



Job Profile

Job Title: Academy Guide Dog Mobility Specialist

Directorate: People & Performance

Reports To: Technical Learning Specialist

Matrix Reporting To: None

Disclosure Check Level: Enhanced - Adult and Child Workforce with a Children's Barred List Check

Date created/last reviewed: 19/05/2022

Overall Role Purpose

The Academy Guide Mobility Specialist (A-GDMS) helps people with sight loss to live the life they choose by enabling the people we support to get out and about through their partnership with a guide dog. An A-GDMS learns all aspects of delivering a safe and efficient guide dog service including training our dogs to the required guiding standard, and providing specialist advice, coaching and support to our service users to become confident and skilled in their guide dog partnership. Once you have been prepared for your role you will join your local Guide Dog Canine Assisted Services team as a competent Guide Dog Mobility Specialist, working towards your final International Guide Dog Federation qualification when the partnership requirements have been met.

"I joined Guide Dogs for the dogs, but I definitely stayed for the people."
Emma - Academy Team.

Key Responsibilities

- Attend and participate in the assigned A-GDMS training programme, carrying out all required reading and pre- and post-course work, making full use of the resources and completing research as required.
- Learn to train dogs in line with Guide Dogs standards and approaches.
- Learn to deliver partnership training in line with Guide Dog Standards and approaches.
- Engage in blindfolded activities or other activities requiring obscured vision in both public and private spaces in order to help develop understanding of sight loss and the training tools.

- Carry out relevant assessment and appropriate matching of dogs and service users.
- Design and implement individual dog and service user training plans to the required standard.
- Recognise how individual service user's requirements will adapt the provision of guide dog mobility services.
- Recognise and support the resolution of any dog wellbeing issues and escalate to relevant colleagues as appropriate.
- Demonstrate appropriate values, attitudes and GD behaviours when interacting with people.
- Complete associated administration in line with relevant policies
- Work with service users, staff and volunteers to coach and develop them in their dog handling, welfare and knowledge skills.
- Learn all aspects required in your programme of learning to ensure a full and competent level of understanding required for creating and supporting guide dog partnerships.
- Work with a range of service users, including both adults and children to develop their skills.
- Develop into a competent and effective technical member of staff to fulfil the key accountabilities of the Guide Dog Mobility Specialist job description, through the skills learning and mentoring available.
- Engage and contribute in team meetings and training. Participate in events and activities and to get to know Guide Dogs service users, volunteers and staff.

Breadth/Scope of Accountability

People Accountability

Number of Direct Reports: None

Number of Indirect Reports: None

Number of Volunteers Supervised: None

Financial Accountability

Annual Income Accountability: None

Assets Managed: None

Budget Accountability: None

Application of this Job Profile

All employees are required to carry out other such duties as may reasonably be required to fulfil their role and support functional and organisational objectives.

All employees must also:

- Comply with all organisational policies
- Promote the vision and values of the organisation
- Engage in continuous personal development

This job profile is accurate as at the date shown above. It does not form part of contractual terms and may be varied to reflect or anticipate changes to the role.

Working at Guide Dogs

As well as other services to enhance the lives of people who are blind and partially sighted, we breed and train guide dogs and companion dogs. Staff and volunteers in all our locations support this work. Therefore, all employees must be comfortable working in environments where dogs may be present.

Guide Dogs is a volunteer-involving organisation and as such all staff are required to support volunteers in their roles. This may or may not mean the direct supervision of volunteers but will require all staff to play a supporting role. From time to time, you may be asked to support / volunteer your time at Guide Dogs events that take place outside of normal working hours. All employees will be expected to be an advocate for Guide Dogs at all times and be a fundraiser.

Guide Dogs is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we work. We expect all of our employees and volunteers to demonstrate this commitment.

Guide Dogs will require proof of identity and the right to work in the UK.

Person Specification

Education/Qualifications

Essential

- Relevant accredited learning/degree or equivalent relevant workplace experience
- Current valid UK/EU Driving licence or able to demonstrate how to complete the role without

Desirable

- Accredited learning in the areas of animal training, behaviour or welfare such as Canine Behaviour diploma, Canine Health & Nutrition diploma, or Advanced Certificate in Dog Training & Behaviour
- Accredited learning appropriate for working with adults, for example, PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification, coaching qualification, health/social care qualification.

Job-Related Experience

Essential

- Previous practical experience working or volunteering with adults and/or young people and/or animals in a supportive capacity.
- Experience of teaching, coaching and mentoring individuals and/or groups.

Desirable

- Previous experience of supporting people with disabilities.
- Previous practical experience in the areas of animal training and/or behaviour.

Knowledge

Essential

- Understanding of positive training approaches and techniques in the development of human or animal behaviour.
- Knowledge of safeguarding practices when working with vulnerable adults and children.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the charity sector.
- Understanding of safeguarding legislation relating to adults and children.
- Knowledge of sight loss and visual impairment.

Skills and Competencies

Essential

- Strong verbal and written communication skills, both face to face and digitally.
- Strong planning and organisational skills, including problem-solving skills, and working to deadlines.
- The ability to demonstrate emotional intelligence, tact and empathy (including during difficult or challenging conversations).
- Ability and confidence to work with restricted vision (including blindfold) in both private and public spaces.
- Able to work as part of a team, demonstrating leadership skills when required.
- Can demonstrate resilience working in a challenging environment and is adaptable, flexible, embraces change.
- Evidence of strong commitment to learn and develop self and others, able to self-reflect and assess own performance.
- Competent and confident computer user including databases and Microsoft Office (Outlook, Word, Excel, Teams, PowerPoint).
- Able to undertake physical demands of the role, including walking long distances daily (in excess of 8-10 miles), in all weather conditions, unaided, and the potential to handle and walk with a range of dog sizes and temperaments.

Desirable

- Demonstrate the ability to work with a range of stakeholders such as service users, volunteers, senior leaders.

Behaviours

Our behaviours capture the essence of what it is to be Guide Dogs people, whether staff or volunteer. They describe the experience we expect everyone - the people we support, donors, partners, our volunteers and staff - to have while working with us. Guide Dogs people are:

- **Person-centred** - We are a group of people working to help each person affected by sight loss. We listen, and recognise that every individual is different in where they've come from and where they're going. We are open, empathetic and inclusive. We place the person at the centre of every decision.
- **Expert** - We are specialists in what we do. We are committed to excellence and will never stop innovating. We respect our history, but seek out ways to adapt and improve, and are always willing to learn.

- **Optimistic** - We are relentless in our belief that people with vision impairment can lead the life they choose. We are passionate about helping each person, committed to challenging barriers, and proud of who we are and what we achieve.

So, we: -

- **Partner** - We only change lives when we collaborate. We build valued relationships with donors. We work together with our service users and colleagues, volunteers and partners - and our dogs, of course - to deliver great outcomes. We support and develop each other.
- **Lead-by-example** - We can all be a guide. We take the lead and then hand it over, empowering people to make progress independently. We gain trust by having faith in others, and influence by example. We do what we say we will.
- **Engage** - We cannot change lives if we look on from the side-lines. We get involved, take ownership, and feel responsible for all we do, think and say. We celebrate wins big and small, and we hold ourselves and each other to account.

We use competency-based questioning within our recruitment processes to assess the extent to which candidates demonstrate these behaviours - in ways appropriate to this role - in how they are at work and generally as people.

Safeguarding

If the role does or may involve working with children, young people or vulnerable adults, or supervising those that do, we'll also be assessing 'safeguarding competencies' as part of the process. These are:

- Appropriate motivation to work with vulnerable groups;
- Emotional awareness;
- Working within professional boundaries and self-awareness; and
- Ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults and protect from harm.

Mobility

A flexible approach with a willingness to work outside of core hours and away from home when required.

Due to the nature of the learning pathway, it is important that the role is site-based with a preference for a full-time working pattern. Any flexible working requests would need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.