



### WWT Veterinary Surgeon

**Grade: 9**

**Directorate:** Operations

**Location:** Slimbridge

**Reporting to:** Head of Living Collections

**Main function of post:** To support the WWT Animal Health Team by providing advice and support to WWT centres regarding animal health management, conduct clinical veterinary work and ensure WWT's compliance with the Zoo Licensing Act 1981. In addition, to conduct post mortem examinations and provide pathological diagnostic investigations for WWT's seven animal collections. To create preventative medicine protocols for all seven animal collections and play a primary role in managing disease outbreaks by liaising with all stakeholders to influence and manage the situation.

**Supervisory responsibilities:** Volunteers, placement & research students.

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### Responsibilities of the post

1. In conjunction with the Animal Health Team, be responsible for the daily healthcare of all captive animals in WWT's seven living collections and the treatment of sick and injured animals (which may be under veterinary supervision). Undertaking the training and certification of staff to administer the appropriate controlled drugs in order to best manage their animals.
2. Undertake post mortem examinations for the living collections at seven of the WWT centres; submitting the appropriate samples for further laboratory analysis as necessary. Consulting with animal care staff over the causes of death and advising them of the appropriate courses of action, plus formal reporting to WWT centres and other staff.
3. Maintain comprehensive and accurate animal health records including management of WWT's post mortem database, ensure periodic reviews of health data to help direct preventative health management measures.

4. As part of the Animal Health Team, ensure that all prophylactic treatments of captive animals are carried out annually in all seven centres e.g. vaccination of susceptible species against duck virus enteritis (DVE) and anthelmintic treatment.
5. To provide veterinary advice and support to the Conservation Breeding Unit's breeding and translocation projects (Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Black-tailed Godwit, Curlew).
6. As part of the Animal Health Team, oversee the translocation of animals to other WWT centres or external collections by advising on the health management pre and post move.
7. As part of the Animal Health Team, assess plans and developments for new animal exhibits for their functionality and practicality, including advice on the veterinary support, knowledge and facilities required to support such projects.
8. Be responsible for the management of the veterinary laboratory including the safe legal disposal of clinical waste, animal by-products and used laboratory chemicals and equipment from the Slimbridge site.
9. Assist with the work of the conservation science department by supporting research and surveillance projects as and when required e.g. conducting post mortem examinations, taking clinical samples or radiographing wild birds during catch events. To also liaise with researchers, collaborating in research projects for the benefit of welfare/conservation/education, collecting required samples, publishing and presenting work/research at centres and within the wider community, including peer-reviewed articles
10. Facilitate Zoo Licence Inspections with the local authority and DEFRA to ensure we are compliant with the latest legislation. Develop new veterinary protocols and SOP's with the appropriate personal training for the animal care teams to maintain future licence compliance.
11. To comply with WWT's Safety Management processes and procedures at all times and contribute to WWT's positive safety management culture.
12. During notifiable disease outbreaks demonstrate best business practice in the role of WWT veterinary advisor by influencing government and local stakeholders including the chief veterinary officer in order to maintain business continuity. Responsibilities will also include:
  - Play a lead role in managing concerns about dead birds at all centres
  - Liaising with APHA vets during AI issues
  - Perform any sampling of birds required by APHA
  - Advise on biosecurity needs and changes in AI outbreaks
  - Guiding on epidemiological units and collating medical information for APHA
  - Liaising with and accompanying APHA vets with on-site inspections

In addition to the duties and responsibilities listed, the post holder is required to perform any other reasonable duties that may be assigned by the supervisor shown above, from time to time.

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**Date raised:** March 2016

**Amended:** Jan 2021

# Person Specification

## 1. Qualifications

### **Essential:**

- Veterinary Degree
- Membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
- Official Veterinarian for avian specific species
- A post graduate qualification in veterinary pathology, and/or a post graduate qualification in the health of zoo/wildlife/exotic animals.
- Current driving licence as the ability to travel to WWT sites is essential

## 2. Experience

### **Essential:**

- Demonstrable experience of work in a busy veterinary environment including work with exotic species and a good knowledge of disease conditions which may impact on the health of captive and wild populations
- Pathology and laboratory diagnostic skills
- Clinical experience with zoo, wild and/or exotic animals

### **Desirable**

- Knowledge of Balai, Zoo Licensing and current animal health and medication legislation
- Veterinary fieldwork experience in catching, ringing and tagging wild birds
- Interest, knowledge and experience in conservation issues and management technique

## 3. Managerial & Supervisory

### **Essential:**

- Ability to supervise the implementation of the preventative health care management programme for WWT's centres
- Manage post mortem health screening programs
- Supervise and facilitate the treatment of captive animals as necessary
- Ability to supervise the work of volunteers, placement & research students
- Communicate to the animal care teams via any relevant platform to ensure the correct medication is administered accordingly

Type of staff	Number managed	Number supervised
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Employed Staff	0	0-4
Volunteers / Casual Workers	0-4	0
Contractors/Stakeholders	0	2-4

## 4. Responsibility

### **Essential:**

- To ensure compliance with Zoo License legislation and provide twice yearly site veterinary audits. To include management of the paperwork for zoo licensing (and RVC compliance).
- To communicate clearly and concisely to the other members of WWT's animal health team to enable consistency of care and advice regarding animal treatments.
- To be able to work safely and manage the appropriate paperwork for zoo licence and RVC compliance.
- Have undertaken Radiation Protection Supervisor training to ensure safety of staff in and around the veterinary department, and when working with the x-ray machine
- Ability to attend and represent professional views clearly at internal WWT meetings including the animal welfare and ethics committee and the avian influenza taskforce group

### **Levels of Responsibility:**

Type of Responsibility	Level (£'s)
Expenditure (exc. payroll)	£9K
Cash Handling	N/A
Assets (required for job, exc. buildings, animal stock)	£100K in assets Over £2 million in animal stock
Visitors (per annum)	N/A

## 5. Creative Ability

### **Essential:**

- Ability to use animal health and welfare knowledge to make quick decisions in fast-paced, challenging situations where the health and welfare of animals or people may be at risk
- A creative thinker who researches, develops and implements innovative methods and ideas depending on the situation
- Ability to apply specialist animal health and welfare knowledge to challenging situations
- Ability to research in order to resolve animal health issues. Ability to understand the health and welfare implications of new developments and projects including the environmental needs of the proposed taxa

## 6. Contact

### ***Essential:***

- Ability to communicate veterinary diagnoses and treatment plans/or other requirements to the animal care staff and conservation teams
  - Ability to communicate with staff at all levels both internally and externally using verbal and written and digital mediums
  - Communicate with external agencies including government veterinary officers and scientific organisations regarding new legislation, animal health issues or zoo licensing compliance
  - Good networking skills at both national and international veterinary level
  - Represent the WWT at external or internal meetings as an ambassador for the WWT
  - Communicate the latest veterinary and husbandry techniques to WWT centre teams
  - Have the knowledge and ability to engage and influence government agencies during notifiable disease outbreaks in order to protect the businesses continuity.
  - Communicate with the media in a variety of situations
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## General Notes

This position will work mainly Monday to Friday but can include variable hours, bank holidays and weekends as part of the operational veterinary team. There is a requirement to be part of the 24 hour on call rota at weekends and bank holidays.