

See your career take off with an internship at Poultry Health Services

Working as a poultry vet offers great opportunities for career progression and the chance to make a difference to the health and welfare of production animals. Here, new graduates Beth Sales and Elliott Boyd reveal how an internship at Poultry Health Services has given their veterinary careers a flying start.

JOINING Poultry Health Services' (PHS) internship programme has given Beth Sales and Elliott Boyd the perfect introduction to a veterinary career and they are growing in confidence and thriving on learning additional skills and taking on new responsibilities.

PHS is one of the largest specialist commercial poultry veterinary practices in the UK, helping clients maximise the health, welfare and productivity of their flock while improving food quality. It has nine practices around the UK and is part of VetPartners.

PHS offers up to four internships a year in poultry medicine and production to help new graduates bridge the gap between university and becoming fully fledged vets.

Beth Sales graduated in August last year and started her internship at PHS straight away. She is following a structured internship programme and receives guidance from her Vet GDP mentors as well as additional support from her PHS colleagues.



Beth said: "I love my job at PHS and working in the poultry health sector has to be one of the best kept secrets of the veterinary world. The work is interesting and there are lots of different aspects to explore, such as disease prevention, research and development and data analysis."

She says that her internship has boosted her confidence, thanks to the support and guidance she receives from PHS.

Beth said: "As a newly qualified vet I feel supported every step of the way. I spend a lot of time with my mentors, who are senior poultry vets, and started out shadowing them on client visits. Every day I'm learning something new, and I've already been given the opportunity to take on more responsibility, which I'm really enjoying.

"I love that the work at PHS is varied and the poultry sector is so diverse. When I began my internship, I was working with game birds and now I'm visiting poultry farms, but we also work with a wide variety of birds from laying hens and broilers to turkeys and ducks and geese to pigeons and doves.

"When I was at university, I knew I wanted to work with farm animals, but the idea of becoming a specialist poultry vet hadn't crossed my mind. My interest was sparked when I went on a placement to a large farm and witnessed the pathology side of poultry work, which made me realise what a fulfilling career poultry medicine can be. It is fascinating to go into the lab and see post-mortems at close quarters and it's a career that allows you to follow animal health right through to under the microscope."

Elliott Boyd has also enjoyed doing pathology work during his PHS internship, which he started in November.



Elliott said: “It has been an exciting time for a young graduate to join the poultry sector as cases of avian influenza mean we are doing a lot of work to monitor clients’ flocks and stop the disease spreading. This involves collaborating with the government and universities plus veterinary practices across Europe to do all we can to safeguard bird health both now and in the future. It’s a very innovative and forward-thinking sector to work in and we have a very high level of diagnostic equipment available to us.”

Like Beth, Elliott has found PHS a supportive place to work and is impressed by the structure of career development it offers.

He said: “I’ve only been part of the PHS family for a few weeks, but I’m pleased with the opportunities I’ve already been given and within a month of starting my internship I had progressed to being able to issue movement licenses.

“I spent the first few weeks going out to farms with other vets, and now I’m doing my own visits I can contact one of my mentors if I want to talk through a case or ask for advice. It can be quite a shock leaving university and starting your first job, but I always feel there’s someone there for me.

“There is a lot of learning material available to interns, and you also benefit from a network of vets that you can call on. We try to meet once a week to discuss the different areas of poultry veterinary work we’re involved in, and it’s a great platform for sharing information and seeking advice. As a newly qualified vet I find this invaluable.”

Both PHS and VetPartners are committed to helping their vets become the very best they can be, and support is available to our graduates who want to continue with their studies. There are also opportunities to travel internationally to conferences or visit practices PHS collaborates with, and these are open to graduates as well as more experienced vets.

Elliott added: “Poultry health was such a small part of my degree that I hadn’t really considered it as a career, but my internship is giving me so many opportunities and I’m really excited to find out where my career will take me. Due to the size of this sector of the veterinary world there are good opportunities to progress. PHS is growing all the time and looking to expand into new locations, so a graduate who joins as an intern could go on to head up their own practice!”

If you’d like to find out more about internships at Poultry Health Services, email sheriffhutton@poultryhealthservices.com or tel: 01347 820 366. For more information, visit: poultryhealthservices.com

Elliott Boyd, 25, graduated from the University of Liverpool and started an internship with Poultry Health Services at Sheriff Hutton in November. He has an interest in endoparasites and has carried out research on the subject.

Beth Sales, 24, graduated from the University of Bristol in 2021. She works at the Tarvin branch of Poultry Health Services in Cheshire. Outside of work Beth enjoys CrossFit, shooting and walking her Labrador, Digby.