Secondary Schools Work Experience
Frequently Asked Questions

Zoos Victoria's Secondary School Work Experience program is for students interested in animal care, wildlife and conservation. Students take part in a week-long placement at a working zoo, gaining real experience with the support of their school and our Work Experience Coordinators.

Applications are competitive and places are limited. Here is more information.

Application process

Where do students apply?
Applications are accepted through Zoos Victoria's website – bit.ly/zvworkexperience

What are the key dates?
Applications open in October and close in December.
Work Experience placements run across Terms 1-4 of the following year.
Visit the website for exact dates – bit.ly/zvworkexperience

Who is eligible?
Victorian secondary students aged 15 years and over can apply.

Which zoos offer work experience placements?
Healesville Sanctuary, Melbourne Zoo and Werribee Open Range Zoo.

Can students apply to more than one zoo?
No – to keep the process fair, students can apply for one zoo only.

Does the school need to approve the student's application first?
Yes – students must have approval from their school before applying.

Each school campus can endorse one student per year.

Can homeschool students apply?
Yes – they are welcome to apply via their parent or guardian.

Can students with diverse abilities apply for Work Experience?
Yes – students of all backgrounds and abilities are encouraged to apply
Where possible, our team will work with the school to support individual needs.

Placement information

How long is the Work Experience placement?
Placements run for five full days, Monday to Friday.
If a public holiday falls during the week, the schedule may be adjusted.

What students do during their Work Experience placement?
Students experience a range of roles across the zoo.
This may include time with Zoo Keepers, Visitor Experience, Horticulture, Retail and Education teams, as well as observing how staff care for wildlife as part of conservation programs.

Will students work directly with animals?
Students do not handle or touch animals.
They may work near animals while supporting tasks such as food preparation and general maintenance, and will observe keepers working behind the scenes.

What support is available before the placement?
Before the placement, students will receive an email from a Work Experience Coordinator. This includes their weekly timetable and everything they need to know. The Coordinator is also available to answer questions.

What time does Work Experience start each day?
Start times vary by zoo and are usually between 7:20am and 9:00am.

Will a student be paid for their time?
Yes – in line with Department of Education guidelines, students receive $5 per day for five days ($25 total). Students will be asked to provide bank details for payment.

Troubleshooting

Can I email my application instead?
No – please submit your application via Zoos Victoria's website – bit.ly/zvworkexperience

My application won't load. What should I do?
Try using a different Internet browser. If the issue continues, call our team on 1300 966 784.

I missed the deadline to submit my application. Can I still apply?
Late applications are not accepted. Students are welcome to apply again the following year if they meet the eligibility criteria.

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