

Veterinary Externship

Program Outline

Revised September 2014



Mission Statement of the Vancouver Aquarium

The Vancouver Aquarium is a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display and interpretation, education, research, and direct action.

General Statement

Located in the heart of beautiful Stanley Park in Vancouver Canada, the Vancouver Aquarium is internationally recognized as one of Canada's foremost centers for aquatic education, research and conservation. We have an exciting opportunity for veterinary students to work in our Animal Health Department. Veterinary externs will work closely with the Vancouver Aquarium's veterinary staff, which includes a board-certified veterinarian, veterinary intern, and two veterinary technicians, in the medical management of a large captive display collection that includes marine mammals, terrestrial mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and a large variety of native and tropical fish. The veterinary extern will also assist the veterinary medical staff in providing medical management for approximately 150 live-stranded marine mammals (mostly harbour seals) which are cared for by the Vancouver Aquarium.

Program Description / Application Deadline

The veterinary externship program is open to students that will be in their third or fourth year of veterinary studies at the time of their stay at the Vancouver Aquarium. The student is encouraged to develop and pursue a learning objective that can be carried out at the aquarium over their stay and include those ideas in the letter of intent.

Externships are offered from April 1 to September 15 of each year. Students should plan to spend two to four weeks at the Vancouver Aquarium. Priority for choosing time slots is according to rank during the selection process.

Externship Placement Dates	Number of Positions	Application deadline
April 1 – Sep 15 th	12 unpaid	March 30

Externship applications are due by March 30, ONE year prior to the planned externship. For example, applications for 2016 externships are due by March 30, 2015. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Please note these dates are subject to change.

Essential Responsibilities

Veterinary Medicine

Assist veterinarians and veterinary staff with monitoring cases, participating in daily rounds, developing treatment options, and diagnostic and surgical procedures as required. Maintain complete patient records. Students should be aware that the number of clinical cases requiring hands-on care is low at a public display facility and the majority of time is spent developing health management programs for the collection animals. Students should be prepared to take advantage of unsupervised "down time" to read relevant literature and to pursue learning objectives.

Husbandry

Each student is required to assist husbandry personnel with their duties.

Science

Each student is required to participate in necropsies including record keeping, data entry, sample taking and storage, and cleaning. The student is also invited to assist with ongoing research projects.

Laboratory

Duties include processing blood samples, water quality analysis, and performing routine laboratory analyses.

Stranding

Assist the Marine Mammal Rescue program with the rescue, transport and care of stranded marine mammals as required. The student will spend at least one day every week at the rehabilitation facility.

Project

Students will be responsible for doing a literature review on a veterinary topic of their choice relevant to the Vancouver Aquarium externship experience. They will present their findings to the husbandry staff during their last week in the form of a noon hour PowerPoint presentation.

Accommodation / Transportation

All candidates are expected to find their own accommodation and transportation in Vancouver. For more information on accommodation and maps, please see resources like the "[Student Guide for Living in Vancouver](#)".

Public transportation in Vancouver is quite accessible. Please refer to the weblink for more detailed information: <http://www.translink.ca/>

How to Apply

A complete application should include the following: resume, letter of interest, and two reference letters. Your letter of interest should include what experience you have, what you hope to gain from the placement, how you heard about the placement and your career goals. The student is encouraged to develop and pursue a learning objective that can be carried out at the aquarium over their stay and include those ideas in the letter of intent.

Applications may be submitted via email using 'Veterinary Externship Application' as the title. You may also submit applications via fax (604-659-3469) or mail:

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Students will be notified of their acceptance into the program by June 30th, one year prior to the planned externship. Good luck to all our applicants.

Thank you for your interest in the Vancouver Aquarium's externship program!

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