

Accommodation Services

Assistance Dogs within University Owned Accommodation

Purpose Statement

To provide clear guidelines around how Accommodation Services will manage, Assistance Dogs within university owned accommodation.

Applicability and Scope

This policy is applicable to all students residing in University owned accommodation.

Definitions

Assistance Dogs

Assistance Dogs are animals that have been highly trained to perform specific tasks to assist a disabled person. The work or task performed by the assistance dog must be directly related to an owner's disability. This does not include the crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

Misbehaviour

For the purpose of this policy, misbehaviour is when an animal acts in a way which disturbs or distresses other residents or causes damage to people or property.

Policy Statement

Assistance Dogs

Assistance dogs are trained by members of Assistance Dogs (UK) or by an equivalent organisation in another country.

Assistance Dogs (UK) is a coalition of Assistance Dog organisations, individual member of which are listed below, and the assistance dogs are required to have:

A formal identification in the form of a branded jacked or lead slips.

A yellow ID booklet from the Assistance Dogs (UK) member organisation. This ID book contains information about the Assistance Dog and its owner, and details of the training organisation who trained the Assistance Dog.

Assistance Dog Organisations

1. Canine Partners
2. Dog A.I.D. (Assistance in Disability)
3. Dogs for Good
4. The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
5. The Seeing Dogs Alliance
6. Hearing Dogs for Deaf People

7. Medical Detection Dogs

8. Support Dogs

Assistance Dog owners should therefore be in a position to evidence that their dogs are certified Assistance Dogs – and not pets with a therapeutic purpose.

Assistance Dogs from other countries

There may be occasions where students, staff or visitors to the University from other countries request that their Assistance Dog accompanies them, As long as the dog is trained by an organisation equivalent to one of the member organisations of Assistance Dogs (UK), this is acceptable.

Guidance for Assistance Dogs in Accommodation

Assistance Dogs are permitted to access all University owned accommodation circulation and communal spaces, on a lead under the control of their handler, who may be student, staff member or a visitor to the university.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Accommodation Service to provide:

- toilet area for the Assistance Dog in an appropriate location for the owner.
- a bin to dispose of the dog waste will also be provided and identified
- cleaning arrangements of the toileting area will be subject to requirement
- a ground floor bedroom on a site suitable for having an Assistance Dog.
- a bedroom large enough to accommodate an Assistance Dog.
- a deep clean at the end of the tenancy (tenant will not be charged).
- information to other tenants living in close proximity that there will be an assistance dog present at the accommodation.

It is the responsibilities of Assistance Dog owners:

- to provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties, if reasonably requested by University staff.
- to ensure that their Assistance Dogs are clearly identifiable by the use of special collars, harnesses and/or ID tags when on duty.
- to ensure that their Assistance Dogs are covered by full liability insurance.
- to prevent and correct Assistance Dogs misbehaviour.
- to make sure that their Assistance Dogs do not cause harm or injury to others and damage to University property.
- to take responsibility for the clean-up of the animal's waste on campus, consistent with reasonable capacity (registered blind people are not expected clean up after their Assistance Dogs).

- to provide care to the Assistance Dog. The owner is to ensure regular health checks, vaccinations and an adequate level of grooming of the Assistance Dog.
- to ensure that the Assistance Dog has its requirements met in regard to feeding, watering and toileting fully met.
- to pick up any additional training needs for their assistance dogs and for the correct safe performance of their duties.
- to pay for the costs of making good any damage to persons or university property.
- to not leave the Assistance Dog unattended or with flatmates, if the owner leaves the Accommodation overnight or during University breaks

Access Restrictions

- Assistance Dog owners must respect the access restriction established by the University on the grounds of Health and Safety.
- Assistance Dog owners must ensure that Assistance Dog do not enter staff and students' privately assigned spaces such as bedrooms and flats without permission.

Etiquette

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 Assistant Dog's service.

Conflicting Disabilities

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

Removal of Assistance Dogs

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.

Residents sharing accommodation with an Assistance Dog

In the case of being allocated a room in close proximity to an Assistance Dog we will inform you that there will be an Assistance Dog in close proximity to your room. You will then be given the option to be reallocated or to decline the offer of accommodation if you are uncomfortable with living in the proximity of an Assistance Dog.

Complaints

Any issues in relation to Assistance Dogs in the first instance should be directed to your Accommodation reception.

Insurance

Your student insurance will not cover any damage to your own personal belongings caused by your service dog. Your student insurance will cover accidental damage to Newcastle University Accommodation Property up to £5000 subject to £100 excess.