

# Animal Keeper Work Placement

**Highland Wildlife Park**

[**www.highlandwildlifepark.org.uk**](http://www.highlandwildlifepark.org.uk)



The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS), a charity founded in 1909, owns and manages Edinburgh Zoo and the Highland Wildlife Park. The Highland Wildlife Park is a premier conservation/education focused visitor attraction based at Kincraig between Kingussie & Aviemore and features cold weather adapted species from around the world as well as indigenous Scottish species, some now extinct in the wild.

The Highland Wildlife Park takes an active role in the education of work placement students. This post involves many of the aspects of animal husbandry that are performed on a daily basis by all of our resident animal keepers from cleaning and refurbishment of animal enclosures, animal feed preparation and feeding, to observation and record keeping. Some maintenance tasks may also be required such as fencing or path repairs, etc.

Work placement applicants are normally required to be students currently undergoing a course related to the department of the park that they wish to work in, although applications are also accepted from newly graduated students as well as highly qualified individuals (e.g. keepers from different zoos wishing to form an exchange).

Students are recommended to make their stay as long as possible since many have commented on the steep learning curve that is involved. It can take at least a week to settle in and to become used to the routine therefore a stay of 4 weeks or longer is required. Because of the popularity of this scheme, the maximum placement period is restricted to two months. Please note also that the minimum age at which we take students is age 20.

We can offer basic bothy accommodation on site - often sharing will be required. A non-refundable fee of £100, payable on arrival, is charged for wear & tear, damage, admin, electricity, etc. We provide kitchen facilities and a shower room but you must supply your own food. You must also bring your own sleeping bag, towels, etc.

We can arrange transport from our nearest railway station at Kingussie but you must advise us of your arrival time beforehand.

**HWP Animal Keeper Work Placement**

**Position Profile**

**Who we are**

The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS), a charity founded in 1909, owns and manages Edinburgh Zoo and Highland Wildlife Park. RZSS has an international reputation for its conservation and education programmes, and the Highland Wildlife Park is a zoological collection specializing in cold weather adapted animals from around the world and Scottish species, past and present.

**RZSS Mission statement**

“Connecting people with Nature. Safeguarding species from extinction.”

**Work Placement Description**

Assist with the husbandry of the various species by participating in many of the duties associated with the day to day care of the animal collection. You will gain some level of experience with all the species within the wildlife park and at the end of your stay you will have a deeper understanding of what is involved in caring for and managing wild animals, native and foreign, in a modern zoological collection.

**Supervision**

Overseen by the Head of Living Collections, you will receive direct supervision and guidance from the two section Head Keepers and their experienced Keeper staff, assisted by the Animal Department Administrator.

**Responsibilities**

**Key activity 1**

Learn to perform most aspects of a wide range of practical management tasks in the day to day operation of the Animal Department. This includes cleaning enclosures and food preparation areas, preparing feeds and working outside in all weathers.

**Key activity 2**

Be alert and report any and all observations to the relevant permanent members of staff within the Animal Department. Contribute to ensuring that animal welfare and management at Highland Wildlife Park is of the highest standard in line with the aims of the Society, relevant legislation and good practice in animal management.

**Key activity 3**

Learn to check on the safe condition of animal enclosures and ensure that all items requiring maintenance are reported, and be prepared to assist in carrying out some repairs as appropriate.

**Key activity 4**

Be considerate and respectful of other students, staff and our visitors. Keep your accommodation and the communal staff areas clean and tidy.

**Key activity 5**

Perform other duties as reasonably directed by the Head Keepers or other member of the Animal Management Team, and ask questions.

**General Guidance**

You will be expected to show a modicum of initiative and a sound work ethic. The international zoo and conservation community is quite small and well connected and you may require a reference from us in the future to help start your own career. We expect you to pay attention, learn, impress us and enjoy your time at the Park.



Please note this information will be held on file and treated confidentially. The information will only be shared among site managers. (Please print or type in the spaces provided).

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| --- | --- |
| **1. STUDENT DETAILS** | |
| Student Name: | |
| Date of birth: | |
| Address:  Post Code: | |
| Mobile Phone Number: |  |
| Personal email: |  |

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| **2. UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE DETAILS** | |
| Course title: | Course Level (HND, Degree, etc): |
| Start date of course: | Expected completion date of course: |
| Is a placement a mandatory element of your course? | |
| Institution Name & Address: | |
| Placement supervisor’s name & contact email address: | |

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| **3. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PLACEMENT FROM YOUR ACADEMIC INSTITUTION’S PERSPECTIVE, i.e. what do they expect you to achieve during your placement? (Daily diary, written essays, photographic evidence, etc)** | | | | | |
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| **4. ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS. Please give details of all your academic studies from High School onwards** | | | | | |
| Subject studied | Level of study (GCSE/Highers/Degree/HND) | Date begun | Date finished | Grade attained | Institution name |

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| **5. NON-ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS & TRAINING, e.g. First Aid, sheep shearing, etc.** | | | | | |
| Subject studied | Level of study (if any) | Date begun | Date finished | Grade attained (if any) | Institution name |
| **6. Do you have any experience with any of the species currently in the collection at the Highland Wildlife Park?** | | | | | |
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| **7. Please give details of any relevant experience which will support your application** |
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| Preferred start & end dates of placement (dd/mm/yy). Maximum 2 months | | Start: | End: | |
| Would you like to be provided with accommodation in our students’ bothy? | | | YES | NO |
| Due to the nature of the work placements, participants must have good mobility and a reasonable level of fitness. Due to practicality, personal wellbeing and Health & Safety it is unfortunately not possible to consider those with a disability, certain health issues, learning difficulty, or special needs. | | | | |
| Please briefly describe any health issues. |  | | | |
| 1. **Please make sure you have read & understood the job description on page 3. Note that you should treat this work placement as you would a real job – you must be professional & fit in with the team.** 2. **If English is *not* your first language, note that you must be able to fully understand verbal instructions & communicate/socialise with staff. If your spoken English is poor, think carefully before submitting your application.** 3. **If you wish to submit your application *electronically*, please email this form along with a colour head & shoulders photo size 45mmx35mm (the photo you would use to apply for a passport) as a separate attachment in jpg format & the names of your 2 referees (references should be from work {either paid or voluntary} or educational supervisors) to** [**jmorse@rzss.org.uk**](mailto:jmorse@rzss.org.uk)**. Note that if you have undertaken work experience at an animal facility, at least one of your references must be from the relevant facility. You must then ask your referees to email their references directly to the same email address, being sure to quote your full name in the email subject.** 4. **If you are submitting your application by post, please return this form with a colour head & shoulders photo, specification as in 3 above, and your references (references should be from work {either paid or voluntary} or educational supervisors). Note that if you have undertaken work experience at an animal facility, at least one of your references must be from the relevant facility. References should be word processed and placed in a sealed envelope with the referee’s signature over the seal. Post to:-**   **Private & Confidential, Animal Dept Administrator**  **Highland Wildlife Park**  **Kincraig, Kingussie**  **PH21 1NL**  **If you wish to talk about your placement or check availability, please feel free to phone (+44) (0)1540 651970 or email** [**jmorse@rzss.org.uk**](mailto:jmorse@rzss.org.uk)  **Please note that no applications will be accepted without receipt of references and ID photo IN THE CORRECT FORMAT. Note also that the first step in the selection process for anyone wishing to participate in our work placement programme is for you to demonstrate that you can follow simple instructions and complete the application process as required.** | | | | |

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| **I declare that all of the details I have provided on this form are, to the best of my knowledge, complete and accurate, I accept that my placement will be terminated if any details are found to be misleading** | |
| **Signed** | **Date** |
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| **Application checklist**  Application form filled out truthfully and in full  Colour ID photo  2 references from work or academic supervisors | |

Highland Wildlife Park is owned by the conservation charity the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland. Charity No SC004064