Working and Assistance Animals

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1. **Working and Assistance Animals**

1.2 **Purpose**

To protect the health, safety and welfare of staff, students and visitors to the University from potential hazards associated with the presence of animals on University premises or in vehicles owned or managed by the University whilst supporting people with recognised needs and ensuring that the University complies with its obligations under relevant legislation, such as the need to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

1.3 **Objectives**

To ensure that staff, students and visitors are aware of:

- the responsibilities of the University
- the duties and limits placed on those bringing animals into the University
- the standards of behaviour required from animals and their owners/custodians

2. **Policy Statement**

The University is a diverse community and is committed to providing a welcoming and safe environment for all. The University also takes its responsibilities for the welfare of all staff, students and visitors seriously, including those with additional needs who may require the support of an assistance animal. The University is aware, however, that bringing animals into buildings or securing them within University grounds (e.g. tying to a railing) has the potential to cause injury, infection or allergy and has animal welfare implications.

In the interest of fairness to everyone, dogs and any other animals are not permitted to be brought into University buildings or vehicles owned or controlled by the University. The only exception to this rule is for recognised assistance and working animals (principally dogs, but including any animal. Clarification of the meaning of “Assistance Dog” is provided in Appendix 1) or when animals are brought into the University as part of an official, formally organised, event.

3. **Arrangements**

3.1 **Responsibilities of the University**

The University will make all reasonable efforts to ensure the following arrangements are in operation.

3.1.1 **Facilities**

The University will arrange for adequate numbers of appropriately specified Spend Areas to be present within the campus. Estates and Campus Services staff will ensure the upkeep of Spend Areas to ensure the health of the animal and the safety of the owner, including the provision of bins for animal refuse and the disposal of the refuse.
3.1.2 Student Services

Student Services will advise students in relation to assistance animals and will highlight this policy to them and make them aware of the help provided by the University and their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Student Services will liaise with the student’s academic School to ensure that any reasonable adjustments needed have been made, that a risk assessment has been performed and to overcome barriers to acceptance of the assistance animal.

3.1.3 Line Managers

Line managers will ensure that staff intending to use an assistance animal are aware of this policy, including their rights and responsibilities under this policy. Line managers will work with the staff member to arrange reasonable adjustments required. Line managers will also liaise with other staff to overcome barriers to acceptance of the assistance animal. HROD Directorate will provide support to line managers in addressing any issues that arise.

3.1.4 Other members of the University Community

The University aims to create conditions whereby the treatment of students, staff and applicants for employment or study, is on the basis of their relative merits, abilities and potential. In order to achieve this, the University requires all members of its community to respect and support each other. All staff within the University are required to undertake training in equality and diversity principles and legislation to support their understanding. All people who come into contact with an assistance animal must treat it as a working animal and allow it to perform its job without interference or hindrance.

3.2 Responsibilities of people intending to bring an animal into the University

The following responsibilities are borne by people who intend to bring an animal into the University, whether that be into a University building or vehicle (see definitions).

3.2.1 Bringing animals into University buildings or vehicles

Where a member of the public or other visitor to the University wishes to bring a recognised assistance animal (usually this will be a dog. Please see appendix 1 in regard to assistance dogs) into University buildings or vehicles in relation to a legitimate reason for the person’s presence within the University, this will automatically be allowed (subject to the right of the University to refuse access as detailed below). The owner/custodian of the animal must still abide by the requirements of section 3.2.2 (see below). The owner/custodian of the animal must still abide by the requirements of section 3.2.2 (see below).

Where staff or students request to bring an assistance or working animal into University buildings or vehicles, this must be agreed in advance with the Dean/Director of the School/Directorate. Where such requests relate to disabled staff or students, the person may wish to contact Disability Services for confidential advice in the first instance. In all cases the request must be in relation to the person’s legitimate work/study-related use of University buildings or vehicles. Likewise, where staff or students request to bring an animal into University buildings or vehicles as part of an official formally organised event, this must be agreed in advance with the Dean/Director of the School/Directorate.

The University must be satisfied that:

1. The requirement is legitimate. In this regard, appropriate medical confirmation of the need
The animal owner/custodian must:

1. Request permission from the University (via the Dean/Director of the relevant School/Directorate) to bring the animal into a building or vehicle at the earliest opportunity (see definition section).
2. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the animal does not cause: damage or introduction of parasites to University Estate or vehicles, injury, harm or ill health, offense, nuisance or distress to other members of the community. In this regard, the School/Directorate Health & Safety adviser should be contacted and a risk assessment undertaken and agreed with School/Directorate management.
3. Ensure that the animal is covered by full public liability insurance.
4. Ensure that the animal does not roam freely around the University Estate.
5. Ensure that the animal is not left unattended in vehicles or tied up outside University buildings.
6. Ensure that the animal does not foul University Estate or vehicles.
7. Ensure that the animal is identifiable as an assistance/working animal.
8. Ensure that the animal is under their control at all times.
9. Ensure the animal’s welfare at all times.

The University reserves the right to refuse access to a University building or vehicle by an animal under circumstances where:

1. The health, safety or welfare of the animal cannot be ensured by the adoption of reasonable control measures.
2. The health, safety or welfare of people in the building or vehicle would be unacceptably affected by the presence of the animal.

3.2.2 Bringing animals onto the University grounds

University grounds are open and accessible with pedestrian entrances at many locations. Staff, students and members of the public have free pedestrian access to many of these grounds and there are very few restrictions on where people can access. For this reason, the University does not place onerous restrictions on domestic animals being brought onto these areas. Any intention to bring non-domestic animals onto campus must be discussed with Estates & Campus Services in advance. The following duties are placed on owners/custodians of domestic animals when on University grounds.

The animal owner/custodian must:

1. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the animal does not cause: damage or introduction of parasites to University Estate, injury, harm or ill health, offense, nuisance or distress to other members of the community.
2. Ensure that the animal does not roam freely around the University grounds.
3. Ensure that the animal is not left unattended in private vehicles on the campus or tied up outside University buildings.
4. Ensure that the animal does not foul University grounds.
5. Ensure that the animal is under their control at all times.
6. Ensure the animal’s welfare at all times.

Additionally, it is recommended that the animal is covered by full public liability insurance.

These general duties are in line with those required of people owning/being a custodian of a domestic animal (typically dogs) in Scotland and take into account The Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003, The Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010, the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 and general Common Law duties of care. Since these duties are general and not specific to the University, public notices will not be displayed regarding the above requirements.

4. Complaints

If a student, staff member or member of public wishes to make a complaint, this will be dealt with in accordance with the standard University of Dundee complaints handling procedure. Complaints by users of assistance or working animals and complaints about such animals will handled equally and with reference to the Equality Act 2010.

5. Further information

5.1 Further Assistance

If further assistance in understanding this policy is required, please contact safety@dundee.ac.uk.

General information on animal control is available via the Dundee City Council Animal Control Service website.

5.2 Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Local Protocols

- University of Dundee – Public Events Safety Policy Arrangement 58
- Disability Services’ website.

5.3 Definitions & Abbreviations

“Assistance animals” refers to those that provide support to staff, students or visitors who have a recognised disability or additional support need (see also appendix 1).

“Custodian” refers to anyone who is not the owner of the animal, but who is responsible for
controlling and ensuring the welfare of an animal in the absence of the owner.

“Earliest opportunity” means with as much notice as possible to ensure that appropriate discussion and consultation can occur between all necessary individuals/groups. Ordinarily, it would be expected that at least 48 hours notice will be given, but it must be noted that each case requires to be considered separately and decisions will vary in the length of time required.

“Formally organised event” means an event for staff, students or the public that has been formally approved by the Dean/Director of the School/Directorate, supports the work of the University and is of short duration (usually lasting no more than one day). The event organiser should also check whether the University Public Events Safety Policy Arrangement 58 applies.

“Private vehicle” refers to any vehicle not own or controlled by the University.

“Spend Area” refers to a location where animals (principally dogs) can defaecate and urinate.

“University building” refers to any building owned or leased by the University. Note that student residences are not University buildings, since they are owned and operated by Dundee Student Village (DSV) Ltd., which is a company operating independently from the University.

“University estate” refers to any University ground, including buildings on that ground.

“University grounds” refers to any land, excluding buildings on that land, owned by the University, including, but not limited to, the main Dundee city centre campus, West Park Centre, University House, Botanic Gardens, Riverside playing fields and Kirkcaldy campus.

“Vehicle” refers to any vehicle owned or controlled by the University, including those leased or rented.

“Working animals” refer to those that may be brought onto campus for the purpose of providing a service to the University (including in relation to official study activities) or as part of law enforcement.
6. Document Information

6.1 Equality Impact Assessment

This policy supports the needs of those with identified additional needs, including those with pertinent protected characteristics applicable under the Equality Act 2010. There is no identified negative impact on equality. The full EIA can be downloaded from: https://uod.box.com/s/zibfpb9q9e96arxddler13jg7vvogv8m

6.2 Approvals & Renewals

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Appendix 1

Definition of Assistance Dog

For the purpose of this policy, an assistance dog is one which has been specifically trained to assist people and which has been qualified by one of the organisations registered as a member of Assistance Dogs (UK) or an equivalent organisation in another country or has undergone similar training and where the owner can provide evidence that the animal is highly trained and will behave to a high standard in public. This also includes dogs that are undergoing official training for the role of an assistance dog, where that training is being undertaken by a person representing an organisation that is a member of Assistance Dogs (UK).

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 and in all places within the United Kingdom (unless there is an unacceptable health and safety risk).

On the grounds of 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 five membership organisations of Assistance Dogs (UK).
II. Dogs from other nations, which do 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 from time to time be recognised.

Types of Assistance Dogs

Guide Dogs assist 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 can be trained to do many other tasks that their owner may find difficult or impossible, for example:

- Opening and closing doors
- Calling an ambulance
- Picking up objects
- Assisting with dressing and undressing
- Accompanying their owner whilst shopping etc.
- Acting as a physical support
- Raising the alarm
- Operating control buttons
- Switching lights on and off
- Carrying items
- Loading and unloading the washing machine
- Fetching the telephone and other items

Support Dogs also train dogs for people with disabilities and Seizure Alert dogs for people with Epilepsy. Seizure Alert dogs are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure, which may appear to be misbehaving.

Members of Assistance Dogs (UK)

The following are registered members of Assistance Dogs (UK):

- Guide Dogs for the Blind Association (GDBA)
Additional sources of information and guidance

Assistance Dogs UK

Assistance Dogs (UK) is a coalition of assistance dog organisations that encourages the exchange of ideas and best practice amongst its members, raises awareness amongst the general public and promotes behavioural and legislative changes to ensure the freedom, independence and rights of its clients. This policy refers to the definitions and types of assistance dogs provided on the assistance dogs website.