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Guide dog mobility instructor - Competences

This CEN Workshop Agreement has been drafted and approved by a Workshop of representatives of interested parties, the constitution of which is indicated in the foreword of this Workshop Agreement.

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Foreword

This CEN Workshop Agreement has been drafted and approved by a Workshop of representatives of interested parties on 2012-09-19, the constitution of which was supported by CEN following the public call for participation made on 2011-04-12.

A list of the individuals and organizations which supported the technical consensus represented by the CEN Workshop Agreement is available to purchasers from the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre. These organizations were drawn from the following economic sectors guide dog schools, universities, service providers for people with disabilities.

Below is the list of the organisations which officially took part to the development of this CWA:

Belgisch Centrum voor Geleidehonden vzw
BELGIUM
www.geleidehond.be

Deutscher Blinden und Sehbehindertenverband (DBSV)
German Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted
GERMANY
www.dbsv.org

The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)
BELGIUM
www.easpd.eu

Eyes on four paws Foundation
BULGARIA
www.e4p-bg.com

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT
AUSTRALIA
www.guidedogs.com.au

F.F.A.C. – French Federation of Guide Dog Associations
FRANCE
www.chiensguides.fr

Fundacja na rzecz Osób Niewidomych Labrador Pies Przewodnik
POLAND
www.fundacja.labrador.pl

Helppes - Centrum výcviku psů pro postižené o. s. / Helppes - Centre for Assistance Dogs
CZECH REPUBLIC
www.helppes.cz

Ilztaler REHA-Hundeschule
AUSTRIA
www.reha-hunde.at

Light into Europe
ROMANIA
www.lightintoeurope.org

Norges Blindeforbunds Førerhundskole
NORWAY
www.blindeforbundet.no

Österreichische Schule für Blindenführhunde
AUSTRIA
www.blindenfuehrhundeschule-buerger.de

Russia Association of the Blind
The Russian School of Guide Dogs Training
RUSSIA
www.sobaka-provodnik.ru

Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union, Guide Dog Training School
SLOVAKIA
www.guidedog.unss.sk

SLO-CANIS - Slovenian Instructors Association – Centre for Guide Dogs and Assistance Dogs
SLOVENIA
www.slo-canis.net

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
UNITED KINGDOM
www.guidedogs.org.uk

University of Lincoln
UNITED KINGDOM
www.lincoln.ac.uk

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The final review/endorsement round for this CWA was started on 2012-06-26 and was successfully closed on 2012-08-26. The final text of this CWA was submitted to CEN for publication on 2012-10-08.

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Comments or suggestions from the users of the CEN Workshop Agreement are welcome and should be addressed to the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre.

Introduction

This CEN Workshop Agreement is the result of the European Project for Guide Dog Mobility Standards (EU EGDMS, <http://www.egdms.eu/>) established under the Leonardo da Vinci lifelong learning programme. European citizens are being denied the benefits of guide dog ownership as the provision of guide dogs has suffered from fragmentation of delivery, low investment in training and poor retention of guide dog instructors. Often, the service is limited by funding which leads to inconsistent criteria resulting in poorly trained and inadequate dogs. The European project aimed to address this situation by developing and disseminating a qualifying programme of training for instructors which addressed the welfare and training of the guide dog as well as the instruction of the client in its safe and effective use as an aid to independent mobility.

The project brought together a group of partner guide dog schools to develop an agreed set of competencies for guide dog mobility instructors (GDMI) and the CEN Workshop 65 allowed the involvement of a much wider group of stakeholders to enable more contributions to be realised.

The methodological approach is based on a modularised learning system largely delivered in the work place of the employing guide dog organisation and/or its professional partners. The content will be employer specific and a range of methodologies will be available to suit need and circumstance. Methodologies can include didactic, e-learning and blended learning approaches. For example, some didactic learning of the practical application of disability theories to client training will be necessary, while a framework will be provided for role play exercises to assist in the practice and development of coaching skills. At the same time, trainees will also be required to undertake their own research using the Internet. Trainees will be required to keep reflective portfolios of evidence to demonstrate that they have completed the required learning.

Some modules will involve role play exercises and trainees will be guided in their learning through directed reading and exercises to be undertaken in the workplace. Guidance will be given on role-play exercises that can be undertaken to increase the student's understanding and empathy with peers, volunteers and clients, particularly those experiencing loss of sight. Every opportunity to involve blind and partially sighted people in these role play exercises should be taken. Discussion among peers and with experienced mentors will be used to exchange knowledge and experience from the field. Trainees will be guided via didactic learning in their reading and understanding of factual information and key concepts. This approach is adopted to increase the confidence of the student in effectively communicating material to others in addition to delivering, receiving and responding to feedback in a professional and positive manner.

As the IGDF standards have a proven value over many years, they have provided valuable direction to the development of this document.

1 Scope

This document provides the reference criteria of essential competences for guide dog mobility instructors in the following general and specific areas:

- professional behaviour and professional ethics;
- interpersonal management and communication competences;
- appreciation of the various forms of visual impairment and their impact on humans;
- methods of orientation and mobility;
- appreciation of the needs of clients with additional requirements;
- dog care and welfare assessment;
- general dog management and training;
- guide dog training;
- client and partnership training and after care.

2 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

2.1

competence

proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and /or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development

[SOURCE: EQF- European Qualification Framework¹]

2.2

guide dog

dog that has been trained by an organisation or individual primarily to provide mobility assistance to blind or partially sighted people

Note 1 to entry: The International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) provides and oversees benchmark standards aimed at ensuring dogs are properly trained and behaved.

2.3

guide dog mobility instructor (GDMI)

person who has the necessary knowledge and skills to be competent to train a guide dog-client partnership

¹ Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualification Framework for lifelong learning, Official Journal C111 dated 2008-05-06 [1]