

# Professional Dog Walker

## CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

We believe strongly in creating healthy communities for pets and people.

Pet caregivers are entrusted to read pets' signals, reward desirable behaviour as it occurs, immediately recognize signs of inappropriate behaviour, and ensure a consistent and safe environment. Our goal is to improve the understanding of animals and their behaviour so that both pet owners and dog walkers may provide better care and appreciate and enjoy their time with their animals.

Dog walking is an exciting field with huge potential for diversification and growth, but you need a lot more than just loving animals to be effective. A successful dog walking business is about building your company's reputation through understanding dog behaviour, by managing communications with animals and their owners, liaising with the public, knowing business fundamentals and legalities, and generating publicity. Simply put, it's about running a business where dogs are the product.

## PROFESSIONAL DOG WALKER - COURSES AND PROGRAMS

1. Professional Dog Walker – Level 1 Certificate
2. Advanced Dog Walking Professional Certificate
3. Courses for Personal or Professional Interest

Whether you are a dog owner or a canine caregiver, these two programs provide the essential components of practical dog walking. Set yourself apart from others in the industry with current, relevant training from instructors who are considered industry experts in their fields.

This program continues to grow in popularity and recognition. To provide a high level of flexibility, courses are offered at various times throughout the year, in a variety of schedule options.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Short-term, part-time studies
- Classroom and practical fieldwork
- High level, qualified industry instructors
- Courses may be taken individually or as part of the certificate program
- Group discounts available

## COLLEGE CONTACTS

Karen Ramsden, Program Coordinator  
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100 West 49th Avenue, Vancouver, BC Canada V5Y 2Z6

Registration: 604.323.5322

[www.langara.bc.ca/pets](http://www.langara.bc.ca/pets)

## LEAD INSTRUCTOR

**Rebecca Ledger, PhD**

Dr. Rebecca Ledger is a companion animal behaviour scientist and clinical ethologist from Vancouver, British Columbia. Originally from the UK, Dr. Ledger was awarded her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of London, her Master's Degree in Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare from the University of Edinburgh (The Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies), and her Doctorate in the assessment and treatment of behavioural disorders in shelter dogs from Brunel University. Rebecca completed three Post-Doctorate Fellowships (funded by the RSPCA, Sanofi Sante Nutrition Animal, and Friskies Petcare) in the adoption, diagnosis, and management of dogs with behavioural disorders, in particular, treatments involving the use of pharmaceutical interventions. Whilst holding the post of University Lecturer, Dr. Ledger also studied for her MBA.

## INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM

In addition to Dr. Ledger, the instructors in this program bring years of both practical and theoretical experience in the animal welfare industry. Instructors currently include:

- Steve Simmonds, City of Vancouver, Manager Animal Services
- Kirsten Wilson, Registered Animal Technologist
- Bonnie Hartney, Animal Behaviourist
- Bridgette Fields, Small Business BC
- Kelsey Birtch, City of Vancouver, Licensing Liaison
- Don Howieson, Lawyer
- Kim Marosevich, City of Surrey, Bylaw Business Operations



## PROFESSIONAL DOG WALKER – LEVEL 1

### CURRICULUM

Courses may be taken individually or as part of the certificate program.

#### Typical Dog Behaviour (3.5hr)

Explore basic theoretical and practical elements of dog behaviour and their social structure including breed-specific behaviours, stages of normal development, communication, dominance, and dog pack theories.

#### Difficult Dog Behaviour (3.5hr)

Learn why dogs develop difficult-to-control behaviours and how to effectively work with them. Topics covered include hostility, predatory chase behaviours, and other aggressive behaviour.

Prerequisite: Typical Dog Behaviour.

#### City Bylaws and Dogs (3.5hr)

As a professional dog walker, or a conscientious dog owner, you need to know about your community and how local legislation and bylaws impact you, your dogs, and your business.

#### Starting a Dog Walking Business (3.5hr)

A dog walking business is more than grabbing a leash and getting some exercise. Learn what it means to run a business and to prepare yourself physically, emotionally, and with the right business skills. Find out what it takes from an expert in small business development.

#### First Aid for Dogs (4.5hr)

This basic first aid for dogs course includes: pet-proofing your space; first aid; CPR skills; life-saving education and emergency response skills that cover bleeding, wounds, poisons, bone injuries, and delivering puppies.

Note: This workshop is not a substitute for veterinary care.

#### Dog Walking – Practical (4hr)

Visit a local dog park to interpret and assess interactions between dogs as a group. Immediate instructor's feedback and suggestions for implementation are provided. Time will be provided for open question and answers to assist with certification exam. Prerequisites: Typical Dog Behaviour, Difficult Dog Behaviour, City Bylaws and Dogs, and First Aid for Dogs.

### CERTIFICATION

To receive your certification you must successfully complete all six courses and receive a passing grade on the final written exam.

Details at [www.langara.ca/pets](http://www.langara.ca/pets)

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

19 years of age or older

Fluency in written and spoken English

Practical component: Physical ability to assist dogs

Additional details at [www.langara.ca/pets](http://www.langara.ca/pets)

## ADVANCED DOG WALKING PROFESSIONAL

Build on your existing skills as a dog walker, and take your qualifications to the next level. This program was created in consultation with industry professionals including representation from animal behaviour consultants, SPCA, animal welfare lawyers, by-laws and licensing agents, veterinarians, animal control, and urban animal special projects. This professional development series is the first of its kind to address a higher level of behavioural and legal issues facing professional dog walkers. Providing both innovative and advanced knowledge, your certificate as an Advanced Dog Walking Professional will offer you a competitive advantage in this growing industry.

### CURRICULUM

Courses may be taken individually or as part of the certificate program.

#### Advanced Dog Behaviour (12hrs)

Discover a broader understanding of what the common behavioural problems are in dogs, as well as certain personality traits that dogs demonstrate. Discussion will focus on canines in group settings.

\*Prerequisite: Typical Dog Behaviour, Difficult Dog Behaviour.

#### Cooperative Dog Training (10hrs)

Students will learn how dogs absorb training skills, what is required to teach them to respond individually and in group settings, the difference between positive versus negative training methods, and how to utilize the correct techniques in specific situations.

Prerequisite: \*Dog Walking Practical L 1 or documented practical hours walking multiple dogs

#### Keeping Dogs Safe (4hrs)

Protect your dog at home, in the park, or on the road. Learn to identify the hidden threats and useful strategies to mitigate those risks. Prerequisites: none

#### Legislation: Beyond Your Community (4hrs)

Discuss actual court cases involving animal cruelty, animal safety, and animal aggression. Be informed of the laws pertaining to your business and how this pertains to your interaction with people and other animals. Learn the tools to recognize and report animals requiring intervention and how to ensure you are operating your business to serve the client and animals best interests.

\*Prerequisite: City Bylaws and Dogs, or equivalent experience

#### Growing a Successful Dog Walking Business (6hrs)

Students will discover tools to stand-out from the crowd, and how to deliver a unique marketing message. Learn about partnerships, diversification, and the customer relations of a dog walking business.

\* Prerequisite: Operating a Dog Walking Business, or equivalent

### CERTIFICATION

To earn a certificate, students must complete all five courses and receive a passing grade on the final exam in each course.

### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

19 years of age or older

Fluency in written and spoken English

Practical component: Physical ability to assist dogs

\*Note that equivalent experience may be considered as a prerequisite. Please contact program coordinator.

Additional details at [www.langara.ca/pets](http://www.langara.ca/pets)