

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR (ASSISTANCE) DOGS ON RVC PREMISES**

**Approved at CEC September 2017**

---

The policy sets out measures that should not inconvenience current dog owners whilst reinforcing RVC's views on responsible ownership and discharging its duty of care to all its employees and students.

The RVC is committed to animal welfare, the human-animal bond and responsible pet ownership. The RVC is also committed to a clean and safe working environment where the needs of all are respected.

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct will result in owners being forbidden to bring their dogs onto the Campus and may result in no dogs being allowed on site.

The issue of dogs and other pets on RVC campuses has been debated previously and the following bullet points outline the Colleges position on the matter.

- Any dog being brought on to the campus need to registered annually. .
- All dogs registered to be on the premises must be made available for student teaching and examinations by arrangement.
- All dogs must be handle-able by others in the absence of the owner.
- All dogs should be able to be tethered or caged when in an office.
- Any dog causing injury or threatening to injure anyone will be removed immediately.
- No student owned dogs are to be kept on campus, with the exception of verified assistance dogs.
- Dogs should not be kept in cars.
- Where offices require additional cleaning, repairing or refurbishing as a result of housing a dog or dogs, the cost will be borne by the owner.
- Owners must clean up after their pet at all times.
- Owners accept all responsibility and liability for damage to people or property caused by dog(s) under their care.
- With the exception of assistance dogs, dogs are not allowed to be kept in open plan offices. When an application is made for a dog to be housed in a shared office the other occupants will be contacted directly for permission. If this is not provided then the permission will not be granted. Where permission is granted a maximum of two dogs per office will be allowed.
- Applications for new dogs being brought on campus will all be treated equally and it should be noted that there is no upper limit of numbers of dogs that might be able to be accommodated on campus.

- When out of the office, the dog must be on a lead at all times and must wear proof of identification in the form of a collar and disc regardless of whether or not the dog has been micro-chipped
- The dog must be well socialised with both people and other dogs – if the dog displays any sign of threatening or aggressive behaviour, this will result in the dog being banned. The dog should not show signs of anti-social behaviour e.g. repetitive barking.
- If the dog causes injury without provocation or reasonable cause to anyone or other dogs, this will result in the dog being banned.
- **All dog faeces must be cleared up immediately and disposed of appropriately;** owners are responsible for providing bags and disposing of these appropriately. Dog litterbins are provided in certain areas but any outside bin may be used.
- Any dog taken onto the Sports Field at Hawkshead can be walked around the edge off lead as long as they are kept strictly under control, but must not be allowed onto the pitches
- No dogs shall be walked or exercised on the main Farm campus at any time.
- With the exception of verified assistance dogs\*, no animals are allowed in lecture theatres, seminar rooms, practical classrooms, areas where food is served or consumed, into other public rooms or into the Halls of Residence or College Close.
- No animals, other than clinical cases or if required for teaching purposes, are allowed into clinical areas at either campus, or the hay barns or the clinical isolation barn at Hawkshead.

All applications to bring new dogs on campus, or as replacements for existing animals, are subject to approval by the Deputy Principal and Director of Estates and Campus Services. **What is a therapy dog?**

Therapy dogs or emotional support animals provide companionship, relieve loneliness, and sometimes help with depression, anxiety, and certain phobias, but do not have special training to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities. They are not, under UK law, currently considered assistance animals. Evidence from a medical practitioner supporting the need for a therapeutic dog (or any other animal) does not mean that the dog is considered an assistance animal. A therapy dog does **not** have the same legal privileges as an assistance dog. Therapy dogs/animals are not permitted on RVC grounds.

## **Assistance Dogs on Campus**

### **\*What is an assistance dog?**

Assistance dogs are trained to perform specific tasks to help a disabled person and are usually qualified by one of the 8 charitable organisations registered as members of Assistance Dogs UK, (Canine Partners, Assistance in Disability, Dogs for Good, Guide Dogs, Hearing Dogs for

Deaf People, Medical Detection Dogs, Support Dogs and The Seeing Dogs Alliance) having undergone a specific and thorough training programme.

Under the Equalities Act, appropriately verified assistance dogs are “legally permitted to accompany its client, owner, or partner, at all times and in all places, within the United Kingdom”.

The RVC is mindful of its responsibilities under the Equalities Act. Thus, assistance dogs are permitted on College grounds. Nonetheless, the College must be satisfied that the requirement is legitimate. However, because of the nature of much of the teaching, practice and training, most notably within in the clinical setting, rotations, EMS and placements, issues with the potential transmission of disease, cross contamination, cross species issues and health & safety, this does mean that assistance dogs can only be permitted access to College grounds in relation to the academic environment. Because of the above considerations and our responsibilities to the College population as a whole, assistance dogs **cannot** be permitted in any laboratory environment or any practical or clinical setting at this time.

### Considerations

Assistance dog owners:

- Must request permission from the College to bring assistance dogs onto campus **as far in advance** as possible of arrival on College premises.
- Will be required to liaise accordingly with the Advice Centre (students), Estates and the Health & Safety Team regarding their assistance dog.
- Provide appropriate evidence that the dog is an approved assistance dog in line with UK law.
- Be able to provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties, when requested by staff.
- Must ensure that their assistance dog is clearly identifiable by the use of appropriate bibs, collars and/or harnesses when on duty so they are respected and not distracted.
- Ensure that their assistance dog is appropriately secured and restrained when not working.
- Are responsible for ensuring that their assistance dogs are covered by full liability insurance and provide a copy to the College.
- Provide evidence that the assistance dog is up to date with appropriate vaccinations.

### **Access Restrictions**

Assistance dog owners must respect access restrictions established by the College on grounds of health and safety. Owners must ensure that assistance dogs do not enter staff and students' privately assigned spaces, such as bedrooms and flats within residences, without permission.

### **Animal Misbehaviour**

Preventing and correcting assistance dog's misbehaviour is the owner's responsibility. Owners must make sure that their assistance dogs do not cause harm or injury to others and damage to College property.

### **Cleanliness**

Registered blind people are not required to clean up after their guide dogs but they are expected to have received the appropriate training to avoid dog waste on campus. Assistance dog users share responsibility for the clean-up of the animal's waste, consistent with reasonable capacity. Owners must use the designated areas identified by the College. In the unlikely event that the dog does foul outside of these designated areas, the owner must report this to Estates who will arrange for the area to be cleaned and sanitised.

### **Animal Care and Supervision**

It is the owner's responsibility to:

- To ensure regular health checks, vaccination and an adequate standard of grooming.
- Ensure the assistance dog has its requirements in relation to feeding, watering and toileting fully met.
- Ensure that the assistance dog is kept on a lead at all times when walking around College grounds or safely harnessed when unsupervised for short periods of time.
- Where it is noted that assistance dogs may be in poor health, excessively unclean or unkempt, the owner will be required to liaise with relevant staff. Failure to engage in improving the welfare of the dog may impact on access to College premises.

The College is not responsible for the loss, ill health, or death of the assistance dog animal.

**The above consideration refers to both students and staff but staff must have the agreement of their Head of Department.**

This Code of Conduct applies at all times, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.