

Practical Dog Training – Learning Objectives

1. Overview of Learning Objectives

The table below outlines the learning objectives that must be successfully achieved during the practical dog training course. Objectives marked with * are optional and intended as additional goals for teams who have already fulfilled the core requirements.

The table is included in the official certificate and serves as a tool for monitoring learning progress. The certificate can only be signed and issued once all required learning objectives have been met.

Topics (§ 13 HuV)	Learning Objectives for Dog Handlers	Learning Objectives for Dogs
1. Strengthening the Bond and Relationship	1.1 Handlers can draw their dog's attention to themselves.	1.1.1 The dog responds with attention to the handler upon receiving a cue.
	1.2 Handlers know what their dog finds rewarding in different situations.	
	1.3 Handlers know how and when to engage in bonding-enhancing play and mental activities with their dog. They can recognise the dog's level of arousal and channel it appropriately.	1.3.1 During play, the dog follows the learned rules (responds immediately to the "end of play" signal; does not pester before or after play, even if the handler is holding a toy; respects the handler's physical boundaries).
	1.4* Handlers know how to train everyday handling and required grooming procedures in a non-aversive manner	1.4.1* The dog allows necessary daily handling and grooming procedures to be carried out without stress.
2. Recognising and Understanding Canine Body Language	2.1 Handlers can correctly interpret expressive behaviour shown by their	

	own and other dogs and react appropriately.	
3. Enabling Dog Handlers to Provide Basic Training	3.1 Handlers know how to correctly reinforce desired behaviours (e.g., timing, setup, use of a marker signal).	3.1.1 The dog accepts the chosen reinforcers in the training setting (e.g., food, toy, marker signal).
	3.2 Handlers know how to teach a cue for a specific behaviour using non-aversive learning theory.	3.2.1 The dog responds to the cue “sit” in a low-distraction environment (maximum one cue repetition).
	3.3 Handlers know non-aversive training approaches for loose-leash walking and apply them correctly.	3.2.2 The dog responds to the cue “down” in a low-distraction environment (maximum one cue repetition).
		3.2.3 In a low-distraction environment, the dog maintains a freely chosen position for at least 60 seconds.
		3.2.4 In a low-distraction environment, the dog orients back to the handler upon receiving a cue.
		3.2.5 In a low-distraction environment, the dog recalls from at least 15 m and remains with the handler (maximum one cue repetition).
		3.2.6 The dog switches to the handler’s other side upon receiving a cue (maximum one cue repetition).
		3.3.1 In a low-distraction environment, the dog can walk 50 m on a loose leash.
	3.4* Handlers promote relaxed behaviour around resources through appropriate management measures.	3.4.1* The dog releases a toy when cued (maximum one cue repetition).
4. Humane and Safe Handling in Challenging Situations	4.1 Handlers know and apply the Canton of Zurich’s code of conduct.	

	4.2 Handlers know management and training strategies that allow them to guide their dog safely and responsibly through everyday situations.	4.2.1 The leashed dog can walk on the side away from a stimulus on a loose leash when: a. Passing an approaching person b. Walking past a handler with a seated dog c. Passing a jogger d. Greeting a person e. Walking through a moving group of people (max. 5 individuals)
	4.3* Handlers can build and use relaxation cues (e.g., mat, touch, word, scent) and apply them in daily life (e.g., in a restaurant).	4.3.1* The dog responds to the relaxation cue and can relax for at least 60 seconds, depending on the situation.
5. Introducing Muzzle Training	5.1 Handlers know how to accustom their dog to wearing a suitable, animal-welfare-compliant muzzle.	5.1.1 The dog voluntarily places its nose into the muzzle for at least 10 seconds without showing avoidance behaviour.

2. Lesson Planning and Structure

Each lesson lasts 60 minutes. Every lesson—except lesson 6—includes theoretical input related to the newly introduced learning objectives. Learning progress is assessed continuously and documented using the official form. No final exam is required.

Every lesson should include:

- Welcome
- Presentation of the upcoming learning objectives
- Theoretical input (except lesson 6)
- Practical exercises (40–50 minutes)
- Individual review of previous learning objectives (except lesson 1)
- Homework assignment (except lesson 6)
- Feedback and farewell

Before the first lesson, administrative checks must be completed (e.g., verifying identification, reading the microchip). Questions regarding the current or earlier lessons may be asked after a session (additional costs may apply).

A lesson plan covering all six sessions must be prepared by the instructor before the course begins and adjusted as necessary for the group.