

Temperament and behaviour assessment criteria

The assessment test is carried out to ensure that your dog is suitable to undertake WAG visits to establishments where you and your dog could be in contact with vulnerable or elderly individuals or children.

The assessment takes place over a period of weeks. Firstly we invite you and your dog to attend an Induction Workshop where we will –

- Give a brief explanation of what WAG does in the community
- Deliver a short presentation on canine body language and how to interpret what your dog is trying to tell you.
- Go through the elements of the next level of assessment.

Workshops take place three or four times a year and there is a charge of £10 to take part.

The next step is that you and your dog will be invited to undertake an assessment where we will ask you to demonstrate that your dog:



Can walk on a relaxed lead without pulling excessively and is under your control at all times. A harness plus collar may be used, but slip leads, extendable leads and head collars or check chains are not acceptable.

Note: The collar must bear an ID tag displaying the information required by Guernsey law.



Obeys basic commands to sit, wait and come when called.



Accepts being greeted, stroked and handled and that is happy to have his paws, ears and tail checked by our assessor. *During visits he will be stroked and patted, sometimes vigorously, by people he doesn't know and we have to be sure he will remain calm being handled.*



Takes a food treat gently from our assessor without snatching. *Patients and children often like to give a treat and we need be sure he takes it gently to avoid causing any concern*



Responds without undue concern to sudden noise or disturbance. *During visits there may be unexpected or sudden noises which may startle the dog, in which case he should recover quickly and not be overly fearful*



We will check that your dog is in good health. Our assessor will check his general health, condition and cleanliness, and check his nails which should be kept trimmed short for visits. *Dogs need to be in tip-top shape to behave appropriately under what can be demanding social and physical conditions*

We will ask you to demonstrate:



That you have at least two poo bags on your person – it is essential that you carry these on WAG visits and that you toilet your dog prior to entering the establishment



That your dog is under control, on the lead, while you carry out a conversation with the assessor. *You will be chatting to people during your visits and its important your dog is happy to wait patiently and under your control*



Grooming your dog's back, chest, stomach and tail. *This exercise is to show that you have control over your dog's behaviour and he is willing to accept your authority*



That you can restrict your dog by holding his collar or holding him firmly for a short while, showing that he accepts restraint. *This control may be required in an emergency where you may need to withdraw your dog from an individual or group of people*



That your dog remains calm and walks freely when among people so that he is not fazed by meeting groups or individuals during visits. *If you are planning to visit schools or other youth groups, your dog will need to meet children during the assessment to determine how he reacts to young people*



Our assessor will take note of any other undesirable behaviours offered by the dog during the course of the assessment (which typically lasts about 30 minutes) Continual jumping up, pawing or excessive licking or timidity are undesirable and may indicate that the dog is over-excited or not comfortable in this sort of situation and therefore may not be suitable as a therapy dog. This does *not* mean that he or she isn't a perfectly lovely family pet!

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