Health and Safety - Animals on Campus Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure:

a. ensures Victoria University (VU) provides a safe workplace for all of its employees, students, contractors and visitors on all the campuses and in relation to all activities under the control and management of the University;
b. provides instructions for privately owned pets brought to a VU campus for purposes unrelated to any VU activities; and,
c. ensures protection of employees, students, contractors and visitors from an allergic reaction, animal attack, and stress caused by fear of animals while attending University sites, activities and protection of the animals brought on-site.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to:

a. all employees, students, contractors and visitors on all the campuses across VU; and
b. all managers, teachers, academic staff and researchers using animals in scientific educational or artistic research or teaching purposes, in accordance with the Animal Welfare Policy.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(3) Health and Safety Policy

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
Everyone working at VU	Do not bring a pet to work unless the pet is exempted within this Procedure (clause 12). Refer to the Animal Welfare Policy whenever there is a work-related reason to have an animal on campus for teaching or research purposes, including drama or theatricals, events, and outdoor activities. Notify verbally and in writing, using the VU OHS Incident Recording System provided, of any hazard with potential to, or incident which has, caused injury, illness or psychological harm.

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Roles	Responsibility
Executives and Leaders Managers and Supervisors	Advise employees, students, contractors and visitors that bringing pets to the University is inappropriate unless the animal is exempted within this Procedure. Refer to the Animal Welfare Policy whenever there is a work-related reason to have an animal on campus for teaching or research purposes. Ensure all appropriate approvals are in place and the workgroup is consulted where an animal is expected to attend the workplace for work-related activities to minimise potential harm.
Teachers, Academic Staff and Researchers	Advise students and visitors that bringing pets to University is inappropriate unless the animal is exempted within this Procedure. Refer to the Animal Welfare Policy whenever there is a work-related reason to have an animal on campus for teaching or research purposes. Ensure all employees and others who may contact animals within teaching activities are protected from physical and psychological harm.

Part B - General

(4) VU is committed to providing and maintaining high standards of health and safety in the workplace. The University promotes a proactive health and safety philosophy based on effective communication and consultation. Health and safety issues that are identified will be taken seriously and addressed promptly to eliminate or mitigate the risk of harm.

(5) Pets in the workplace pose various health hazards, including allergic reactions, hygiene issues, bites or scratches, and potential psychological stress. Pet owners or those in control of pets at the University must take care to ensure their own safety and the safety of others.

(6) The general rule is that employees should not bring pets to work unless the animal is specifically required for the work being conducted, co-workers have been consulted, and there is specific compliance with the Animal Welfare Policy.

(7) Any pets brought onto VU campus grounds must be restrained and accompanied by a responsible person at all times.

(8) Petting animals brought on-site requires a risk assessment and compliance conducted in accordance with the Animal Welfare Policy.

(9) If any pet causes a nuisance or shows aggressive behaviour while on University sites, it will be banned from all the University sites.

(10) The University does not allow pets inside buildings unless the animal is specifically required for the work being conducted, co-workers have been consulted, and there is specific compliance with the Animal Welfare Policy.

(11) Reference to and compliance with the Animal Welfare Policy is mandatory whenever there is a work-related reason to have an animal on campus for teaching or research purposes, including drama or theatricals, events, and outdoor activities.

Exceptions

(12) The following animals are exempt from the building entry exclusion (where an exception applies, the animal must still be controlled at all times, and the Animal Welfare Policy still applies):

a. guide dogs or seeing-eye dogs which are specially trained dogs that enable blind or visually impaired people to avoid obstacles/hazards and increase their independence and confidence in mobilising and accessing the community;

b. guide dogs in training;
c. assistance animal (see: HSW-2.16-GL-05-1.0 Assistance Animals Guidance Note), which means any animal trained to perform tasks or functions that assist a person with a disability to alleviate the effects of their disability. This does not include companion animals; and
d. emergency services and/ or law enforcement animals on duty.

Pet Owners

(13) If pet owners bring a pet onto campus, they must:

a. keep the pet on a lead no longer than 1.5 metres or enclosed in a cage and accompany them at all times;
b. carry a bag or have other means of picking up and removing the pet's faeces;
c. immediately collect any faeces and dispose it in a sealed bag before placing it in a rubbish bin; and
d. not enter a building with a pet unless the pet meets one of the exemption criteria (clause 12).

Section 5 - HESF/ESQA/ESOS Alignment

(14) HESF: Standard 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety.

(15) Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and FPP Requirements 2025: Standard 20 Compliance with Laws.

Section 6 - Definitions

(16) Guide Dog: A guide dog is a necessary aid for a person who is blind or has low vision. Anyone can bring an accredited guide dog onto campus and into any campus area. Guide Dog use is protected under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

(17) Assistance Dog: means a dog that is trained to perform tasks or function that assist a person with disability to alleviate the effects of their disability. (under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010).

(18) Assistance Dog/Animal: Like a guide dog, these animals are trained to assist one person with specific a disability, mental health or medical need. Examples of this type of service animal are:

a. Medical Alert Animal (for cardiac, diabetes or seizures for example);
b. Hearing Assist Dog (for people who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing);
c. Mobility Assistance Animals;
d. Psychiatric Assistance Animals; and,
e. Assistance Dogs for Autism (other types of neurodivergence conditions) or a developmental condition.

To be accredited, these dogs must pass a Public Access Test (PAT) which usually involves at least twelve months training and specifically trained to assist the person with disability to alleviate the effect of the disability. The PAT must be completed by an accredited business/association that can issue the certificate. The certificate is held by the owner and must be displayed on campus when requested and if necessary. It needs to be on the animal with the appropriate documentation. The animal will have demonstrated that they are a) safe and effective in a public place b) able to be effectively controlled by the handler and c) effective in accessing public places and passenger vehicles in a safe way.

(19) Other types of service animals: There are other types of dogs that assist people with disability including mental health conditions, but they may not have the same access rights as a PAT certified assistance dog. They can include:

a. Therapy Dog
b. Emotional Support Dog
c. Visitation Animal
d. Facility Animal
e. Companion Animal

(20) Domestic Animal: in this guidance a domestic animal is a pet, companion, emotional support or therapy animal, that is not:

a. Guide Dog, Assistance Dog or Assistance Animal; or,
b. wildlife, pests, farm animal, research animal or veterinary patient.

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