# Job Profile

Job Title: Habilitation Specialist
Directorate: Operations

Reports To: Operations Manager - Skills, Information and Support Services (SISS)

Matrix Reporting To: None

Disclosure Check Level: Enhanced – Adults and Children

Date created / last reviewed: February 2023

## Overall Role Purpose

The Habilitation Specialist enables children and young people with a vision impairment to live the life they choose by delivering specialist services that enable them to become more mobile and independent.

## Key Responsibilities

* To holistically assess the needs and capabilities of children and young people (CYP) with a vision impairment (VI) and produce appropriate person-centred training programmes and recommendations as required.
* Plan, implement and review habilitation training programmes for CYP with vision impairment (including those with complex needs).
* Deliver specialist habilitation (mobility and independence) services which support the Guide Dogs strategic objectives and bring independence and freedom to CYP with a vision impairment, across your region or nationally.
* Write reports, maintain accurate records, and monitor CYP’s progress against set training programme goals, adapting these as required to ensure they continue to meet the CYP’s individual needs and identify any further training requirements.
* Deliver habilitation awareness training to parents / carers and professionals.
* Provide advice, information and training to parents/carers, professionals including school staff and any others supporting CYP with a vision impairment to promote and ensure reinforcement of training programmes and to raise their awareness of vision impairment and resources available.
* Participate in and, as necessary organise extra-curricular activities for CYP with vision impairments as part of their habilitation training, including occasional residential events.
* Conduct environmental accessibility audits of educational, recreational, and work experience settings, and compile written reports with recommendations to assist with the inclusion and safety of learners with vision impairment.
* Liaise and make regular contact with other relevant statutory and voluntary agencies in order to support the development of habilitation skills.
* Lead, inspire and mentor trainee staff to achieve agreed objectives within available resources.
* Have a technical understanding of the needs of CYP in relation to the range of current products and services available from Guide Dogs and partner agencies with whom we work.
* Input and maintain records within given time frames and ensure our Data Protection policy is adhered to.
* Plan ongoing reviews of CYP’s progress in relation to work programme objectives.
* Maintain a healthy, safe, and secure teaching and learning environment and to act in accordance with all relevant policies and procedures – Guide Dogs and partner agencies.
* Advise on appropriate technologies to support independence and integrate technology into service delivery.
* Any other activities relevant to the role that will enable blind and partially sighted children and young people to become independent and mobile.

## 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. 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 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 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

Evidence of qualification in **one** of the following or equivalent:

* Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight Graduate Diploma – IOE.
* BSc Hons Top-up Degree Habilitation Studies (BCU Birmingham City University).
* Rehabilitation Officer Diploma / Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) – Working with Children with Visual Impairment.
* Nationally recognised qualification in habilitation training for children and young people with visual impairment.

Or hold **one** of the following and demonstrate the motivation and willingness to study for the BSc Hons Top-up Degree Habilitation Studies (BCU) or equivalent:

* Foundation Degree in Rehabilitation Work (Visual Impairment)
* Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care in Rehabilitation Studies (Visual Impairment)
* Both Mobility Officer and Technical Officer Certificates
* Diploma in Higher Education in Rehabilitation Studies (Visual Impairment)

In addition, be able to demonstrate all the following:

* Registration with appropriate professional body (essential upon appointment and fees are funded by Guide Dogs).
* Able to meet the travel requirements of the role. This may be through holding a valid full UK driving licence or alternative arrangements such as Access to Work support or public transport, if suitable for the role location.
* Able to undertake physical demands of the role, including walking long distances daily for extended periods of time, in all weather conditions. Be able to handle equipment and specialist resource required for the role.

#### Desirable

* Recent training related to either sensory impairment, Community Care practice, or working with children and families.

## Job-Related Experience

#### Essential

* Demonstrable experience of teaching mobility and independence skills to individuals with a vision impairment in home, education and/or community settings.
* Demonstrable experience of supporting children and young people (Not necessarily vision impairment related) e.g., Youth Work, in an education setting, brownie or scout leader.
* Proven experience of carrying out access and environmental audits.
* Demonstrable post qualifying experience in statutory or voluntary sector.
* Proven ability to liaise effectively with other professionals / agencies.
* Demonstrable evidence of effective assessment and planning skills.

#### Desirable

* Proven ability to work directly with children and young people and their parents / guardians to carry out effective habilitation programmes, including low vision training.
* Demonstrable experience of training or making presentations to groups.
* Experience of working with children with complex needs.
* Proven experience of working with pre-school children.
* Experience of working with Children and Young People through key stages in transition.

## Knowledge

#### Essential

* Demonstrable knowledge of range of resources and equipment available to people with vision impairment.
* Can demonstrate an understanding of confidentiality and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).
* Can demonstrate an understanding of safeguarding process.
* Can demonstrate an understanding of risk assessment process.

#### Desirable

* Knowledge of child development. In addition, evidence of continued professional development (CPD) to maintain current knowledge and experience within the field.
* Knowledge of relevant legislation in relation to Children and Young People.
* Demonstrable knowledge of range of resources available to Children & Young People with vision impairment.

## Skills and Competencies

#### Essential

* Competent in Microsoft Office skills, particularly Word, Excel, and Outlook.
* Excellent communicator in English and Welsh speaker where necessary.
* Effective communication skills, verbal and written.
* Good organisational and administrative skills and can identify problems and either manage or escalate them.
* Supports their team and colleagues, and is a conscientious, trustworthy, and considerate colleague.
* Open and honest and can deal with emotional issues well.
* Respectful of others, tolerant and open-minded.
* Deals well with conflict, calmly, respectfully and constructively, remaining within professional boundaries.
* Committed to good quality and service, and service improvements, and is focused on providing a good service both internally and externally.
* Ability to work as part of a team and individually.
* Can manage their own workload and able to prioritise effectively to meet deadlines.
* Can evidence the ability to work safely with children and young people.

## 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 have come from and where they are 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 will 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.
* 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.

## Job Group (internal use only)

This role has been evaluated as a Specialist Professional, please follow this [link](https://guidedogs.sharepoint.com/%3Aw%3A/g/Ec1eCkqjWa1OttLo4tqDsikB9d3tJ31nGcMWIFbIQUfrpQ?e=xmU1IH) to view the salary band.