

Assistance Dogs on University Premises:

Student Guidance

Including guidance on Emotional Support Therapy Animals

Student & Academic Services, June 2025

1. Introduction

The University of Greenwich is committed to providing an environment which is accessible and welcoming for all.

Providing access to university premises for assistance dogs to accompany their owners, is a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010. The University will work with disabled students to identify their access requirements and to make the necessary reasonable adjustments.

Emotional Support Therapy Animals

Higher Education Institutions are not legally required to permit emotional support therapy animals on campus. The decision to allow such animals remains at the discretion of the University. Where emotional support therapy animals are not permitted, alternative emotional and pastoral support will be arranged to ensure the wellbeing of the student.

2. Purpose

The University of Greenwich recognises that assistance dogs play an important role in the safety and wellbeing of disabled people and has provided guidance within this document for students.

The University will not allow pets and other animals on to its premises, including Halls of Residences.

The guidance aims to:

- Raise awareness of issues relating to assistance dogs;
- The arrangements for bringing an assistance dog on campus;
- The responsibilities of the University, owner and the student community regarding assistance dogs;
- Set out arrangements for managing issues and complaints.

3. Assistance dog on campus

All students who use an assistance dog should contact their Faculty Administration office about bringing their assistance dogs onto university premises in advance of arrival. The student will need to be able to provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties, when requested by university staff.

All students who use an assistance dog will be required to register with the Student Wellbeing Service, who will be able to provide advice, coordinate the implementation of reasonable adjustments and signpost to Estate and Facilities, where required.

Assistance dogs will not be permitted in certain specialist teaching environments, such as laboratories or simulation rooms, due to health and safety considerations. In such cases, a sighted guide will be provided as an alternative form of support.

Suitable arrangements for the dog's safe access to and conduct of work in the university must be agreed. Further information is contained within the section - University Arrangements, below.

5. Student's Responsibilities

The assistance dog is the responsibility of its owner who will therefore need to ensure the following:

- The dog is kept on a lead during the times when walking around campus.
- The dog's feeding requirements are met.
- The dog is clearly identifiable – using special collars and/or harnesses when on duty.
- The dog uses the designated areas identified by Estates and Facilities, for relieving itself and the owner clears up and disposes of the waste. In the unlikely event that the dog does foul outside of these designated areas, the owner must report this to an appropriate staff member to make arrangements for the housekeeping team to clean and sanitise the area.
- The dog behaves appropriately and does not disrupt others, cause harm or injury to others and does not damage university property. The owner will be responsible for any damage to persons or university property.
- The student is expected to respect access restrictions established by the University on grounds of health and safety.
- The student is responsible for the training needs of their assistance dog, to ensure that they can safely perform their duties. If training has not been provided by a recognised charity then the student will need to notify Student Wellbeing Service so that a risk assessment can be organised.
- The student will also need to ensure that their dog is covered by full public liability insurance at a level of £5m. Proof of this insurance will need to be supplied when requested.
- The student must ensure that their dog does not enter other students' bedrooms, shared toilets or showers in halls.

- The student ensures that the dog receives regular health checks and vaccination.
- The student must ensure that the dog is kept groomed and clean and is in good health when on university premises.

6. University Arrangements

The University has put in place the following arrangements to ensure that students who are accompanied by an assistance dog, are able to fully access university premises and facilities. These arrangements will be agreed in consultation with the student.

- Accommodation Services will liaise with the student to ensure appropriate accommodation is allocated, taking into consideration their needs and those of the dog.
- Accommodation Services will inform and consult other students in hall and to seek confirmation that they will not be adversely affected by the presence of the assistance dog. Alternative housing arrangements will be considered for any students who have concerns. Guidance on expectations surrounding the care of the assistance dog in halls will be given to the student.
- Student Wellbeing Service, in consultation with Estates and Facilities Services, will be responsible for making arrangements for orientation on campus. Student Wellbeing Services can be contacted by email wellbeing@gre.ac.uk
- Student Wellbeing Service, in consultation with Estates and Facilities Services and Timetabling team, will ensure student is timetabled in suitable rooms.
- Estates and Facilities Services will ensure that assistance dogs are provided with information about designated areas where the dog will be able to relieve itself. A water bowl will be provided on request. Estate and Facilities Services can be contacted by email fmcentralhelpdesk@gre.ac.uk
- The University's Health and Safety Services will ensure that suitable arrangements are made for emergency evacuation plans for assistance dogs and their owners.
- The Faculty will be responsible for notifying the student cohort that will be impacted and checking if any students within the class have any objections, for example allergies which need to be considered. Details about the student that has the assistance dog should not be shared with the cohort.
- The Faculty will need to share Guidelines for Interacting with Assistance Dogs and Owners (Appendix 2) with student cohort.

- The Faculty will advise the owner of areas where there will be restricted access for assistance dogs, for health and safety reasons. These could include research laboratories and areas where protective clothing is required.
- The University reserves the right to request the removal of, or bar entry to an assistance dog when it poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

7. Complaints and Resolutions

If a student wishes to raise a complaint about the treatment of themselves or their dog, this complaint should be raised with the relevant department, for example the student's Faculty or Accommodation Services. The issue will be investigated, and every effort will be made to resolve the matter informally. If the issue cannot be resolved at the informal stage, it will be escalated and managed through the appropriate university disciplinary procedures.

Similarly, if a student or member of staff wishes to raise a complaint about an assistance dog, or their owner, this should also be raised with the relevant department in the first instance. Again, every attempt will be made to resolve this informally. However, if the issue cannot be resolved informally, or where there is non-compliance with the request to resolve the matter, the issue will be escalated and managed under the appropriate university disciplinary procedures.

Appendix 1

Types of Assistance Dogs

Assistance dogs are working dogs who are specially trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability and perform their role as guide dogs, hearing dogs, service or support dogs or seizure alert dogs.

It is recommended that assistance dogs be trained by a member of [Assistance Dogs UK \(AD \(UK\)\)](#), a coalition of recognised assistance dog organisations, or an equivalent organisation in another country.

If trained by a member of Assistance Dogs UK (AD (UK)) then it is recommended that the owner carries formal identification; this can be in the form of a branded jacket or lead slips and/or 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.

If training has not been provided by a recognised charity, then the University will conduct a risk assessment.

Appendix 2

Guidelines for Interacting with Assistance Dogs and Owners

It is important to note that assistance dogs are working dogs, who are performing tasks to assist disabled people. It is, therefore, useful to consider the following guidelines:

- Talk to the assistance dog owner and not the dog.
- Be mindful that the owner may not have the time to stop and talk. Also talking to the dog will be a distraction which prevents the dog from focusing on their owner's needs.
- If you are helping the owner to get to their destination speak to the person and they will give the correct commands to their dog.
- Do not feed, pet or praise the dog without asking first.
- Assistance dogs have a strict healthy diet and they may also have allergies. Praise is a reward for assistance dogs and is provided by their owners.
- When admiring an assistance dog, it is best to keep your eyes averted and direct comments to the owner, to prevent distracting the dog.

Appendix 3

Additional Information

Additional sources of further information regarding Assistance Dogs can be obtained from organisations who are registered members of Assistance Dogs (UK)

Assistance Dogs UK

Website www.assistancedogs.org.uk

Website www.assistancedogs.org.uk/members/

Contact number 01844 348 100