

AUCKLAND ZOO

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# Veterinary Student Placements

## Frequently Asked Questions

(updated 2026)



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## Who can apply?

Placements are for students in their final year or that have graduated in the last 12 months.

## How and when can I apply?

Applications for the next year need to be sent between the 1st April and the 1st May of the current year. This means that you have to make sure your application is sent in the year before you are intending to come.

Fill in the application form and email it to:  
[volunteer.coordinator@aucklandzoo.co.nz](mailto:volunteer.coordinator@aucklandzoo.co.nz)

## What is the duration of the placement?

Placements are for a minimum of 3 weeks and a maximum of 4 weeks.

## What are our selection criteria based on?

A preference will be given to students that have shown a strong interest in zoo, wildlife and conservation medicine and that are keen to further their career in this field. Students from any university will be considered as long as the year of placement they apply for is in their final year or just after graduation.

## What can one expect to do during the placement?

The placement is meant as an introduction to zoo, wildlife and conservation medicine. No two placements will be the same as this depends on the clinical cases that come up during your time here.

As zoo medicine involves a lot of other aspects and clinical work only takes up a small part of our time, we encourage the students to work on their own project that has been decided upon at the beginning of the placement.

We also engage the students as much as possible in discussions and meetings, and encourage them to interact with nurses and keepers to get an understanding of the broad spectrum of tasks a zoo and wildlife veterinarian is involved in. Students will spend time with the vets, as well as with the nurses during procedures, and when taking care of in-patients.

Students will perform post mortem examinations and help with data entry. Time on animal sections can be organised to learn about husbandry and care of the different species. If you have a specific interest you can let us know and we will try to accommodate for this as much as possible.

## Is the placement competitive?

Yes, it is. We do receive a lot of applications but can only accept about 10 people a year.

## What happens when my application is successful?

You will be sent a confirmation email of your placement and placement dates before the end of May. You will also receive a letter with extra information.

## What happens when my application is unsuccessful?

You will be notified before the end of May.

## Does the zoo provide accommodation?

The zoo does not provide accommodation but there are a lot of hostels, bed and breakfasts, and hotels in Auckland. Most will be some distance from the zoo though and you will have to arrange your own private or public transport to come here.

## Does the zoo provide health insurance?

The zoo does not provide insurance, so make sure you are insured through your university or have your own insurance. ACC covers accidents in NZ.

Please check out their website <https://www.acc.co.nz/im-injured/what-we-cover/> to see what is covered and what is not.

## Do we write reference letters at the end of the placement?

We do not write generic reference letters but you can indicate the vets as referees when you are applying for other placements or jobs. Please discuss this with the vet before submitting any applications.

## Does the zoo provide any support with costs e.g. travel, accommodation etc.?

No. All expenses must be covered by the student.

## What are the working hours?

Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm with a half hour lunch break at 12.30pm.

You will need to bring your own lunch or you can buy food at one of the restaurants in the zoo.

## Do you need certain vaccinations?

We do not require any vaccinations but advice you to have your vaccinations such as tetanus and hepatitis up to date.