

Procedures for The Provision of Supports to Students with Disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties

7.9 Service Dogs Policy

7.9.1 Introduction

Recognised under Irish Law, a Service Dog is defined as a highly trained dog that has been specifically trained to assist a person with additional needs. For an animal to be recognised as a Service Dog it must be fully trained and registered with one of the following organisations or an international equivalent:

- Irish Guide Dogs for The Blind
- Dogs for The Disabled (Cork)
- Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland
- Canine Partners (UK)
- Dog A.I.D. (UK)
- Guide Dogs UK
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People (UK)
- Medical Detection Dogs (UK)
- Support Dogs (UK)
- International Guide Dog Federation

The college recognises that Service Dogs are highly trained working animals who pose a minimal risk of causing disruption to college activities. Members of the wider college community are reminded that Service Dogs are working animals and not pets and should not be disturbed when at work.

7.9.2 Objectives

- To outline the arrangements made for Service Dogs and their handlers on campus.
- To outline the roles and responsibilities within the college in relation to Service Dogs.
- To outline the responsibilities of the handlers of Service Dogs on campus.
- To outline the process for dealing with issues and complaints if they arise.

7.9.3 Scope

This policy applies to applicants and learners who wish to bring a Service Dog on campus with them to classes. Any programmes in which learners are accompanied by Service Dogs, and any faculties/departments in which staff are accompanied by Service Dogs. This policy outlines the processes taken during application stage, induction and while the learner is attending their course.

This policy does not apply to emotional support animals, which are animals used by people to provide comfort or emotional support, but which do not meet the criteria

Section G: Support for Learners

to be classified as service animals. Emotional support animals are not currently recognised under Irish legislation.

7.9.4 Responsibility for Implementation

Applicant / Learner

- Required to support their application with relevant documentation including identification for the Service Dog and a supporting letter from a medical professional.
- Responsible for providing supporting documentation such as the Service Dog's registration and supporting medical documentation during the Needs Assessment.
- Service Dogs are welcome in college buildings subject to owners ensuring:
 - That their animal wears an identifiable harness or a branded lead clearly stating that it is a working Service Dog.
 - That they carry suitable identification to prove that their animal is a Service Dog if requested for clarification.

Admissions Office

- Will normally require an applicant who wishes to bring a Service Dog on campus to indicate their intention to do so at the time of application as part of their Needs Assessment.

Learning Support Coordinator

- Undertake a Needs Assessment
- Will inform the applicant if their request to bring a Service Dog on campus has been approved, and will be responsible for ensuring documentation is in order.
- If the request to bring a Service Dog on campus is approved, the Learning Support Coordinator will inform the Campus Services Coordinator and the relevant Programme Director.

Programme Director

- Responsible to communicate to the programme team that a Service Dog will be present in classes.
- will communicate with the other learners in the learner's class the guidelines around interacting with Service Dogs included as the [Appendix 22](#).

7.9.5 Procedures for the Acceptance of Service Dogs

Section G: Support for Learners

- i. The Admissions Office will normally require an applicant who wishes to bring a Service Dog on campus to indicate their intention to do so at the time of application as part of their Needs Assessment.
 - ii. The Needs Assessment will be reviewed by the Learning Support Coordinator.
 - iii. The applicant will be required to support their application with relevant documentation including identification for the Service Dog and a supporting letter from a medical professional.
 - iv. The college will make the final decision as to whether or not to approve an applicant's / learner's Service Dog request.
 - v. The [Appendix 22](#) giving guidelines on interacting with Service Dogs will be circulated to the faculty.
-