

Assistance dogs on University premises

UPR HS05 Appendix I version 08.1

Policies superseded by this document

This document replaces version 08.0 of UPR HS05 Appendix I, with effect from 30 March 2021.

Summary of significant changes to the previous version

Minor amendments have been made for clarification purposes only.

Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in [UPR GV08](#).

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1 Introduction

The University's Security and Public Access Policy UPR HS05 states that 'no dogs, other than guide or assistance dogs are permitted to access the University grounds and premises.' The purpose of this policy is to provide clarification on what is recognised as assistance dogs and the duty on both the University and the assistance dog owners when permitting dogs onto campus.

2 Policy

- 2.1 The University recognises that an assistance dog kept and used by a disabled person (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) wholly or mainly for the purpose of assisting that person to carry out day to day activities will require access to the University's grounds and premises including student accommodation.

- 2.2 For the purpose of this policy, an assistance dog is one which has been specifically trained to assist disabled people and which has been qualified by one of the organisations registered as a member of Assistance Dogs (UK)¹ or an equivalent organisation in another country.
- 2.3 Assistance dogs trained by members of Assistance Dogs (UK) or by an equivalent organisation in another country, have formal identification and are permitted to accompany their owners at all times, unless there is an identified health and safety risk.
- 2.4 In order to meet its health and safety responsibilities to its staff, students and visitors, the University reserves the right to refuse access for a dog that:
- i is not qualified by one of the eight membership organisations of Assistance Dogs (UK);
 - ii is from another country and does not meet the full membership criteria of the established international assistance dog organisations – Assistance Dogs International, Assistance Dogs Europe, International Guide Dog Federation – or other such international bodies as may be recognised.
- 2.5 The University permits the following types of Assistance Dogs:
- i Guide Dogs assisting people who are blind or are visually impaired.
 - ii Hearing Dogs assisting people who are deaf or are hearing impaired.
 - iii Support Dogs for people with limited mobility.
 - iv Seizure Alert dogs for people with epilepsy.

3 Approval

- 3.1 Assistance dog owners must request permission to bring the dog onto campus prior to it coming to work regularly on campus. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis with risk assessments. Assistance dog owners must respect any access restrictions identified through risk assessments and established by the University on grounds of health and safety.
- 3.2 Where an assistance dog poses adverse health risk to another student(s), the University will take appropriate steps to determine suitable alternative arrangements for either or both parties, where this is possible and reasonable.

¹ Member organisations of Assistance Dog UK:

- Canine Partners
- Dog A.I.D.
- Dogs for Good
- *Guide Dogs*
- *Hearing Dogs for Deaf People*
- *Medical Detection Dogs*
- *Support Dogs*
- *The Seeing Dogs Alliance*

- 3.3 No request will be approved until the owner of the assistance dogs provides a copy of the ID booklet and any associated paperwork. Every owner of an assistance dog trained by an ADUK member organisations is given an AD(UK) ID booklet with information about the assistance dog and the training organisation. The assistance dog would need to maintain their registration for the duration of their study with on-going renewal when required.
- 3.4 The assistance dog is the responsibility of its owner who must ensure that it:
- i is kept on a harness at all times when walking around the University premises;
 - ii uses identified areas for toileting and does not allow it to foul the University paths or grounds;
 - iii has its requirements in relation to toileting and feeding requirements met;
 - iv has regular health checks, vaccination and an adequate standard of grooming;
 - v is clearly identifiable by the use of special collars and/or harnesses when on duty;
 - vi is covered by full liability insurance and a copy provided to the University.
- 3.5 It is recognised that accredited assistance dogs are highly trained, and their owners will have had specialised training in the safe and effective use of their dog. The dog's behaviour is a key part of this training and it should not cause any disruption. It is understood that seizure alert dogs are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure, which may appear to be misbehaving.
- 3.6 If at any stage an assistance dog presents with unacceptable or disruptive behaviour or if a risk is identified, or if the above responsibilities are not met, the University reserves the right to withdraw approval for the dog to be on campus. Any such decision would be made in consultation with the owner and the relevant training body where appropriate.
- 3.7 Once approved, the University will ensure that staff, students and others as appropriate are provided with adequate information to appropriately respond to the needs of the assistance dog, its owner, and all those in contact with the assistance dog. General guidance on interacting with assistance dogs or with people who have assistance dogs is provided under section 7.

4 Accommodation Services

- 4.1 When a resident student has an assistance dog, the Student Support and Welfare team is responsible for informing other students in Halls, who are likely to come into contact with the assistance dog and for asking them to confirm that they would not be adversely affected by the presence of the dog.

- 4.2 The assistance dog must never be left alone for any extended period of time in halls of residence. Where arrangements are made for the assistance dog to be cared for by a person other than their owner, this must be made known to Student Support and Welfare team in advance. Assistance dogs must always be taken with the owner if they leave campus for a prolonged period, including overnight.
- 4.3 The assistance dog must not enter other students' bedrooms, the shared toilets or shower rooms in Halls of Residence and University Accommodation without permission.

5 Emotional support / therapy animals

The University does not permit staff or students to bring pets as emotional support animals onto campus unless they are brought in for an agreed and specific therapeutic purpose. This would only be permitted through a formalised arrangement with an appropriately recognised organisation such as Pets as Therapy.

6 Working animals

Fully trained and qualified working animals such as dogs that assist in law enforcement, are permitted onto campus.

7 Interacting with assistance dogs

When interacting with assistance dogs or with people who have assistance dogs, please bear the following points in mind:

- 7.1 Talk to the handler, not the dog

It is very frustrating for a person to have to interrupt your conversation with their dog. Likewise, if you are helping a person with a guide dog to get somewhere, give the person directions or talk with the person as they follow you. They will give the dog the correct commands for following you. Please do not call the dog. The dog is used to working for the disabled owner. If it is responding to you, it is no longer focused on their needs but on you.

- 7.2 Do not pet or praise the dog without asking first

It can be very dangerous for the handler if their dog is distracted and not doing its job. It is important to remember that while they are extremely intelligent, devoted, and highly trained, service dogs are still capable of acting upon natural instincts and may display the same behaviours as other dogs from time to time. Guide dogs sometimes scavenge for food, get distracted by other animals, experience fear, and forget about their work when tempted by things they like. People's attention can be especially alluring. Praise is a reward for service animals, and people who work with the dogs provide it when it is appropriate. Sometimes it is given quietly in small doses; and at other times it is given lavishly. If another person says, "What a good dog," in passing, the person may have just rewarded the dog, without knowing it, for something the dog did just before the person arrived that was dangerous to the user. When admiring a service dog, it is best to keep eyes averted, comments directed to the user, and voice modulated appropriately (e.g. do not speak as if

addressing a child or use an especially sweet-sounding voice, as this will draw the dog's attention).

7.3 Don't get angry at the handler if they do not want to stop to talk about their dog.

Please keep in mind that they hear the same questions many times a day and often would just like to get home. Nice comments are always welcome, however!

7.4 Don't feed the service dog.

Many – not all – service dogs are on strict, healthy diets to keep their working lives long, and they may also have allergies that you are not aware of. It also can break the dog's training if they learn that they get food in a public place.

Sharon Harrison-Barker
Secretary and Registrar
Signed: **30 March 2021**

Alternative format

If you need this document in an alternative format, please email us at governanceservices@herts.ac.uk or telephone us on +44 (0)1707 28 6006.