



Offer to students seeking Extra-Mural Studies (EMS) with the Animal & Plant Health Agency

The Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA) offers the opportunity to see veterinary work from a non-practice perspective. Whichever option you choose, you are sure to experience something rather different from other EMS placements.

What can APHA offer?

- An opportunity to develop veterinary professional skills, in line with the [RCVS EMS aims](#) and [Day 1 competencies](#) with a particular focus on state veterinary medicine, including diagnostic services.
- Health and safety aspects of your participation clearly explained, and risk assessments made available where necessary. In certain cases, the limits of your involvement in APHA work will be explained and adhered to.
- A named person to act as your mentor before and during your placement.
- A high quality experience including meeting people who do a range of government work in our multidisciplinary teams. Specific tasks, cases or events cannot be guaranteed during your placement but we will aim to provide you with an interesting and informative experience.

Eligibility

- You should be a veterinary student and either studying at a UK university, the Szent Istvan University in Hungary or resident in the UK and studying abroad.
- You should be undertaking clinical training which must be in the final two years of your course (4th/5th years at most universities or 5th/6th years at Cambridge). Placements may also be accepted during the summer prior to you starting your final two years according to individual university requirements. Any alternative arrangement can be discussed with APHA on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to availability; for example, we are willing to consider recent graduates.

- Apply for a placement using the application form. From January each year, bookings are open for January-December the following year however please note that all placement dates are provisional until final confirmation is received approximately one month before placement date.
- Before the placement starts, you will need to obtain health clearance from APHA's Occupational Health department. The relevant forms will be sent to you approximately three months before your placement start date. Complete and return them as soon as possible, as without relevant health clearance, the placement will not be confirmed.
- Note that it is mandatory to have had a tetanus vaccination in order to undertake an EMS placement at APHA (excluding the Vets in Government week in London). Tuberculosis (BCG) vaccination is also mandatory for placements in Pathology & Animal Sciences at Weybridge, and is recommended for other sites but not essential. If you have had the relevant vaccinations in the past you may not need to have them done again, but you must check with your GP. Please ensure that if you arrange vaccination specifically for this placement, your GP and the APHA Occupational Health department have confirmed that immunity will be conferred before the placement starts.
- Note security requirements vary depending on location. Your APHA EMS Co-ordinator will advise you of the necessary requirements. Please bring photo identification on the first day of your placement.
- Respect the confidentiality of all information you have access to during your placement. You will be bound by the Official Secrets Act during and after your placement and will be required to sign a declaration prior to your placement. You will receive further information about this during the application process.
- Treat all the people you deal with respectfully and you will receive the same in return.
- Highlight your educational and personal needs.
- Complete the APHA EMS feedback form to help us improve the experience for future students.
- Remember if you need an assessment or feedback to be completed by APHA, please make this requirement clear and provide the relevant documents at the start of your placement.

APHA placements available to veterinary students

You can obtain an APHA EMS placement in the following business areas:

- a) Field Operations
- b) Veterinary Investigation Centres
- c) Customer Service Centres
- d) Live Animal Border Inspection Post

e) Pathology and Animal Sciences, Weybridge (specific entry requirements apply)

f) Vets in Government based in London

There may be opportunities to undertake placements in more than one business area with a maximum of two weeks total placement time. Work varies enormously; the following section summarises the range of work you might experience, and the application form lists the locations for all options.

a) Field Operations

Veterinary and technical staff work at all sites offering this and some offices also have administrative staff. You can expect to get involved in work associated with disease control including bovine TB and animal welfare, either responding to complaints or carrying out routine inspections. As a regulatory organisation, a lot of the work done is based on legislation so you will have a chance to see how APHA puts the law into action. In most cases you will spend the majority of your placement out of the office on farms and at other locations accompanying a vet or technical officer. Please note you may be required to use your own vehicle to get to various farms or field stations as some sites cover very wide geographical areas, so having your own transport is essential. When using your own vehicle you will be required to obtain Business Class insurance cover. Please contact your insurance company to check arrangements; extra payment is not always required, depending on the policy. At the start of the placement it will be necessary to provide evidence of your driving documents (licence, insurance and MOT). Expenses are not paid by APHA.

b) Veterinary Investigation Centres

Veterinary Investigation Officers (VIOs) at these sites carry out scanning surveillance; searching for new and emerging diseases in farm animals, and provide a diagnostic service to practitioners. You can expect to see post mortem examinations on livestock and sometimes wildlife or exotic animals. There tends to be a seasonal aspect to post mortem material being received, with the lowest case numbers typically between June and September. Most sites which take EMS students undertake laboratory testing and receive diagnostic samples by post. Here you will have the opportunity to discuss suitability of the sample and testing requests, assigning tests and, depending on location, setting up and interpreting the test procedures. Occasionally farm visits are carried out to investigate unusual cases, but most of your time will be spent in the lab or post mortem room.

c) Customer Service Centres

Our International Trade Centre in Carlisle concentrates on dealing with all aspects of import and export of animals and animal products. Imports Certificates are reviewed and documents required for export are issued here. Export health certificates are produced, allowing a huge range of animals and products to be moved around the world. This is an office-based experience. You can

expect to learn a great deal about international co-operation, certification and monitoring of animal movements. The Centre liaises with veterinary authorities across the world.

d) Live Animal Border Inspection Post

A small number of places are available at the live animal Border Inspection Post at Heathrow airport. This office deals with animals arriving and leaving by air. It is a very busy location and you can expect to learn about the complex requirements associated with international trade.

e) Pathology and Animal Sciences, Weybridge

Placements at the Weybridge site will offer an insight into work carried out under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 as well as spending time in the pathology department and research laboratories. You will have the opportunity to learn about veterinary involvement in welfare, ethical review processes and the role of the Named Veterinary Surgeon. This placement is comprised of a mixture of work with animals, office-based reviews and time in the laboratory. There are a limited number of places at Weybridge each year. If you are interested in this area of work you can find out more about the Laboratory Animals Veterinary Association (LAVA) EMS scheme on the [LAVA website](#).

f) Vets in Government, London

Veterinary advisers work closely with policy teams to ensure that our policies for dealing with animal disease and welfare are based on sound evidence and scientific facts. The vets also deal with reports of suspected notifiable disease, co-ordinating our response and providing guidance to the staff on the farms. This is an office-based experience; you will discover how veterinary and scientific expertise is used to influence legislation and government policy in Defra, Scottish Government, Welsh Government, Food Standards Agency, Home Office and Veterinary Medicines Directorate. Placements are for one week, based in Nobel House, London. We currently run this EMS placement twice a year in July and December. Attendance at an EMS Vets in Government week for students is allocated with one space per University offered in the first instance and any spaces not filled by two months before the course date will be allocated to students on the waiting list on a first come, first served basis. It is highly recommended that this week is complemented by an APHA site placement, to ensure the student gains both policy and operational experience.

Applying for a placement

- Please apply well in advance and provide several options if you can. It is also important to let APHA know if your plans have changed and you can no longer fulfil your placement.

- Unfortunately APHA can't offer any accommodation to you and expenses are not paid. For field-based placements it is necessary for you to have your own transport available. We will provide you with the necessary protective clothing, though you might prefer to use your own wellies. Please consider accommodation and transport requirements for sites prior to submitting an application as not all are close to towns or public transport links.
- Please be aware that confirmation of a booking is not absolute confirmation that EMS will occur at the specified site. Should the site you've initially booked need to be changed for unforeseen reasons (e.g. site closure or relocation of services), the APHA EMS Coordinator will contact you at the earliest opportunity to outline the options available.
- Please complete the application form and email it to EMS@apha.gov.uk. On receipt, an acknowledgement will be sent within seven working days. Enquiries will then be made to try and secure a provisional EMS placement at your preferred site.

Application Form - Extra Mural Studies (EMS) at APHA

- On receipt of this completed application form the APHA EMS Co-ordinator will be in contact with you.
- All students must have a valid tetanus vaccination in order to be eligible for a placement. BCG is also required for placements at Pathology & Animal Sciences, Weybridge and is recommended for all placements, but not compulsory.
- Provision of your own transport is necessary for all field placements.
- Complete all parts of the application form, A to D. Provide a short personal statement of no more than 200 words explaining why you are interested in EMS with APHA. If we require further information we may ask for a reference from a University tutor or other appropriate person.

A. Personal details

Full Name	
Contact Address	
Mobile	
Email	
University	
Date of final exams	

B. Dates available *(From January each year bookings open for January-December the following year)*

Date preferences	Week 1	Week 2 (Yes/No) <small>(Please indicate if you would like a second week and give dates below)</small>
1		
2		
3		

C. Site Preference

Please indicate in the table below the site(s) of your choice rated 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choice and we will endeavour to place you at one of your preferred locations. Placements are for five days Monday to Friday.

Your own transport is **essential** for all field placements as there may be a requirement to attend at more than one location.

Location	Activities	Choice 1, 2, 3	Comments
Ayr	Field operations		
Bury St Edmunds	Field operations		
Caernarfon	Field operations		
Carlisle	Customer Service Centre		
Carmarthen (Ty Merlin Parc, Pensarn)	Veterinary Investigation Centre		
Carmarthen (Job's Well Road, Johnstown)	Field operations		
Crewe	Field operations		
Exeter	Field operations		
Galashiels	Field operations		
Heathrow	Live Animal Border inspection post		FULLY BOOKED FOR 2022 and 2023
Inverness	Field operations		
Inverurie	Field operations		
Leicester	Field operations		FULLY BOOKED FOR 2022
Lincoln	Field operations		FULLY BOOKED FOR 2022
Newcastle	Field operations		
Perth	Field operations		
Penrith	Veterinary Investigation Centre		
Shrewsbury	Field operations		
Stafford	Field operations		
Starcross	Veterinary Investigation Centre		
Thirsk	Veterinary Investigation Centre (post-mortems only)		

London	Vets in Government 8-10 students for a week placement		Dates for 2022 and 2023 yet to be released
Weybridge	Pathology & Animal Sciences		Dates for 2023: 23-27 January 20-24 February – Fully Booked 20-24 March 24-28 April 22-26 May 19-23 June - Fully Booked 24-28 July – Fully Booked 21-25 Aug – Fully Booked 25-29 Sep 16-20 Oct 27 Nov - 1 Dec
Worcester	Field operations		
York/Sand Hutton	Field operations		

D. Personal Statement

Please provide a short statement of no more than 200 words explaining why you are interested in EMS with APHA.

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.