

Applicants Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to British Antarctic Survey (BAS), we are pleased to see that you are interested by what we do. In this handbook, you will find useful information about the recruitment process and the employment at BAS. Before you apply, make sure you have read the document.

Who we are

British Antarctic Survey delivers and enables world-leading interdisciplinary research in the Polar Regions. Our skilled science and support staff based in Cambridge, Antarctica and the Arctic, work together to deliver research that uses the Polar Regions to advance our understanding of Earth as a sustainable planet. Through our extensive logistic capability and know how BAS facilitates access for the British and international science community to the UK polar research operation. Numerous national and international collaborations, combined with an excellent infrastructure help sustain a world leading position for the UK in Antarctic affairs. British Antarctic Survey is a component of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). NERC is part of UK Research and Innovation (www.ukri.org).

We employ experts from many different professions to carry out our science as well as keeping the lights on, feeding the research and support teams, and keeping everyone safe! If you are looking for an opportunity to work with amazing people in one of the most unique places in the world, then British Antarctic Survey could be for you. We aim to attract the best people for those jobs.

Employment based in Antarctica is a unique opportunity that very few people get to experience, and we want to ensure that the experience is safe, enjoyable, and exciting. We have been sending people to Antarctica for over 60 years and have been responsible for most of the UK's scientific research in Antarctica.

We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and fostering diversity as part of an inclusive culture. We expect everyone at BAS to act in a manner that promotes this culture. Our responsibility is to foster a culture where people understand, respect and appreciate each other's differences and everyone's right to dignity and develop an inclusive working environment.

Eligibility

As the British Antarctic Survey operate in the British Overseas Territories, we must ensure that everyone we employ has the right to work in the UK. You will be asked to provide documentation at the interview stage to prove your right to work, which may include passports, indefinite leave to remain, visas, or any other supporting documents.

Health

Antarctic deployment involves working in a remote and harsh environment where adaptations to working, living and recreation areas are not achievable to a level that might be expected in the UK. There is a Genuine Occupational Requirement to be physically capable of negotiating rough, icy and snowy terrain as well as being mentally resilient and medically fit.

In order to be considered for this role, we will conduct our own medical examination to ensure that we have minimised any risks and that you are physically capable of performing the tasks required. We will also ask that you ensure you have good dental health, with a visit to your dentist to conduct the required checks. The most common medical emergencies in Antarctica are dental. We do not have an upper age limit for applicants but require everyone to complete the same medical and dental checks.

Working in Antarctica is a large commitment, and we have a duty to ensure that you are both mentally and physically prepared for the unique challenges that Antarctica provides. Please be aware that during your deployment to Antarctica you will not have any time away from the continent for birthdays, Christmas, or any other holiday. This includes the 18-month Winter deployments.

COVID-19

We have a responsibility to do everything that we can to ensure that Antarctica stays COVID free. Our medical checks for this season will be more focused on the factors that increase your risk of an adverse reaction to the coronavirus.

You will be required to be vaccinated against Covid-19, more details will be confirmed closer to your appointment date using the most recent guidance from the government and our medical unit.

How to apply

On our vacancy page, under each role, you will find the “How to apply” section where you must complete the following documents:

- Application form
- CV and Cover Letter
- Additional forms
 - Medical form (BASMU)
 - Publication form (if science role)
 - Diving form (if diving officer)
- Equality Opportunities Questionnaire

Prior submitting your application, please ensure that you have replied to all questions.

Recruitment process

We operate on an annual schedule, with roles being advertised from January to March, interviews happening from April to early July, start dates for your training from August to October, and deployment from October to December. We will contact all applicants to keep you updated on the outcome of your application.

There are three stages before the offer of employment.

1) Shortlisting

The panel composed of technical experts will assess your application against the criteria set on the job description. If you have passed the selection process, you will be invited for an interview. If you are not selected for interview, we will inform you via email.

2) Interview and practical test (if appropriate)

Due to Covid-19, interviews will be held virtually via Zoom for this season. For some roles, we might ask you to travel to Cambridge for a second stage of the interview which is usually a practical test. If you have been successful, we will contact you and offer you the role. If you are unsuccessful, we will inform you via email.

3) Offer of employment

If you have been successful, we will offer you the role. Please note that our offer is subject to **satisfactory medicals, references and security checks**. We reserve the right to withdraw our offer if the above is not satisfactory. Checks may take few weeks to be completed.

Employment

We offer Summer or Winter Roles. Summer roles are typically four to six months during the austral summer, from October to March. Winter roles are for up to 18 months, and will consist partly of an austral Winter, during which Antarctica is practically inaccessible due to extreme weather. The length of the contract may vary based on organisational requirements, restrictions, and the method of your travel home from Antarctica

HR will send your paperwork and contract as soon as possible, but it might take few weeks.

The benefits of our employment are listed [here](#).

Training

Comprehensive preparatory training and instruction are vital for the success and safety of Antarctic field campaigns and operations. The length of your employment will include a period of training. We offer two types of training:

- Job-Specific Training Courses: HR L&D Team will get in touch
- Pre-deployment training: practical advice, information regarding your deployment, induction to British Antarctic Survey policies and culture and opportunity to meet future colleagues.

You can find more information [here](#).

This training is mandatory and can take between two weeks and three months to complete depending on your role and previous experience. You will need to be fully available to undertake any required training.

Deployment

Usually, you will be deployed to Antarctica between October and December. You will have 10 days leave known as “embarkation leave” prior your departure. You will travel by air (Commercial or MOD flights) or via our research vessel, RRS Sir David Attenborough with the journey taking approximately seven weeks.

COVID-19

Antarctic national programmes are working together to ensure that we keep Antarctica free from Covid-19, that means we had to review the way we used to travel. You may be required to quarantine two weeks prior to your deployment.

This is a life-time experience and just the start of your Antarctica adventure!

If you have any questions, please contact the HR team at the following address: employment@bas.ac.uk

We look forward to receiving your application. Good luck!