



**Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University**

# Assistance Dogs on University Premises Guidance for Students

## 1.0 Responsibilities

### Students

Are required to give advance notice of their intention to bring an assistance dog onto the premises. This will enable the University to carry out an animal in building risk assessment. This will ensure that any support and necessary risk controls can be put in place and enable the owner and dog to remain comfortable and safe.

#### **Students requesting to bring an assistance dog on to University Campus:**

- Should contact the [Disability Support Team](#) and if appropriate the [Accommodation Office](#).

#### **Students when with their dog on campus are responsible for ensuring that their dog is:**

- Clearly identifiable by the use of branded jacket/lead/harness or equivalent.
- Covered by full public liability insurance – a copy of which should be provided to Disability Services/Accommodation Officer.
- Under their control and on a lead at all times.

#### **Students must ensure that:**

- High standards of hygiene, in relation to the assistance dog and associated waste, are maintained at all times. This applies to bedding, food and water dishes to avoid contamination in food areas and arrangements for disposal of waste.
- Further discussion with the owner will be required to plan any toilet/'spending' breaks and to identify a suitable area for these breaks.

## 2.0 Guidance and Information

### Assistance dogs on campus

The University recognises that a dog kept and used by a disabled person (as defined by the Equality Act 2010), wholly or mainly for the purposes of assisting that person to carry out day-to-day activities will require access to the University estate and relevant buildings.

Assistance dogs are the only animals that are permitted to be in University buildings. Anyone bringing animals into University buildings without permission, other than Assistance dogs, will be asked to remove the animal from campus immediately. On health and safety grounds, the University will exclude dogs from University premises that are not qualified under the [member organisations](#) of Assistance Dogs (UK) or have undergone an equivalent program of training. Requests made in respect of assistance dogs should be considered on a case-by-case basis and will always be subject to an appropriate assessment of risk.

It should also be noted that the risk assessment, on grounds of health and safety, might well highlight certain higher risk areas (i.e. laboratories, workshops etc.) from which the assistance dog will be prohibited from.

### **Emergency Evacuation**

Any student requiring support to safely evacuate their building(s) in the event of an emergency evacuation, or whilst on campus with their assistance dog will need to arrange for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) to be implemented – this can be arranged via the Student Hubs.

## **3.0 Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the definition of an assistance dog?**

An assistance dog must:

- Be trained and registered by a member of [Assistance Dogs UK](#) – a coalition of Assistance Dog organisations (or an equivalent organisation in another country) or have undergone an equivalent program of training.
- Have the yellow ID booklet from the Assistance Dogs 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, or ensure that the equivalent information is readily available upon request.
- Have a formal identification in the form of branded jackets or lead slips, or equivalent.

### **Can I pet an assistance dog?**

Assistance dogs are not pets and are at work, performing tasks to assist the disabled person. Therefore, you should always talk to the handler, not the dog.

Colleagues or students should not:

- Feed, pet or praise assistance dogs.
- Deliberately distract or startle an assistance dog.
- Separate or attempt to separate an assistance animal from the person using the animal's service unless given express permission.

It is useful to note that seizure alert dogs are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure, which can make them appear as though they are misbehaving.

### **What about objections from staff/students/visitors?**

Other people in the proximity of the assistance dog may raise a reasonable objection due to allergy, medical condition, mental health issues and other reasons. If this occurs, the University will seek to make alternative arrangements for the person making the objection. If there is an identifiable person with an allergy to or fear of dogs,

then reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that person has minimal or no contact with dogs; in these instances, the situation will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

Allergies, fears, concerns arising out of cultural or religious beliefs etc. will be managed through risk assessment on a case-by-case basis.

### **Where can a student dispose of any dog waste?**

Please liaise with the relevant building Facilities Manager to discuss the set-up of a designated dog toileting area on the campus.

### **How will reasonable adjustments be made?**

A discussion should take place between the dog owner and their tutor to identify what [reasonable adjustments](#) need to be made to accommodate the dog.

Points to consider:

- Where will the dog be while the owner is working?
- How will we know when the dog is 'working'?
- Does the dog need to be in a pen to avoid being disturbed or trod on accidentally?
- How many times a day does the dog need a toilet break?
- Where will it go for this toilet break and do special facilities need bringing in?
- Who is allowed to feed the dog?

**Tip:** When the assistance dog is in campus buildings, it might be useful to provide a list of 'Do's and Don'ts' for other colleagues so that everyone knows how to behave around the dog.

All this information could be included into the reasonable adjustment form for the disabled student or maybe be additional information agreed with a department.

[Guide Dogs UK](#) can provide a spending pen for the dog to use when toileting, but it needs to be in a safe location, discussion with [Business Support and Improvement](#) (EFCD) may be required to identify the best location for this. For further information, please refer to their [Guidance on the provision of spending facilities for guide dogs and other assistance dogs](#).

### **What if someone has a service/therapeutic animal?**

The number of people claiming therapeutic benefits gained from spending time with animals is rising. Whilst there are no robust scientifically proven benefits yet, the University recognises that there may be instances where requests for support from therapeutic animals should be considered. For this reason, each case will be assessed on its merits to determine the impact upon the wider University community in relation to the request. This is an evidence-based process, so students will be asked to provide evidence (of medical need and training program) to support their request.

Please note if approved, they will also be required to demonstrate that there is appropriate public liability cover for the animal.

**Where can I find more guidance about assistance dogs?**

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) have produced '[Assistance dogs: A guide for all businesses](#)'. More advice and information can be obtained from the member organisation that has provided the assistance dog.