**APBC ABT Q&A**

**26 October 2021**

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**The Animal Behaviour Technician (ABT) role**

**Animal Behaviour and Training Council (ABTC) Standards:**

[ABTC-Standard-Animal-Behaviour-Technician-12-March-2021.pdf](https://abtc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ABTC-Standard-Animal-Behaviour-Technician-12-March-2021.pdf)

For use by all ABTC Practitioner Organisations (e.g. APBC) who assess this role

**Recent developments:**

* Revised in 2020 to try to clarify the context and purpose of the role
* Revised again in 2021 to provide further clarification through revisions to the overview (recently agreed by the ABTC)
* Resulting changes to the Knowledge & Understanding and Performance Criteria now being finalised to reflect the latest overview (the changes will be relatively minor to ensure consistency across all aspects of the standards

**Principles of the standard:**

An ABT must be able to:

* design and implement programmes to provide preventative behavioural advice to owners/handlers/other professionals to safeguard against the development of problem behaviours
* design and implement programmes to provide first-aid behavioural advice to owners/handlers/ other professionals prior to referral to a suitably qualified practitioner
* implement behaviour modification and/or environmental modification plans, developed by a CAB or VB following assessment/evaluation of an animal by that same CAB or VB
* base their work on scientific evidence, using humane approaches to animals and clients

**Contexts for those taking up the role:**

1. Veterinary nurses
2. Practitioners working in a rescue setting
3. Practitioners working in private practice

In the case of 3. it may be challenging for independent practitioners to work with a CAB or VB as the standard requires. This may also limit the types of case that can be taken on in private practice. If your aim is to work as an independent behaviour therapist, taking on all types of case, the CAB role will be the appropriate role for you. As an ABT you would not be able to take on behaviour modification cases, without an assessment of the case by a CAB or VB. Your work independently could only cover preventative and first aid behavioural programmes.

In accordance with the ABTC Code of Professional Conduct, all individual practitioners are required to work within the ABT Standard and their professional competence. All cases that are, or develop beyond, the scope of this Standard should be referred on responsibly.