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**Animals on Campus Policy**

**Introduction**

The University recognises that there may be legitimate reasons for staff or students to bring animals on to campus. This will most commonly be in the form of assistance or service animals and the University is fully committed to supporting open access where possible. Given the public nature of the University estate, it is very common for members of the public to be on University grounds with an animal.

This document provides guidance on the University’s policy on the presence of animals on its estate. It is designed to assist students, staff and visitors in identifying the services offered to support animals that are legitimately on campus, and to clearly identify in which circumstances animals can be brought to the University.

There is a separate procedure for Animals in University owned and maintained by residential accommodation (Appendix 1) which applies to students and staff seeking to bring animals into University accommodation.

**Policy**

* It is the University’s policy that, subject to the limited exceptions, animals are not permitted in its work and study places (including vehicles), or its residential accommodation. This includes domestic pets.
* No animals should be left in parked vehicles on campus.
* Animals must not be tied up outside buildings.
* Animals are not permitted on our playing fields or sports facilities.

**Exceptions**

* Assistance animals for persons with a disability, or those being trained for such a purpose and most likely to be dogs;
* Assistance animals for the health and wellbeing of staff or/and students and which have been trained for such a purpose and most likely to be dogs;
* Visitors walking on the public right of ways through the University grounds.
* Animals involved in approved and specific teaching or research studies

**Assistance Animals**

It is recognised that some staff and students will rely on an assistance animal for support with physical tasks. Such animals are normally dogs and are trained to undertake these tasks. Emotional support or therapy animals are currently not formally classed as assistance animals in the UK. It is the current position of the University that emotional support or therapy animals are not considered as assistance animals and therefore do not have the same right of access. The exception to this will be where the animal has been specifically trained to the same level as an assistance animal. Requests will be dealt with on a case by case basis the process for which is outlined in this Policy.

**Definition of an Assistance Dog**

For the purpose of this policy, an assistance dog is one that has been specifically trained to assist disabled people.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 states the following as definition of an assistance dog;

*‘Assistance dogs are dogs that have been trained to work in partnership with disabled people to assist them in accessing services and to help them to improve their mobility, independence and quality of life. Assistance dogs support people with a wide range of disabilities; including visual impairments, deafness, physical disabilities and hidden disabilities. Assistance dogs are highly trained working dogs: they are not pets! Assistance dogs can be recognised by the harnesses and coloured jackets that they wear. A jacket will usually display the name of the organisation that trained the dog in question.’*

Assistance dogs on the University estate must normally:

• be trained by a member of [Assistance Dogs UK](https://www.assistancedogs.org.uk/) (AD(UK)), a coalition of assistance dog organisations or an equivalent organisation in another country;

• have a formal identification in the form of branded jackets or lead slips;

• have the yellow ID booklet from the AD (UK) member organisation. This ID book contains information about the owner and their dog, details of the training organisation who trained the dog and its owner.

• where the animal has been trained outside of the UK, evidence will be required of the training received by the equivalent organisation.

**Types of Assistance Dog**

Guide dogs – assisting people who are blind or are visually impaired.

Hearing dogs – assist people who are deaf or are hearing impaired.

Support dogs/Dogs for the Disabled – who provide support for many tasks that their owners may find difficult, such as:

• Opening and closing doors;

• Calling an ambulance;

• Picking up objects;

• Assisting with dressing and undressing;

• Accompanying their owner whilst undertaking chores such as shopping;

• Acting as a physical support;

• Raising an alarm;

• Operating control buttons;

• Switching lights on and off;

• Carrying items;

• Loading and unloading a washing machine;

• Fetching the telephone and other items.

Seizure alert dogs - are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure, which may appear as misbehaving to others.

Autism assistance dogs – supporting people with autism

Dogs supporting people with mental health issues.

Assistance dogs are not pets, and do not act like pets. Normally assistance dogs are with their owners 24 hours a day and their training means that they are able to support their owner in a range of settings undistracted by what is going on around them. They are also trained to toilet when prompted.

**Procedure**

**Students**

Students seeking to bring an assistance animal onto campus must register with Disability Services. Students who are eligible to register with Disability Services can also have their wider needs reviewed as part of an Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA).

Students must provide;

* information about the animal and its tasks/duties, when requested
* proof that the animal is trained as an assistance animal
* Insurance documentation for the animal

An assessment will be undertaken to understand what parts of campus to which the student with the assistance animal will need to access. If the student is studying on programmes which include laboratories and other ‘non standard’ environments or settings, including field trips, Disability Services will arrange for a risk assessment to be undertaken in conjunction with the University Safety Service.

Where it is deemed unsafe for an animal to be in a particular environment, efforts will be made to sure that an alternative reasonable adjustment is in place to ensure that the student has access to their learning environment.

**Staff**

Staff members seeking to bring an assistance animal onto campus must contact the Diversity and Inclusion Unit who will liaise with the relevant HR Business Partner for the area in which the staff member works.

Staff must provide;

* information about the animal and its tasks/duties, when requested
* proof that the animal is trained as an assistance animal
* Insurance documentation

An assessment will be undertaken to understand what parts of campus to which the staff member with the assistance animal will need to access. If the staff member needs to access ‘non standard’ environments or settings, the Diversity and Inclusion Unit will arrange for a risk assessment to be undertaken in conjunction with the University Safety Service.

Where it is deemed unsafe for an animal to be in a particular environment, efforts will be made to sure that an alternative reasonable adjustment is in place to ensure that the staff member has access to their work environment.

**Owners’ responsibilities**

Assistance animal owners must ensure that their assistance animals are clearly identifiable by the use of special collars and/or harnesses when the animal is working.

Owners are responsible for ensuring that their assistance animals are covered by full liability insurance and provide a copy to the University (see above).

Assistance animal owners must respect access restrictions established by the University on grounds of health and safety, for example presence of their animal in laboratories. This will be subject to individual access review.

Owners must ensure that assistance animals do not enter staff and students’ privately assigned spaces, such as bedrooms and flats within residences, or office or study space, without permission.

Preventing and correcting assistance animals misbehaviour is the owner’s responsibility. Owners must make sure that their assistance animals do not cause harm or injury to others and damage to University property. Owners must ensure that the animal behaves in an appropriate manner at all times so as not to disrupt others.

People registered as blind are not required to remove litter caused by their guide dog but they are expected to have received the appropriate training on how to control their dog to avoid dog littering on Campus.

Assistance animal users share responsibility for the clean-up of the animal’s waste, consistent with reasonable capacity. Owners must not allow animals to foul the buildings, paths or grounds on Campus. In the unlikely event that the animal does foul in University buildings and the owner is unable to clean this up, the owner must report this to the Estates Directorate who will arrange for the area to be cleaned and sanitised.

Animal care is the owner’s responsibility and they must ensure regular health checks, vaccination and an adequate standard of grooming are carried out. Owners must ensure the assistance animal has its requirements in relation to feeding, watering and toileting fully met.

Owners must ensure that assistance dogs are kept on a lead at all times when walking around the Campus or safely harnessed when unsupervised. Owners of assistance animals that are ill, in poor health, excessively unclean or unkempt will be requested to remove the animal from University premises.

Owners are responsible for the training needs of their assistance animals, for the correct and safe performance of their duties.

The University recognises that owners will feel strongly about their animal being permitted to continue to be allowed on campus. However, owners are responsible for engaging positively and constructively where there may be challenges to the presence of an assistance dog including though not exclusive to instances where an animal may cause a health and safety risk; where people with extreme phobias or allergies are present; where there have been challenges to emergency evacuation protocols; where there have been issues presented by an animals behaviour including animal waste; where there has been damage to University property.

**Queen’s University responsibilities**

When assistance animals are in University properties, reasonable site-specific guidelines will be agreed with the owner. These will be agreed with the Estates Directorate in conjunction with relevant Heads of Departments for staff, and the Student Disability and Wellbeing Service for students and the assistance animal user. Assistance animal users are required to comply with the conditions of those guidelines.

The University will work positively and constructively with owners and other parties where disputes may arise as the result of an assistance dog on campus.

The University reserves the right to prohibit the presence of an assistance animal on campus in certain circumstances, usually where there is a significant conflict with our health and safety duty.

**Familiarisation with and orientation on the campus as part of an induction.**

Student Disability and Wellbeing will advise students with assistance animals and signpost them to this policy to make them aware of the help provided by the University and their rights and responsibilities.

Student Disability and Wellbeing will liaise with the student’s academic department and accommodation to ensure that any reasonable adjustments needed have been made.

The Diversity and Inclusion Unit will advise staff with assistance animals and signpost them to this policy to make them aware of the help provided by the University and their rights and responsibilities

**Interacting with Assistance Animals and their Owners**

Please note assistance animals are at work, performing tasks to assist disabled persons and are not pets.

• Talk to the owner and not the animal – If you are assisting a person with an assistance animal then give your directions to the person, they will give the correct commands to follow you. Do not call the animal, as it needs to focus on its owner.

• Do not feed, pet or praise the animal – you can put the owner in danger if you distract them.

• Do not get frustrated if the owner does not want to talk to you about their animal.

• Do not deliberately distract or startle an assistance animal.

• Separate or attempt to separate an assistance animal from the person using the animal’s service lead.

**Visitors walking on the public right of ways through the University grounds.**

Visitors walking animals through the campus are expected to keep them under control at all times, and where relevant on a lead. It is appreciated that it is very difficult to monitor such a policy in regards to visitors on campus and it is therefore intended to provide strategically placed signage that will inform them of their responsibilities. The University will not provide animal waste bins as the norm as owners would be expected to manage this independently and the University does not have the resource to empty such bins.

**Complaints or conflicts arising from animals on campus**

If a student or staff member wishes to make a complaint or express concern about an animal on Campus then they should, in the case of an animal supporting a student, contact the Student Disability and Wellbeing Service in the first instance. In the case of an animal supporting a member of staff, contact the Diversity and Inclusion Unit in the first instance.

This will be raised with the individual and their line manager/Head of Department/Disability and Wellbeing Manager (or nominee). Religious or cultural beliefs cannot be used to prohibit assistance animals on campus.

Every attempt will be made to resolve the matter informally with the owner, including where necessary appropriate mediation. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, or the informal resolution is not complied with, then the issue will be escalated and dealt with through the staff or student complaints procedure.

If a student or member of staff with an assistance animal is facing challenges from other members of the community about the presence of their animal on campus they should seek support from the Disability and Wellbeing Service or the Diversity and Inclusion Unit respectively.

The University reserves the right to refuse access for any animal if regular infringements of this policy occur.

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