



Assistance Dogs and Other Animals on Campus policy

The University of Leicester is committed to providing an inclusive and safe environment for all students, staff and visitors.

We recognise the important and valuable role Assistance Dogs have in supporting the confidence and independence of disabled people. Assistance Dogs are highly trained to carry out a variety of practical tasks to assist with (for example) mobility, dexterity and/or physical co-ordination.

This policy applies to staff, students and visitors, and sets out the arrangements and procedure to follow if a student or a member of staff wishes to bring an Assistance Dog onto university premises.

All staff, students and visitors are advised that the University does not usually permit animals on campus other than authorised Assistance Dogs (as defined by the Equality Act 2010 s173) accompanying a disabled person for the purpose of enabling that person to carry out day-to-day activities.

This policy applies to all university-controlled premises, including university vehicles and accommodation. Please note that external third parties, such as employers, placement providers and other organisations will have their own policies regarding Assistance Dogs. If Assistance Dog users are required to attend external premises which are not controlled by the University, the Assistance Dog policy of that venue will apply.

Animals other than Assistance Dogs are typically prohibited from campus except in exceptional circumstances or in relation to university-organised events, such as Canine Calming Days and other wellbeing events.

Please note that **pets are not allowed** onto university premises, including university accommodation.

Important Definitions

Assistance Dog (Equality Act 2010 s173) - a dog which:

- a. has been trained to guide a blind person;
- b. has been trained to assist a deaf person;
- c. has been trained by a prescribed charity to assist a disabled person who has a disability that consists of epilepsy or otherwise affects the person's mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- d. is of a prescribed category which has been trained to assist a disabled person who has a disability (other than one falling within paragraph (c)) of a prescribed kind.

Therapy/Emotional Support Animal ("ESA") – a dog or other animal that provides emotional support to help alleviate identified symptoms or effects of disability. An ESA does not necessarily aid with mobility and does not assist a disabled person with practical daily tasks, nor does it necessarily accompany a disabled person at all times.

As the behaviour of ESAs is harder to guarantee than that of Assistance Dogs, we do not anticipate that such animals would meet the standards of control expected, except in very rare, limited circumstances. It is also necessary to consider the wellbeing of the animal itself and the impact on other students and staff in shared environments.

For these reasons, requests for ESAs will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the procedure for Assistance Dogs set out below and on receipt of appropriate evidence of need, which may include professional medical advice. Evidence will also need to demonstrate that the animal has been trained to a sufficiently high standard so that the University is satisfied that it will not interfere with the students' learning and other forms of participation in the student experience, or in the case of staff, in undertaking their role, and poses no risk of harm to others and must be covered by full public liability insurance.

Whilst the University recognises the positive impact that animals can have on wellbeing, currently only Assistance Dogs are expressly recognised under equality legislation. ESAs, therapy animals and assistance animals other than dogs are not, and therefore these animals do not have the same access rights as Assistance Dogs.

Assistance Dogs - Training

Assistance Dogs are trained to assist individuals with practical tasks and day-to-day activities. They can be trained to help people with conditions such as sight/hearing loss, epilepsy, diabetes, limited physical mobility and more.

Assistance Dogs are highly trained, meaning they:

- have an appropriate temperament;
- will sit or lie quietly on the floor next to their owner;
- will not wander freely;
- are unlikely to foul in a public place;
- have appropriate veterinary care;
- have public liability insurance.

Assistance dogs may be trained by one of the eight charity members of [Assistance Dogs UK](#). Members of this organisation have successfully passed an extensive accreditation process that covers all aspects of their training, dog welfare and administration, meeting exacting international standards. Many other charities and organisations also exist in the UK to train assistance dogs to the same high standards. It is the University's preference that dogs are trained by an organisation that is a member of ADUK or international equivalent. We also recognise that Assistance Dogs may be trained by other organisations or charities and can even be owner-trained, however Assistance Dogs trained through these alternative channels must be trained to the same high standards as those trained by ADUK members.

Bringing an Assistance Dog onto University premises

Visitors are welcome to bring their Assistance Dog on campus, as long as the dog and owner meet the required standard of training and the expectations laid out in section 7.3. If a visitor's Assistance Dog acts in a threatening, aggressive or disruptive manner, the University reserves the right to require its removal.

Staff and students should follow the procedure outlined below in advance of bringing an Assistance Dog onto University premises. Following this procedure enables the University to consider each case on an individual basis in order to provide the most appropriate support.

Prior to an Assistance Dog being brought onto university premises, the University will seek assurance that the Assistance Dog and their owner have undertaken appropriate training for a sufficient time period, that the Assistance Dog is well prepared for the university environment and has been exposed to a range of environments and situations.

Assistance Dog users are responsible for the behaviour of their Assistance Dog. The University reserves the right to exclude an Assistance Dog from a facility or, in extreme circumstances, from the campus, if the Assistance Dog poses a threat to the health and safety of other people, for example where the dog is aggressive, where unresolved animal misbehaviour continues, or where it is established that the animal does not meet the criteria for an Assistance Dog outlined in this policy.

Procedure for Students

Students who wish to bring an Assistance Dog on campus must:

1. Contact AccessAbility to register the Assistance Dog.
2. Provide details on the Assistance Dog's registration with ADUK or other organisation (if relevant) or provide evidence that the Assistance Dog and owner have completed training.
3. Engage in a risk assessment, as required, which may include site visits with the Assistance Dog, including to their School and university accommodation, where relevant.
4. Provide evidence of public liability insurance.
5. Inform the Accommodation team if living in halls of residence. This can be done on application when applying for a place in halls.

Procedure for Staff

Staff who wish to bring an Assistance Dog on campus must inform their line manager, so that appropriate support can be put in place. They will also be required to:

1. Provide details on the Assistance Dog's registration with ADUK or other organisation (if relevant) or provide evidence that the Assistance Dog and owner have completed training to the required standard.
2. Provide evidence of public liability insurance.

They may also be required to engage in a risk assessment if their role requires them to work in specific environments, for example research laboratories.

Roles and Responsibilities

AccessAbility (student requests) Feed, pet or praise assistance animals

- Signpost students to this policy and assist students with their initial orientation, facilities available for Assistance Dogs and any support needed.
- Discuss with the student their preferred approach, which may include awareness raising with other students about Assistance Dog etiquette and addressing any concerns raised by other students.
- AccessAbility Tutors will undertake a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), for the Assistance Dog and the student, if required. A PEEP for university halls accommodation will also be undertaken by ResLife, if relevant.

Managers (staff requests)

- Ensure that staff who use Assistance Dogs aware of this policy, including their rights and responsibilities as an Assistance Dog user.
- With support from their local HR team, Staff Disability Adviser and Health and Safety (if relevant), check the information received relating to training and insurance, and if required, organise a risk assessment.
- Support staff in their preferred approach, which may include making colleagues aware that an Assistance Dog will be on the premises. Outline appropriate etiquette around Assistance Dogs and address any potential concerns raised by colleagues.
- Ensure that Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are in place for the staff member and their Assistance Dog, if required.
- Raise any concerns about the Assistance Dog (e.g. behavioural issues) with the Assistance Dog user in the first instance.

Assistance Dog Users

Assistance Dogs are the responsibility of the Assistance Dog user. Assistance Dog users are responsible for any loss or damage to persons or university property caused by their Assistance Dog.

Assistance Dog users must ensure that their Assistance Dog:

- is under control and on a lead at all times whilst on campus;
- wears an ID tag and ideally some kind of item that identifies the Assistance Dog as a working animal (e.g. harness, jacket, lead or other identifier);
- receives the appropriate rest breaks and recuperation;
- is not ill, in poor health, unclean or unkempt. If these standards are not met, the University may require the Assistance Dog be removed from university premises;
- is never left alone with anyone other than their owner (there may be exceptions in relation to laboratory work);
- uses the designated spending pen for toileting and does not foul university premises. In the unlikely event an Assistance Dog does foul inside university buildings, Assistance Dogs users must report this to the Security team for them to coordinate arrangements for cleaning;
- is kept up to date with insurance, vaccinations, and flea/tick/worming treatments, as necessary.

Members of the University Community

Assistance Dogs are not pets. Members of the University community should not:

- feed, pet or praise Assistance Dogs;
- distract or startle Assistance Dogs; or
- interfere with an Assistance Dog’s service

Failure to abide by these requirements may result in disciplinary action.

Assistance Dogs from Abroad

There may be occasions where overseas students and staff, from outside of the UK, request that

their Assistance Dog accompanies them. As long as the Assistance Dog is trained to a similar standard to that of one of the member organisations of ADUK, this is permitted. Such students and staff should follow the procedure set out above.

Conflict Solutions

Removal of Assistance Dogs

The University reserves the right to remove or prohibit entry to an Assistance Dog where the University considers it poses a threat to the health and safety of others, for example where the Assistance Dog is aggressive, where unresolved Assistance Dog misbehaviour continues, or where it is established that the animal does not meet the criteria for an Assistance Dog outlined in this policy.

Assistance Dog users who fail to comply with this policy could be subject to further action under the relevant University disciplinary procedure.

Restricted Access

The University may restrict the access of Assistance Dogs to certain areas for health and safety reasons. Restricted areas may include research laboratories, practical facilities, medical facilities, areas where protective clothing is required, etc. Applications for exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Religious or Cultural Conflicts

Religious or cultural beliefs cannot be used to prohibit access for Assistance Dogs and their users.

Phobias and Allergies

Concerns relating to a fear of, or allergies to, dogs or other animals can be raised with the line manager (for staff) and AccessAbility (for students) to be considered at a local level.

Complaints and Appeals

Complaints by Assistance Dog Users

Assistance Dog users wishing to make a complaint about their treatment, or that of their Assistance Dog, can report the incident to their line manager (for staff), AccessAbility, ResLife or their School (for students), or through Report and Support under the Dignity and Respect at Leicester Policy.

Complaints about Assistance Dogs

Issues and concerns about an Assistance Dog’s behaviour should be raised with the owner in the first instance. If this is not possible, issues can be raised with their line manager, AccessAbility, or where the Assistance Dog user is unknown Security.

Formal Complaints

If the issue cannot be resolved informally it should be escalated and dealt with through the University’s existing formal complaints processes (Grievance for staff and student complaints (Senate Regulation 12) for students), but it should be noted that the rights of Assistance Dogs and their users are legally protected.

Complaints about the application of this policy

If an Assistance Dog user, or an ESA user, has a complaint about a university decision under this policy, they should follow the relevant complaints procedure (Grievance for staff and Senate Regulation 12 for students). Complaints should be raised as soon as possible and in any event within three months of the decision.