

Just the Job Information Sheet

Job title

Veterinarian

Job description

The primary responsibility of veterinarians in practice is to serve the public through the provision of high quality care for the health and welfare of animals, kept as pets or for leisure activities, as working animals, farm livestock, or wildlife.

Veterinary practices are distributed through the country in towns and rural areas. These may involve one veterinarian working on their own but, more commonly, several veterinarians work together.

Practices vary according to the location. In large cities, for example, practices may deal only with companion animals such as dogs, cats and caged birds. This is commonly referred to as 'small animal' or 'companion animal' practice.

In farming areas, the emphasis is on farm livestock such as cattle, sheep, deer and pigs, although other animals such as dogs, cats and horses are also dealt with ('large animal' or 'mixed' practice). Some practices, particularly in areas where there are large numbers of horses, may deal mainly or solely with them ('equine practice').

Clinical practice offers an interesting career with plenty of variety. Apart from other veterinary skills, it requires an ability to assess facts in investigating outbreaks of disease in order to arrive at a satisfactory diagnosis.

Common sense, independence and the ability to work with people of the farming community or other animal owners are necessary.

Qualifications required

Bachelor of Veterinary Science

Training costs

Approximately \$2650 for pre-selection first semester and then if offered a place in professional phase then approximately \$48000 for years two through to five (this covers tuition and non-tuition university fees calculated from 2011 figures). This does not cover any textbooks, specialised equipment, clothing or travel/accommodation costs that may be required.

Other career opportunities

A veterinary degree can lead to a great diversity of other careers including employment in animal welfare, conservation biology, specialist clinic construction, animal feed formulation and manufacture and zoological parks.

There are many career opportunities for veterinarians in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in the divisions of Biosecurity New Zealand, New Zealand Food Safety Authority, and MAF Quarantine Service.

Other career opportunities are possible in the following areas:

- Veterinary Diagnostic Services

Diagnostic Services are provided by government and privately owned laboratories. Laboratories are staffed by veterinarians with advanced training in disciplines such as diagnostic pathology, microbiology, virology, parasitology, clinical biochemistry and haematology.

- Crown Research Institutes

Research into animal health and production is carried out in a number of centres around the country. Veterinarians play important roles in all aspects of animal research and artificial breeding and in the extension of research findings to other members of the profession and to the farming community.

- Research and technical services in industry

This industry requires the professional skills of veterinarians, and there are posts available in such fields as technical advisory services and research. Many of these can lead to senior executive management roles.

- International Veterinary Science

There are development projects for livestock industries in overseas countries. A number of veterinarians are involved in projects concerned with this development, with some projects being on a very large scale.

Salary range



Salary Scale Review March 2010

The following salary scale represents the negotiated salary scale between the Association of Rural Veterinary Practices and Club Practitioners Branch of the NZVA.

The salary scale is for remuneration as based on the previous terms and conditions incorporated within the previously negotiated Standard Individual Service Agreement, and are effective 1st April 2010.

Veterinary Salary Scale

Grade I	Year 1	\$50,000
	Year 2	\$60,000
	Year 3	\$66,000
	Year 4	\$72,000
	Year 5	\$78,000
Grade II	Min	\$78,000
	Max	\$125,000
Grade III	Min	\$125,000
	Maximum is negotiable	

Grade I Years 1 to 5 relate to years after completion of the course in veterinary studies accepted by the Veterinary Council of New Zealand or its successor for the purposes of registration. The dollar range given in Grade I is the range of salary within which a graduate of five years standing should be paid, the actual level being determined by individual performance in addition to years of service. Advancement through the grades is automatic up to Grade I Year 5, after which performance criteria are taken into account.

Grade II The margins in Grade II recognizes the wider range of experience and ability of veterinarians in this category. Progression through Grade II is based on merit and is not automatic. It allows for salary increases after five years experience other than for inflation, and represents promotion in recognition of fulfilling Employee objectives.

Grade III Allows for further promotion, and reflects a CEO or equivalent position that includes like responsibilities beyond the objectives.

Other careers this profession could lead to:

Research scientist in biomedicine.

How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry

A solid scholastic background to a minimum of NCEA Level 3 in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Mathematics and English are also highly regarded. It is recommended that applicants have studied a minimum of 20 credits in each of the subjects at NCEA Level 3 and passed a minimum of 14 credits in each of the subjects.

Other places to source information about this job

Massey Websites:

- http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/programme-course-paper/programme.cfm?prog_id=92611
- <http://vet-school.massey.ac.nz/>

New Zealand Veterinary Association

- <http://www.vetspace.org.nz/content/public>

Veterinary Council of New Zealand

- <http://www.vetcouncil.org.nz/massey.php>