



Common Accreditation Gaps (Even in High-Performing Animal Care Facilities)

Many facilities deliver excellent animal welfare yet experience unnecessary stress during accreditation. The challenge is rarely the quality of care — it is how that care is structured, documented, and communicated.

Below are five gaps frequently identified during accreditation preparation and independent welfare reviews.

1. Strong Welfare Practices, Weak Documentation

- Welfare decisions are happening daily, but they are not consistently captured in formal, review-ready documentation.
- **Why it matters:** Reviewers can only evaluate what is clearly demonstrated.

Consider: *If a reviewer asked for evidence today, could your team easily show the full scope of the welfare work being done?*

2. Data Collected Without Interpretation

- Behavioral observations, enrichment records, and health indicators are gathered but not synthesized into a clear welfare narrative.
- **Why it matters:** Data shows activity; interpretation demonstrates oversight and informed decision-making.

Consider: *Is your data being translated into insights that clearly support welfare decisions?*

3. Inconsistent Welfare Assessment Across Departments

- Assessment approaches and documentation standards vary between teams, areas, or taxa.
- **Why it matters:** Consistency signals institutional commitment and operational structure.

Consider: *Would your welfare approach appear cohesive to an external reviewer?*

4. No Centralized Welfare Framework

- Critical welfare information exists across multiple locations — files, software systems, and personnel — without a unifying structure.
- **Why it matters:** Fragmentation slows the review process and can create preventable accreditation concerns.

Consider: *Could your team quickly access and present welfare documentation in a clear, organized manner?*

5. Reactive Rather Than Proactive Welfare Strategy

- Adjustments are made when concerns arise, but proactive evaluation cycles are not clearly documented.
- **Why it matters:** Accreditation bodies look for evidence of continuous assessment and forward planning.

Consider: *Are you demonstrating an ongoing, structured approach to evaluating and strengthening welfare?*

Key Takeaway

Recognizing one or more of these gaps is not a reflection of poor welfare — it often signals that your facility would benefit from stronger structure around the important work already taking place.

While accreditation standards outline *what* is expected, they rarely define *how* to get there. That's where we can help.

Ready to strengthen your accreditation readiness?

Let's start the conversation.

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