

# RADA

## Royal Academy of Dramatic Art

### Animals in the workplace (excluding productions)

In this document, “you” and “your” means the staff and student; “we”, “us” and “our” mean RADA.

1. RADA (including RADA Business) is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all students, employees, visitors, contractors, and consultants.
2. We recognise that an assistance animal kept and used by a disabled person (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) wholly or mainly for the purpose of assisting that person to carry out day to day activities, will require access to RADAs premises.
3. Our policy is that only guide or assistance animals are permitted to access RADA’s grounds and premises.
4. The purpose of this policy is to provide clarification on what is recognised as an assistance animal and the duty on both the us and the assistance animal owners when permitting animals in any of the RADA buildings.
5. For the purpose of this policy, an assistance animal, most likely a dog, is one which has been specifically trained to assist disabled person(s) and which has been qualified by one of the organisations registered as a member of Assistance Dogs (UK)<sup>1</sup> or an equivalent organisation in another country.

### Assistance Dogs

6. Assistance animals are animals that have been trained to work in partnership with disabled people to assist them in accessing services and to help them to improve their mobility, independence and quality of life. Assistance dogs support people with a wide range of disabilities; including visual impairments, deafness, physical disabilities and hidden disabilities. Assistance animals are highly trained working animals: they are not pets! Assistance animals can be recognised by the harnesses and coloured jackets that they wear. A jacket will usually display the name of the organisation that trained the animal in question.
7. Assistance animals trained by members of Assistance Dogs (UK) or by an equivalent organisation in another country, have formal identification and are permitted to accompany their owners at all times, unless there is an identified health and safety risk. Where it is deemed unsafe for an animal to be in a particular environment, efforts will be made to sure that an alternative reasonable adjustment is in place to ensure that the person has access to their learning environment/ work environment.
8. In order to meet our health and safety responsibilities to staff, students and visitors, we reserve the right to refuse access for an assistance animal that:

- a. is not qualified by one of the eight membership organisations of Assistance Dogs (UK).
  - b. is from another country and does not meet the full membership criteria of the established international assistance dog organisations – Assistance Dogs International, Assistance Dogs Europe, International Guide Dog Federation – or other such international bodies as may be recognised.
  - c. does not have fully up-to-date vaccination record.
9. Member organisations of Assistance Dog UK:
- Canine Partners
  - Dog A.I.D.
  - Dogs for Good
  - Guide Dogs
  - Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
  - Medical Detection Dogs
  - Support Dogs
  - The Seeing Dogs Alliance
10. RADA permits the following types of assistance animals:
- a. Guide Dogs assisting people who are blind or are visually impaired.
  - b. Hearing Dogs assisting people who are deaf or are hearing impaired.
  - c. Support Dogs for people with limited mobility.
  - d. Seizure Alert dogs for people with epilepsy.
  - e. Autism assistance dogs – supporting people with autism
  - f. Dogs supporting people with mental health issues.
11. Assistance animals are not pets, and do not act like pets. Normally assistance animals are with their owners 24 hours a day and their training means that they are able to support their owner in a range of settings undistracted by what is going on around them. They are also trained to toilet when prompted.

### **Emotional Support & Therapy**

12. We do not permit staff or students to bring pets as emotional support animals into RADA unless they are brought in for an agreed and specific therapeutic purpose.
13. Emotional support or therapy animals are currently not formally classed as assistance animals in the UK.
14. It is the current position that emotional support or therapy animals are not considered as assistance animals and therefore do not have the same right of access.
15. The exception to this will be where the animal has been specifically trained to the same level as an assistance animal. Requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis the process for which is outlined in this Policy.

### **Working Animals**

16. Fully trained and qualified working animals such as dogs that assist in law enforcement, are permitted into RADA buildings.

## **Approval**

17. Assistance animal owners must request permission to bring the animal, prior to it coming regularly into RADA. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
18. Initial communication should be made with the following parties.
  - a. Students – Courses Leader
  - b. Staff – Line Manager or HR Department  
Cc'ing in the Head of Operations & Estate
19. Owners must respect any access restrictions identified through risk assessments and established by us on grounds of health and safety.
20. Where the animal poses adverse health risk to another member of the community, we will take appropriate steps to determine suitable alternative arrangements for either or both parties, where this is possible and reasonable.

## **Responsibility of owner**

21. No request will be approved until the owner provides:
  - a. information about the animal and its tasks/duties, when requested.
  - b. a copy of the ID booklet and any associated paperwork. Every owner of an assistance dog trained by an ADUK member organisations is given an AD(UK) ID booklet with information about the assistance dog and the training organisation. The assistance dog would need to maintain their registration for the duration of their study with ongoing renewal when required.  
or  
formalised arrangement with an appropriately recognised organisation such as Pets as Therapy, a certificate of assistance linking the animal to you as well as a letter from your doctor.
  - c. Insurance documentation for the animal
22. The assistance animal is the responsibility of its owner who must ensure that it:
  - a. is always kept on a harness when walking around RADA premises.
  - b. uses identified areas for toileting and does not allow it to foul on RADA Premises internally and externally.
  - c. has its requirements in relation to toileting and feeding requirements met.
  - d. has regular health checks, vaccination, and an adequate standard of grooming.
  - e. is clearly identifiable by the use of special collars and/or harnesses when on duty.
  - f. is covered by full liability insurance and a copy provided to RADA.
23. We recognised that accredited assistance animals are highly trained, and their owners will have had specialised training in the safe and effective use of their animal. The animal's behaviour is a key part of this training, and it should not cause any disruption. It is understood that seizure alert animals are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure, which may appear to be misbehaving.
24. If at any stage an assistance animal presents with unacceptable or disruptive behaviour or if a risk is identified, or if the above responsibilities are not met, the RADA reserves the right to withdraw approval for the animal to be on site. Any such decision would be made in consultation with the owner and the relevant training body where appropriate.

25. Once approved, RADA will ensure that staff, students and others as appropriate are provided with adequate information to appropriately respond to the needs of the assistance animal, its owner, and all those in contact with the assistance animal. General guidance on interacting with assistance animals or with people who have assistance animals is provided below.

### **Interacting with assistance animals**

26. When interacting with assistance animals or with people who have assistance animals, please bear the following points in mind:

- a. Talk to the handler, not the animal
- b. Do not pet or praise the animal without asking first
- c. Don't get angry at the handler if they do not want to stop to talk about their animal.
- d. Don't feed the service animal.

### **Raising a Concern**

27. Should anyone in the office, classroom, or studio where the animal will be working have concerns, they must be discussed with their line manager or course leader and a resolution found to ensure both parties are able to come into RADA.

28. You are also able to raise concern by using the inline [report a concern form](#).

Original Policy created	April 2024
Policy Updated	N/A
Document Approved by	Health & Safety Committee
Date Approved	08.05.2024
Version	1.0
Review Date	Yearly – next review April 2025
Owner	Head of Operations & Estates