

P421 CAFRE Assistance Dogs Policy

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	CAFRE Quality Manual Index	CAFRE Website (Tick as appropriate)
Document available	✓	✓

This document can also be produced in alternative formats upon request

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Version History

Version	Description of Changes	Date
01	Initial document development	July 2023
02	Appeals section updated to remove panel of staff in consideration of appeal.	August 2024

Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Scope	4
3. Objectives	4
4. Definitions	4
5. Process and Procedure.....	5
6. Concerns.....	5
7. Appeals.....	6

1. Introduction

CAFRE values the diversity of its learner body and is committed to providing an environment which is welcoming for all. In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act, CAFRE will work with people with disabilities to identify support needs and make reasonable adjustments to provide a safe and inclusive place to study. CAFRE recognises that assistance dogs provide invaluable support to individuals with a range of disabilities.

2. Scope

This policy and associated procedures apply to all learners enrolled at CAFRE. This includes when they are out of college on organised college events, on placements or in their place of employment, or when they engage in off campus misconduct.

This policy was written with due cognisance to the current legislation, advice, guidance, and college procedures. This policy and associated procedures apply to all learners enrolled at CAFRE.

3. Objectives

CAFRE welcomes requests from applicants relating to assistance dogs on campus including in residential accommodation.

Some areas of the campus may not be accessible to assistance dogs due to health and safety risks, licensing, or sector regulations, including, but not limited to, agricultural and equine yards, some outdoor teaching facilities, and the food technology and production facilities.

The College is unable to accept requests from students for support animals, therapy animals or pets on campus, unless they meet the definition of assistance dog as set out in this policy.

CAFRE may refuse access to the campus to any animal that poses a threat to the safety and security of students, staff, members of the public or college animals on site.

4. Definitions

College Premises – Property that is owned, operated, or maintained by CAFRE.

Disability – Applies to a person if they have a physical or mental impairment which is having a substantial, adverse and long-term (lasting or likely to last 12 months or more) effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities (Equality Act, 2010).

Reasonable Adjustments – Changes offered by CAFRE, where needed, and where people with disabilities would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled people without them. What is reasonable will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Assistance Dog – An assistance dog is a dog with formal identification that has been specifically trained and accredited by a member of Assistance Dogs (UK), its partner agencies or equivalent organisation in another country. Assistance Dogs (UK) partner organisations includes; Autism

Dogs Charity, Canine Partners, Darwin Dogs, Dog A.I.D., Dogs for Good, Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, Medical Detection Dogs, Service Dogs UK, Support Dogs (for Autism, for Epilepsy, For Disability), The Seeing Dogs Alliance and Veterans with Dogs.

Guide dogs are the most common type of Assistance Dog, used by individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Other conditions that may require the use of Assistance Dogs include hearing loss, mental health conditions, physical impairments, diabetes, epilepsy or seizure-related disorders, and autistic spectrum conditions.

5. Process and Procedure

Applicants wishing to be accompanied by an assistance dog should make a request and discuss their requirements with the campus Student Support Officer.

The applicant must supply the Student Support Officer with the relevant documentation and evidence of the assistance dog's accreditation, vaccination history and liability insurance.

The Student Support Officer will carry out appropriate consultation with all concerned departments, including teams in Education, Estates, Facilities and, if relevant, Student Services in order to consider appropriate arrangements and confirm whether reasonable adjustments can be made.

CAFRE will confirm arrangements with the applicant, explaining any particular risks or issues with a granting of the request, including any areas of college services where CAFRE considers a requested adjustment to its services to be unreasonable.

Where the request is granted, any specific adjustments, requirements or restrictions that apply will be explained to the applicant. These may include for example, alternative arrangements that the applicant may need to put in place for the assistance dog for certain lectures, classes or practicals if the assistance dog is not permitted in those areas.

6. Concerns

CAFRE may decline to accept or may require the removal of an assistance dog from its campus including accommodation if:

- The assistance dog has not been trained and accredited by a member of Assistance Dogs UK, its partner agencies or equivalent organisation in another country.
- The learner cannot provide evidence of the assistance dog's accreditation, vaccination history and liability insurance.
- CAFRE considers it poses a threat to the safety and security of learners, staff, members of the public or college animals on site.
- The learner does not act in accordance with any access arrangements made.
- The assistance dog is ill, in poor health, unclean or unkempt.

If the learner, member of staff or any other learner has a concern relating to the assistance dog, it should in the first instance be raised with the Programme Manager/Course Director with a view to resolving the issue informally. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should raise a formal complaint as identified below.

7. Appeals

The learner has the right to appeal a formal decision made by CAFRE. This means that the learner is requesting another individual (or a number of individuals) with the appropriate authority to review the previous decision. The appeal will be considered by an independent Head of Branch.

The appeal must be submitted:

- Within 10 working days of the decision leading to the appeal, and,
- In writing, either by letter or email to CAFREappeals@daera-ni.gov.uk.

CAFRE will aim to notify the learner of the outcome of their appeal within 10 working days of the date when the learner submitted their written appeal.