



Careers in Animal Care

Your guide to training, jobs and opportunities

Liverpool & Merseyside | Level 1 to Level 3 | SEND-friendly options may be available

Why Choose a Career in Animal Care?

- Rewarding work caring for animals and making a real difference to their welfare
- Diverse career opportunities — shelters, rescues, zoos, veterinary clinics, farms
- Build lasting relationships with animals and communities
- Hands-on, practical work with real variety every day
- Growing industry with strong job security and progression routes
- Opportunities in conservation, wildlife rehabilitation and animal behaviour

Skills and Personal Qualities

- Passion for animal welfare and wellbeing
- Physical fitness and stamina — ability to work outdoors in all weathers
- Patience and calm demeanour when handling animals
- Attention to detail — following care and health protocols
- Problem-solving skills and ability to work independently
- Good teamwork and communication with colleagues and public

Useful School Subjects

- Biology & Science — animal anatomy, health, behaviour, ecology, habitats
- Chemistry — understanding medicines, treatments and animal nutrition
- PE & Outdoor Education — fitness, outdoor skills, conservation work
- English — documenting animal observations, client communication
- Geography — understanding wildlife habitats and ecosystems

Local Courses (Levels 1 to 3)

Courses are available at local colleges across Merseyside. Many courses accept students without GCSEs.

Animal Care & Management

- St Helens College — Animal Care L1–L2 | Animal Management L2–L3 (with 50+ animal species)
- Myerscough College, Croxteth, Liverpool — Animal Care L1–L3 (new Animal & Equine Studies Centre)
- Knowsley Community College — Animal Care Courses L1–L2
- Riverside College, Widnes (Cronton) — Animal Care L2 Diploma | Animal Management L3 Extended Diploma

Specialist Pathways

- Dog Grooming — Merseyside Career Development Training (MCDT) Liverpool & Formby
- Veterinary Nurse Assistant — MCDT training and external providers
- Wildlife Conservation & Rehabilitation — available through college partnerships

SEND-Friendly & Supported Provision

- Supported study options may be available — speak to your careers adviser about what could work for you

Apprenticeships and Training

- Animal Care Apprenticeship — Level 2 (18 months+)
- Animal Care & Welfare Manager Apprenticeship — Level 3
- Veterinary Nurse Apprenticeship — Level 3 (foundation pathway)
- Dog Grooming Apprenticeship — Level 2-3
- Search live vacancies: www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk
- Supported Internships (for students with an EHCP) are run by local colleges with their selected employer partners — ask your careers adviser whether this route could suit you

Jobs, Volunteering and Work Experience

There are many different animal care roles available — from small animal shelters to large zoos, veterinary practices, farms, and wildlife rehabilitation centres.

Role	Where You Work	Starting Qualification
Animal Care Assistant	Shelters, rescues, kennels, catteries	Level 1 Animal Care or no formal qualifications
Animal Care Technician	Veterinary clinics, hospitals, zoos	Level 2 Animal Care or NVQ
Zoo Keeper	Zoos, wildlife parks	Level 2-3 Animal Management
Veterinary Nurse Assistant	Veterinary practices, clinics	Level 2-3 + specific training
Dog Groomer	Grooming salons, spas, self-employed	Level 2-3 Dog Grooming
Animal Welfare Officer	Rescue organisations, councils, charities	Level 2-3 + relevant experience
Farm Manager / Livestock Worker	Farms, agricultural settings	Level 2-3 Animal Management
Wildlife Rehabilitator	Wildlife centres, sanctuaries, charities	Level 3 + specialist training
Kennel / Cattery Assistant	Boarding facilities, rescue centres	Level 1 Animal Care or no formal qualifications

Typical starting salary: £16,000–£22,000. Experienced managers and specialists can earn £24,000–£35,000+.

Work Experience & Volunteering

- Volunteer at animal shelters, rescue centres, conservation charities or sanctuaries
- Work experience at veterinary practices, kennels, catteries or wildlife rehabilitation centres
- Ask your school or adviser to arrange a placement in a local animal care setting

Next Steps and Contact Information

- Visit college open days and websites
- Search for local jobs: www.indeed.co.uk | www.notjustjobs.com
- Find apprenticeships: www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk

TAGS Careers	www.tags.careers — local careers information and resources
Colleges	St Helens College: www.sthelens.ac.uk Myerscough Croxtheth: www.myerscough.ac.uk Knowsley CC: www.knowsleycollege.ac.uk Riverside: www.riversidecollege.ac.uk
More Support	Your careers adviser can provide additional guidance tailored to your needs
Apprenticeships	www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk www.indeed.co.uk www.notjustjobs.com