

# QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

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Student Campus and Life  
Queen's Accommodation

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## Accommodation Assisted Animals Policy

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Queen's Accommodation values the diversity of its student and staff and family residents and is committed to providing an environment which is welcoming for all. [This Policy must be read in conjunction with the University's 'Animals on Campus' Policy.](#) Queen's [Accommodation at Queen's](#) endeavour to support the individual accommodation needs of all residents subject to the provisions outlined below.

All residents requiring the support of an assistive animal must clearly demonstrate, with appropriate evidence, from a relevant organisation or appropriate health professional, that the animal has been specifically trained and placed with them for one of the following purposes:

- Assisting with daily living tasks
- Working as a medical alert to support the management of a medical condition.

### 2. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ASSISTANCE AND THERAPEUTIC ANIMAL

An 'assistance animal' is trained to perform specific tasks to help a disabled person and are usually qualified by one of the charitable organisations registered as members of Assistance Animals UK or other international assistance animal organisations.

A 'therapeutic animal' incorporates a wide range of potential activities. A therapy animal is 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 animal, 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 in the UK are not considered to be assistance animals.

### 3. TYPES OF ASSISTED ANIMAL

- Guide animal - assist people who are blind or are visually impaired.
- Hearing animal – assist people who are deaf or are hearing impaired.
- Support animal/animal for the disabled - a support animal can be trained to do many other tasks, which their owner may find difficult or impossible, for example:
  - Opening and closing doors
  - Calling an ambulance
  - Picking up objects
  - Assisting with dressing and undressing
  - Accompanying their owner whilst shopping
  - Acting as a physical support
  - Raising the alarm

- Operating control buttons
- Switching lights on and off
- Carrying items
- Loading and unloading the washing machine
- Fetching the telephone and other items
- Support animals provides assistance for people with disabilities i.e. Seizure Alert Animals for people with Epilepsy.

The main hazards and concerns associated with having animals in Queen's Accommodation 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 Queen's Accommodation property
- Residents who feel uncomfortable around domestic animals, who may be in the communal areas within apartments or houses with their owners.

#### **4. POLICY**

Queen's Accommodation has developed a policy to specifically address issues relating to assistance animals in University accommodation.

Assistance animals (guide animals, hearing animals, and service animals) are allowed into university buildings under the control of their owner. University members with a disability who utilise an assistance animal or one in training must register in advance of arrival with Disability Services. Therapeutic animals are not allowed to reside within Queen's Accommodation apartments and houses. Pets are also not allowed to reside within Queen's Accommodation apartments and houses.

#### **5. Assisted Animals Requirements**

Must be trained by a member of Assistance Dogs UK (AD (UK)), a coalition of assistance animal organisations, listed below:

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

**OR**

- Must be trained by a member of an established international assistance animal organisations i.e. Assistance Animals International, Assistance Animals Europe, International Guide Animal Federation – or other such international bodies
- Have a formal identification in the form of branded jackets or lead slips.

- Have the yellow ID booklet from the Assistance Dogs UK (AD (UK)) member organisation or other such international bodies. This ID book contains information about the owner and their animal and details of the training organisation who trained the animal and its owner.

*\*Please note assistance animals are at work, performing tasks to assist persons with disabilities and are not pets.*

Queen's Accommodation has a few rooms available which meet the needs of a disabled resident. The University provides information for disabled students, staff, and family in relation to the use of assisted animals, which can be discussed with Disability Services, to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made.

This policy ensures equality and fairness to all potential residents applying for Accommodation through the University.

## **6. PROCEDURE**

### **6.1 Requirements for Assistance Animals**

Queen's Accommodation define an assistance animal as one which has been specifically trained to assist a disabled person and which has been qualified by one of the organisations registered as a member of Assistance Dogs UK (AD (UK)) or an equivalent organisation in another country.

Assistance animals, have formal identification and are permitted to always accompany their owners and in all places within the United Kingdom (unless there is a genuine health and safety risk). A therapy animal does not have these same legal privileges.

On the grounds of Health and Safety responsibilities to its staff, students and visitors, the University reserves the right to refuse access for an animal that:

- Is not qualified by one of the five membership organisations of Assistance Dogs UK (AD (UK))
- Animals from other nations, which do not meet the full membership criteria of the established international assistance animal organisations – Assistance Animals International, Assistance Animals Europe, International Guide Animal Federation – or other such international bodies.

### **6.2 Animals in Residence**

Only assistance animals that meet the above criteria will be exempt from the rules that otherwise restrict or prohibit animals in residence.

### **6.3 Queen's Accommodation Roles and Responsibilities**

When a resident has an assistance animal, Queen's Accommodation is responsible for informing other residents living in Queen's Accommodation, who are likely to meet the assistance animal to ask them to confirm that they would not be adversely affected by the presence of the animal.

If a student or member of staff wish to make a complaint about an assistance animal, they should refer to the Complaint Policy.

The University will ensure that staff in Queen's Accommodation will be provided with training, so that they can respond appropriately to individual needs.

#### 6.4 Management Team

Queen's Accommodation Management team will ensure that a student, staff and/or family member with an assistance animal are aware of this policy, including their own responsibilities and will work together to arrange any reasonable adjustments required.

The Management team will also ensure that other members of staff respond appropriately to the resident and the assistance animal.

#### 6.5 The Owner's roles and responsibilities

The assistance animal is the responsibility of its owner who must ensure that:

- It is always kept on a lead when walking around the University premises.
- Does not allow it to foul the University paths or grounds.
- Regular health checks, vaccinations and an adequate standard of grooming is ensured.
- Has its requirements in relation to toileting and feeding requirements met
- The assistance animal is clearly identifiable by the use of special collars and/or harness when on duty.
- The assistance animal is covered by full liability insurance and a copy is provided to Queen's Accommodation
- Does not enter a resident's bedroom, the shared toilets or shower rooms in Queen's Accommodation
- Always behaves in an appropriate manner and does not disrupt others. Owners must make sure that their assistance animal does not cause harm or injury to others or cause damage to Queen's Accommodation. Seizure Alert animals are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure, which may appear to be misbehaving.

## **7 COMPLAINT SECTION**

If a student, staff and/or family member with an assistance animal residing in Queen's Accommodation wishes to make a complaint about the treatment of themselves or their animal, it should be raised with the Accommodation Manager and Residential Life Manager as appropriate.

If a student, staff and/or family member wish to make a complaint about an assistance animal, it should be raised with the Accommodation Manager and Residential Life Manager as appropriate.

Every attempt will be made to resolve the matter informally, including where appropriate the use of mediation. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the issue will be dealt with through the Complaint Policy.