supports your decision?

How to Achieve a Pass

You should:

- Produce a training programme.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of implementing the programme.
- Briefly review the success of the training.
- Briefly evaluate the programme using your results.

How to Achieve a Merit

To achieve Merit you should also:

- Produce a detailed training programme that requires only minor changes before approval.
- Demonstrate a good understanding of implementing the programme.
- Review the progress made towards achieving the training goal.
- Provide detailed explanations when evaluating the success of the programme.

How to Achieve a Distinction

To achieve Distinction you should also:

- Produce a detailed training programme that requires little or no modification before approval.
- Demonstrate excellent implementation throughout the training sessions.
- Fully review the progress of the training programme with reference to whether the specific goal was achieved.
- Evaluate every aspect of the programme in detail, including the methods, equipment, rewards, environment and overall effectiveness.

Top Tips

- Plan everything before your first training session.
- Keep training sessions short and enjoyable.
- Reward the behaviour you want immediately.
- Record every session, even if progress is slow.
- Include plenty of photographs or videos as evidence.
- Be honest when evaluating your programme. Discuss both successes and areas for improvement.
- Remember that animal welfare should always come before achieving the training goal.