**Job Profile**

Job Title: Training and Behaviour Specialist

Directorate: Operations

Reports To: Training and Behaviour Business Partner

Matrix Reporting To: None

Disclosure Check Level: Enhanced

Date created/last reviewed: 20/06/2024

## Overall Role Purpose

The Training and Behaviour Specialist helps people with sight loss to live the life they choose by supporting operational teams within a geographical area to achieve their outcomes, ensuring the Guide Dog Service technical workforce are maintaining an ethical and standardised approach to dog and client training to establish quality, sustainable partnerships.

With support from the Training and Behaviour Business Partner, the Training and Behaviour Specialist will support the ongoing development of skills and knowledge of the technical teams, volunteers, and clients, through the provision of expert training, coaching, behaviour advice and practical support in relation to dog welfare, behaviour, breeding, puppy socialisation, dog training, and the human-canine relationship.

## Key Responsibilities

* To support the development of staff in relation to dog welfare, behaviour, breeding, puppy socialisation, dog training, and the human-canine relationship via the provision of ongoing and practical training as outlined in professional development plans.
* To attend sites within a geographical area to assess adherence to our operational procedures and standardised training methodologies.
* To mentor and coach individuals and teams across the technical workforce to develop their practical skills, knowledge, and ability, to ensure compliance with our ethical and standardised approach to dog and client training in the establishment of quality, sustainable partnerships.
* To work across the Breeding, Puppy Raising, Dog Care, Dog Supply and Partnership teams, to support the delivery of professional development plans for individuals, teams, and services.
* To consult on dog behavioural issues through liaising with internal technical staff, including Academy.
* Undertake hands-on training and behaviour modification as required.
* To support the creation of guide dog procedures, processes and training materials as required.
* To support guide dog operational duties, including Academy, where dogs have specific or additional dog training needs.
* To support decision making when assessing dog temperament and behaviour (across all life stages) and to support the technical workforce to develop dog training plans utilising standardised PRT (Positive Reinforcement Training) and welfare friendly approaches.
* Monitor learning outcomes, compliance and skills development of individuals and teams to ensure adherence to our ethical and standardised approach to dog and client training.
* Guide Dogs is a learning organisation, and we are committed to fostering a positive climate for continuous learning. We expect all our people to demonstrate commitment and actively participate in continuous professional development (CPD).

## 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

* Accredited qualification in animal behaviour and/or training, or equivalent experience.
* Membership to relevant bodies associated with the animal training and behaviour modification field.
* Current valid UK/EU Driving licence, or able to demonstrate how to complete the role without.

#### Desirable

* Accredited dog trainer/instructor (e.g. with Association of Pet Dog Trainers or Karen Pryor Academy).
* GDT or GDMS qualification

## Job-Related Experience

#### Essential

* Experience of working with animals, in relation to the shaping of behaviours and task acquisition.
* Practical, hands-on experience within the field of behaviour modification and animal training at both a practitioner and supervisor level.
* Experience of coaching and training individuals and groups of people in practical skills and theoretical knowledge.
* Proven experience of carrying out behaviour modification programmes with animals.
* Experience of working with animals with varied temperaments and needs.

#### Desirable

* Experience working with volunteers
* Experience of working with dogs specifically in relation to the shaping of behaviours and task acquisition relevant to working dogs or similar.
* Experience of working with a wide variety of dogs, and breeds with varied temperaments and needs.

## Knowledge

#### Essential

* A working knowledge of animal ethology, behaviour, learning theory, animal ethics and positive reinforcement training techniques.
* Understanding of people training and coaching theory models.

#### Desirable

* A knowledge of visual impairment and the effects this has on an individual’s mobility and Guide Dogs handling ability

## Skills and Competencies

#### Essential

* Proven written and verbal communication skills, particularly in relation to the area of people skills training and education.
* Significant expertise and experience in the use of positive reinforcement training animal techniques.
* Can demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm, passion, resilience and commitment to the methodology used in PRT approaches.
* Can demonstrate the ability to actively engage with people on a practical level during the demonstration and explanation of dog training techniques. Proven ability to coach and mentor individuals during the development of practical and skills learning.
* Excellent organisational and self-management skills.
* Required to support the diverse training activities required by the project.
* The ability to seek out and utilise topic relevant CPD to aid continuous improvement.

#### Desirable

* Experience of supporting elements of organisational change or continuous improvement.

## 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 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; and
* Ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults and protect from harm.

## Mobility

Regionally based with a nominated site, with regular travel throughout the assigned regional area. Occasionally travel outside region to attend national meetings or activities where overnight stay may be necessary.

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=bbOvM9) to view the salary band.