

Assistance Animals on University Property: policy and guidelines

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Assistance Animals on University Property: Policy and Guidelines

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1. Statement

London Metropolitan University is committed to ensuring that all students have as equitable an academic experience as possible, and therefore endeavours to work with disabled students to support them during their time on campus.

Staff and students whose access to work and student services is facilitated by the use of mobility aids should not be refused entry on the basis of their disability or reliance on mobility aids, including assistance dogs.

In line with the Equality Act 2010 (England, Wales and Scotland) and the Disability Discrimination Act (Northern Ireland), the Universities Disabilities and Dyslexia Service (DDS) will work with disabled students to identify support needs and make reasonable adjustments in order to provide a safe and welcoming environment, in which access to study facilities, student programmes and services is equal for all.

2. Policy

London Metropolitan University generally prohibits individuals from bringing animals inside any University owned, leased, or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures.

The main hazards and concerns associated with having animals inside University premises are:

- Stalled or delayed evacuation of a building in an emergency situation
- Aggressive behaviour of animals
- Allergic reactions and transmission of disease
- Zoophobia (phobia of animals that causes distress or dysfunction in an individual's everyday life)
- Slips, trips and falls
- Animal waste
- Damage to University property

It is acknowledged that these hazards also apply to University grounds, albeit to a lesser extent.

In order to minimise these risks, subject to the exceptions given below, animals are not permitted inside University owned, leased, or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures. In addition:

- No animals should be left in parked vehicles on campus.
- Animals must not be brought onto campus or tied up outside buildings.
- Animals are also not permitted in our sports, leisure or entertainment facilities.

3. Assistance Animals - Scope

An assistance animal, usually a dog, is specially trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Guide dogs are the most common type of assistance dog, used by individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Other medical conditions may require the use of assistance dogs: hearing loss, mental health conditions, physical impairments, epilepsy or seizure-related

disorders, autism spectrum conditions. A pet or a therapy/emotional support animal is not an assistance animal.

London Metropolitan University recognises that assistance dogs play an important role in the safety and well-being of disabled people. The University allows access to assistance dogs under the control of their owner and is prepared to make reasonable adjustments for their safe access and conduct of duties. Pets and other animals that do not aid of members of its community and/or do not meet the requirements below are not allowed in the University buildings or maintained grounds.

Assistance dogs must:

- be trained by a member of Assistance Dogs UK (AD(UK)), a coalition of assistance dog organisations listed below 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.

There are seven registered charities that form AD (UK), these are:

- Canine Partners
- Dog A.I.D.
- Dogs for the Disabled
- Guide Dogs
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
- Medical Detection Dogs
- Support Dogs

4. Assistance Animals - Owners' Responsibilities

It is recommended that University students with a disability who utilise an assistance dog register in advance with the DDS.

4.1 Information

It is advised that assistance dog owners notify the University in advance that they will be bringing an assistance dog onto the estate. They should be able to provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties, if or when requested by University staff.

4.2 Identification

Assistance dog owners must ensure that their assistance dogs are clearly identifiable by the use of special collars and/or harnesses when on duty.

4.3 Insurance

Owners are responsible for ensuring that their assistance dogs are covered by full liability insurance and provide a copy to the University.

4.4 Access restrictions

Assistance dog owners must respect access restrictions established by the University on grounds of health and safety. Owners must ensure that assistance dogs do not enter staff and students' privately assigned spaces without permission.

4.5 Animal misbehaviour

Preventing and correcting assistance dog's misbehaviour is the owner's responsibility. Owners must make sure that their assistance dogs do not cause harm or injury to others and damage to University property.

Please note that seizure alert dogs are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure and they can appear to be misbehaving.

4.5 Cleanliness

Registered blind people are not required to clean up after their guide dogs but they are expected to have received the appropriate training to avoid dog waste on campus. Assistance dog users share responsibility for the clean-up of the animal's waste, consistent with reasonable capacity. Owners must use the designated areas identified by the University. In the unlikely event that the dog does foul outside of these designated areas, the owner must report this to the Estates helpdesk (ask@londonmet.ac.uk or ext. 5555) who will make arrangements for the area to be cleaned and sanitised.

4.6 Animal care and supervision

Animal care is the owner's responsibility. The owner ensures regular health checks, vaccination and an adequate standard of grooming. Owners must ensure the assistance dog 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 University estate or safely harnessed when unsupervised for short periods of time.

Owners of assistance dogs that are ill, in poor health, excessively unclean or unkempt may be required to remove the animal from University premises.

London Metropolitan University is not responsible for the loss, ill health, or death of the assistance dog animal.

4.7 Animal training

Owners are responsible for the training needs of their assistance dogs, for the correct and safe performance of their duties. A copy of the yellow ID booklet from the AD(UK) member organisation must be provided to the University.

5. Assistance Animals - Organisational Arrangements

When assistance dogs are in University properties we may need to agree reasonable site-specific guidelines. Assistance dog users are required to comply with the conditions of those guidelines. Under this provision, the University requires that:

- Access requirements involving assistance dogs are legitimate and pre-agreed with the University
- Suitable arrangements for the animals' safe access to and conduct of work in the University are made
- All concerned parties (co-workers, classmates, other residents, etc.) are consulted and advised on safe practice and appropriate behaviour
- The assistance dog owner agrees to the terms and conditions of use of assistance dogs within the University

The DDS offers the following arrangements, for its registered students, in order to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for assistance dogs, their owners, and other members of the residential and campus community:

- Support and advisory services from the DDS
- A mutually agreed Individual Needs Assessment Report (INAR) that sets out any reasonable adjustments required
- Arrival or pre-arrival site orientation
- Visits by the assistance dogs trainer are encouraged in the early settling-in days
- Service animal route safety check (for hazards and obstructions)
- Provision or identification of designated spending pens or relief area/s for the toilet needs of assistance dogs on the premises or off-site,
- Within rooms and enclosed spaces on University premises, to ensure there is sufficient space for assistance dogs within reach of owner (under a table or in a corner)
- Provision of water bowls, if requested

5.1 Compliance, Awareness and Training

Student Services will ensure that staff, students and other members of the University community are provided with adequate training to respond to the needs of the assistance dog, its owner, and all those in contact with the assistance dog.

Student Services will ensure that practice is conformable to current legislation.

5.2 Notification

It is recommended that a student requiring the support of an assistance dog registers with the DDS. Where a student is registered with the DDS the service will;

- provide prior notice to staff, students and University partners living or working in close proximity to the assistance dog.

- Consultation and advisory services will be offered to all affected parties.

5.3 Infrastructure

Estates co-ordinates the identification and, if necessary, installation of appropriate relief areas such as spending pens.

Estates will manage the upkeep of spending pens (located at North site only), including the regular provision of refuse bins.

5.4 Emergency Evacuation

The University sets out a safe and suitable emergency evacuation plan for assistance dogs and their owners.

Health and Safety in conjunction with DDS to brief assistance dog owners on emergency evacuation procedures.

Health and Safety to make information on emergency evacuation available for reference in accessible formats.

Health and Safety to ensure that emergency responders are trained to make reasonable efforts to keep assistance dogs with their owners in the event of an emergency situation. However, the emergency responder's priority should be toward the safety of the owner.

5.5 Orientation

Where a student is registered with the DDS the service will;

- conduct pre-arrival and arrival site orientation.
- organise guided assistance in the event of route variations, relocation, or when access to specific areas are restricted.

Please note that Assistance Dogs are highly trained working dogs, performing tasks to assist disabled persons. Members of the University community should not: -

- touch or feed an Assistance Dog, unless invited to do so by their owner;
- deliberately distract or startle an Assistance Dog;
- separate or attempt to separate an Assistance Dog from the person using the Assistance Dog's service.

6. Therapy Animals

A therapy animal is an animal prescribed to an individual as part of a treatment process for a physical or mental condition. Animal-assisted therapy (AAT) is a type of therapy that involves animals as a form of treatment. The goal of AAT is to improve a patient's social, emotional, or cognitive functioning. Unlike an assistance dog, a therapy animal does not facilitate mobility for its owner or user or assist with daily tasks, and need not accompany its owner at all times. Therapy animals will only be permitted on University premises with prior written agreement from

the University. Therapy animals also need to be suitably trained and registered and will be assessed on a case by case basis. Medical evidence will also need to be submitted to the University outlining the need for and scope of the therapy animal.

7. Working Animals

An animal, usually a dog, which provides other services within the University, such as assisting in law enforcement. Such animals are permitted within University premises with the consent of the University.

8. Conflict Situations

8.1 Removal of Assistance Dog

The University reserves the right to remove or bar entry to an Assistance Dog when it poses a direct threat to the health & safety of others. Unresolved animal misbehaviour may also provide grounds for removal, after all reasonable measures have been taken to address this.

8.2 Damage

Assistance Dog owners are responsible for any damage to persons or University property.

8.3 Restricted access

The University may restrict access of Assistance Dogs to certain areas for health and safety reasons. Restricted areas may include research laboratories, medical facilities, areas where protective clothing is required, boiler rooms, etc. Applications for exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

8.4 Conflicting disabilities

Where an Assistance Dog poses adverse health risk to a/other student(s), the University will seek medical documentation from the affected party/parties to determine suitable alternative and equitable arrangements for either or both parties.

8.5 Religious or cultural conflicts

Religious or cultural beliefs cannot be used to prohibit access to Assistance Dogs and their owners.

9. Complaints

Any issues in relation to assistance dogs on University premises that cannot be resolved informally should be raised in accordance with the University's [complaints handling procedure](#).

10. Additional Information

Guide Dogs

www.guidedogs.org.uk
guide_dogs@guidedogs.org.uk
0845 241 2178

Assistance Dogs UK

www.assistedogs.org.uk
01844 348 100

Canine Partners

www.caninepartners.co.uk
info@caninepartners.co.uk
08456 580 480

Dogs for the Disabled

www.dogsforthe-disabled.org
info@dogsforthe-disabled.org
08700 776 600

Medical Detection Dogs

www.medicaldetectiondogs.org.uk
01296 655 888

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

www.hearing-dogs.co.uk
info@hearingdogs.org.uk

Support Dogs

www.support-dogs.org.uk
supportdogs@btconnect.com
0870 609 3476

The Royal National Institute of Blind People

www.rnib.org.uk
0303 123 999

Dogs A.I.D

www.dogaid.org.uk
01743 588 469