UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

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# Assistance Animals for Disabled People Policy

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

## Document Control:

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|---|---|
| **Policy Owner:** | Disability Services for students<br>People Team for staff |
| **Policy Author(s):** | Deputy Director of Wellbeing and Safeguarding<br>Employee Relations |
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| **Approving Body:** | Social Inclusion Committee<br>Policy Oversight Group |
| **Equality Impact Assessment Date:** | [26/03/2029] |
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| **Date of Next Review:** | [01/07/2026/] |

## Amendment History:

| Version Number: | Effective Date: | Summary of Amendments: | Author: |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | December 2022 – July 2023 | Establishment of Policy | Estates Accessibility Officer |
| 1.1 | March 2026 | Review of policy | Deputy Director of Wellbeing and Safeguarding |
| 1.2 | October 2026 | Amendment to policy to reflect employee and employer responsibilities, in addition to students | Employee Relations |

## 1. Purpose

1.1 The University of Warwick is committed to creating a community which is welcoming and inclusive, which includes supporting disabled staff and students.

1.2 The University generally prohibits individuals from bringing animals inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures.

1.3 However, the University recognises that an animal (an "Assistance Animal"), usually a dog (an "Assistance Dog"), kept and used by a disabled person (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) wholly or mainly for the purpose of assisting that person to carry out day to day activities, will require access to the University's estate, relevant buildings and University owned, leased or controlled student accommodation.

1.4 This document outlines the way in which the University will manage the provision of campus access for assistance animals for staff and students as part of our commitment to creating a diverse campus.

## 2. Scope

2.1 Assistance Dogs

The University recognises that some disabled employees and students may need to use an Assistance Dog, and under the Equality Act 2010, assistance dogs are permitted on University of Warwick grounds. Staff and students are required to give advance notice of their intention to regularly bring an assistance dog onto campus. It is acknowledged that there can be a range of assistance animals, however most commonly this a dog, which has been professionally trained to perform tasks for a disabled person.

The University of Warwick expects that requests to bring assistance dogs onto campus by directed initially contacting Disability Services (for students) or to line managers (or employees). Employees should contact their Line / Recruiting Manager in the first instance to discuss their request. The employee will normally be asked to complete an Adjustments Form This will enable the University to ensure that appropriate support, and any necessary control measures, are put into place.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission states[1] that Assistance Dogs:

- are not pets and are treated as "auxiliary aids",
- are highly trained,
- will not wander freely around the premises,
- will sit or lie quietly on the floor next to its owner and are trained to go to the toilet on command and so are unlikely to foul in a public place.

Most are instantly recognisable by the harness or identifying dog jacket they wear.

Assistance Dogs are generally trained by members or candidates of Assistance Dogs (UK) [ADUK][2] or by an equivalent organisation in another country. Guidance on international Assistance Dogs can be found from Assistance Dogs International and their accredited member search. See section 4.11.

Assistance Dogs trained by member organisations of ADUK[3] will have formal identification (examples given in Appendix Three). Assistance Dog owners should therefore be in a position to evidence that their dogs are qualified Assistance Dogs and **NOT pets with a therapeutic purpose** (see section 4.13).

[1] https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/assistance-dogs-guide-businesses-and-service-providers (accessed March 2026)

[2] https://www.assistancedogs.org.uk/ (accessed March 2026)

[3] https://assistancedogsinternational.org/ (accessed March 2026)

Assistance Dogs have formal identification and are permitted to accompany their owners at all times and in all places within the United Kingdom (unless there is a genuine health and safety risk – for example an infection control clinical environment)[4].

Assistance Dogs are highly trained working dogs, performing tasks to assist disabled people. Assistance dogs trained by ADUK member organisations perform practical assistive tasks for their disabled partners or alert to life-threatening medical conditions to enable their owners to be independent.

Members of the University community should not:

- touch or feed an Assistance Dog, unless invited to do so by their owner;
- deliberately distract or startle an Assistance Dog; or
- separate or attempt to separate an Assistance Dog from the person using the Assistance Dog's service.

## 3. Responsibilities

This Policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis within the Disability Team and People Team. If there are significant changes to national laws or guidance in the Higher Education sector, this Policy may be subject to change.

| **Role** | **Responsible for:** |
|---|---|
| **Head of Departments** | Understanding departmental obligations for supporting assistance animals in the workplace and supporting employees or students within the department who require assistance animals. This includes ensuring appropriate risk assessments have taken place and measures implemented accordingly. |
| **Employee** | Complying with this policy to ensure that assistance animals in the workplace are managed appropriately and in line with expectations detailed in UK legislation. |
| **People team** | Advising line managers and employees on the policy and ensuring compliance with policy. |
| **Disability Services** | Advising students and departments on the policy |
| **Students** | To ensure compliance with responsibilities outlined within the policy |

## 4. Policy Statement

4.1 Assistance Dogs on University Premises

Assistance Dogs are permitted to access all University premises under the control of their handlers (or where necessary in order to control the Assistance Dog for a short period of time, someone other than the handler), who may be students, staff or visitors to the University.

When Assistance Dogs are inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures, their owners must comply with the following guidelines:

4.2 Information

The University will request information from owners and owners shall provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties to ensure the necessary arrangements are put in place to accommodate them on University premises. Information will be shared with consent for support purposes with relevant Departments on a need-to-know basis.

4.3 Identification

Assistance Dog owners must ensure that their Assistance Dogs are clearly identifiable by the use of special collars, harnesses and/or ID tags when on duty.

The University will provide a University ID upon completion of the process checklist outlined in Appendix 1 to Assistance Dogs from an ADUK member organisation (or relevant verified equivalent) who will be living in University owned, leased or controlled accommodation buildings and/or regularly supporting their owner inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures. University ID cards for other Assistance Dogs (including those outlined in sections 4.11 and 4.12) will be issued on a case-by-case basis.

Assistance Dog owners shall show the University ID card if reasonably requested by University staff and may use the card to demonstrate the Assistance Dog is known to the University. Possession of the University ID card does not provide any authority greater than to demonstrate the owner's commitment to compliance with the guidelines set out in section 4 of this policy and act to identify the Assistance Dog as a member of the University Community. The University ID card is the property of the University of Warwick and the University reserves the right to revoke the University ID card at any time, including following breaches of the guidelines set out in section 4. Expired, lost or stolen ID cards are subject to the University's existing policies. University ID cards must be renewed annually.

4.4 Insurance

Assistance Dog owners are responsible for ensuring that their Assistance Dogs are covered by full public liability insurance at an appropriate level. Proof of this insurance will need to be supplied to complete the checklist in Appendix 1 to obtain a University ID card.

4.5 Access restrictions (including accommodation buildings)

Assistance Dog owners must respect access restrictions established by the University on grounds of health and safety. Assistance Dog owners must ensure that Assistance Dogs do not enter staff and students privately assigned spaces, such as bedrooms and flats within residences, without permission.

Only Assistance Dogs with a valid University ID card are permitted to be within student and staff University owned, leased or controlled accommodation buildings. Upon application for University owned, leased or controlled accommodation (or as soon as their needs change), disabled students and staff with Assistance Dogs should declare their intention to bring an Assistance Dog into their accommodation so the process of applying for a University ID card (see section 4.3) and allocating suitable accommodation can begin.

Conference delegates or hotel guests should notify their relevant University contact and/or accommodation provider that they will be bringing an Assistance Dog to ensure that appropriate information can be provided to delegates/guests about relevant spending (toilet) facilities for their Assistance Dog.

4.6 Animal misbehaviour

Preventing and correcting Assistance Dogs' misbehaviour is the owner's responsibility. Assistance Dog owners must make sure that their Assistance Dogs do not cause harm or injury to others and/or damage to University property. Any harm or injury to others and/or damage to University property must be reported immediately to the Community Safety Team[5], or relevant local equivalent for locations other than the main University of Warwick campuses in Coventry.

Unless it is directly related to the emergency assistance of their owner (for example, in the event of a seizure or to raise the alarm), noise and erratic behaviour (as perceived by the University) of an assistance dog is not acceptable on campus. This could include consistently disruptive behaviours (including noise such as barking) that may impact on the wellbeing of the community and/or standard operation, teaching or other, on University premises.

4.7 Cleanliness

Registered sight impaired people[6] are not required to clean up after their Assistance Dogs but they are expected to have received the appropriate training to avoid dog waste on University property. Assistance Dog owners must take responsibility for the clean-up of the animal's waste, consistent with reasonable capacity. Assistance Dog owners shall use reasonable endeavours to use the designated spending (toileting) areas identified by the University. The University already has several dedicated spending facilities[7] across the main University of Warwick campuses in Coventry.

In the unlikely event that the Assistance Dog does spend outside of these designated areas, the Assistance Dog owner must report this to the Estates Service Desk (or Community Safety Team out of hours) who will make arrangements for the area to be cleaned and sanitised. Please contact the relevant local equivalent for locations other than the main University of Warwick campuses in Coventry.

4.8 Animal care and supervision

Animal care is primarily the Assistance Dog owner's responsibility. The owner ensures regular health checks, vaccination and an adequate standard of grooming of the Assistance Dog.

[5] https://warwick.ac.uk/services/community-safety/contact/ (accessed March 2026)
[6] https://www.rnib.org.uk/eye-health/registering-your-sight-loss (accessed March 2026)

[7] https://warwick.ac.uk/study/international/meetus/visit/guidance (accessed March 2026)

Assistance Dog owners must ensure the Assistance Dog has its requirements in relation to feeding, watering and toileting fully met. Owners must ensure that Assistance Dogs are kept on a lead at all times when walking around the University's estate or are safely restrained when unsupervised for short periods of time.

In order to support Assistance Dog owners who are students or staff, the University will provide toileting facilities in an appropriate location for the Assistance Dog owner, as soon as is reasonably practicable, once a need has been identified and communicated to the Estates Capital Programme Team. The University already has several dedicated spending (toilet) facilities across the main University of Warwick's campus in Coventry.

Contact should be made with the Estates team via accessibility@warwick.ac.uk to ensure that Assistance Dog owners can be shown the nearest relevant spending (toilet) facilities and that an assessment of any further reasonable adjustments required to the physical built environment can be assessed.

4.9 Animal training

Assistance Dog owners are responsible for any ongoing and additional training needs for their Assistance Dogs and for the correct and safe performance of their duties.

The University reserves the right to require written evidence of a level of training and/or confirmation from a reputable professional organisation that the Assistance Dog has been trained to perform practical assistive tasks for their disabled partners and/or alert to life-threatening medical conditions to enable their owners to be independent.

Assistance Dogs must be trained to meet the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners' (IAADP) published minimum training standards for public access or a recognised equivalent. This is being requested in the interest of other members of our community, as well as health and safety requirements, given the nature of our campus and facilities.

For more information on owner-trained animals, see section 4.13.

4.10 University public buildings

Whilst the University public buildings are covered by this policy, there may be additional local policies in place. Assistance Dog owners should check with these venues for the most up to date information. Public buildings include but are not limited to Warwick Arts Centre, the Sports and Wellness Hub (and other sports facilities), Warwick Retail outlets, Warwick SU outlets and venues and the Health Centre.

Additionally, Assistance Dogs are allowed in University-managed accommodation[8] and the Conference facilities[9], but pets are not.

4.11 Assistance Dogs from other countries

There may be occasions where students, staff or visitors to the University from other countries request that their Assistance Dog accompanies them. The Assistance Dog should be trained by an organisation equivalent to a member organisation of Assistance Dogs (UK). Guidance on

[8] https://warwick.ac.uk/services/rescommunity/lifeinhalls/regulations (accessed March 2026)
[9] https://warwick.ac.uk/services/conferences/guestinfo/accessibility/ (accessed March 2026)

international Assistance Dogs can be found from Assistance Dogs International[10] and their accredited member search[11].

Note that all the guidelines in section 4 still apply and compliance with section 4 is expected regardless of the animal origin. For Assistance Dogs from other countries, the University reserves the right to require written evidence of a level of training and/or confirmation from a reputable professional organisation that the Assistance Dog has been trained to perform practical assistive tasks for their disabled partners and/or alert to life-threatening medical conditions to enable their owners to be independent.

4.12 Assistance Animals other than dogs

Whilst Assistance Dogs are the most common Assistance Animal, the University recognises that some other animals are starting to become trained as auxiliary aids to support disabled people. Note that all the guidelines in sections 2– still apply with relevant equivalency, but compliance with section 4 is expected regardless of the animal type. For Assistance Animals other than dogs, the University reserves the right to require written evidence of a level of training and/or confirmation from a reputable professional organisation that the Assistance Animal has been trained to perform practical assistive tasks for their disabled partners and/or alert to life-threatening medical conditions to enable their owners to be independent.

Assistance Animals other than dogs will only be permitted within University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures on a case-by-case basis, with the prior written agreement of the University in the form of a University ID card following the principles set out in this policy for members of ADUK, including compliance with section 4.

For more information on local arrangements in University public buildings, see section 4.10.

4.13 Therapy and support animals and owner-trained animals

Therapy and support animals (including dogs) are different to Assistance Dogs from ADUK member organisations. They will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances within University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures on a case-by-case basis, with the prior written agreement of the University in the form of a University ID card following the principles set out in this policy for members of ADUK, including compliance with section 2.2.

For both therapy and support animals and owner-trained animals (including dogs), the University reserves the right to require written evidence of a level of training and/or confirmation from a reputable professional organisation that the Assistance Dog has been trained to perform practical assistive tasks for their disabled partners and/or alert to life-threatening medical conditions to enable their owners to be independent. Should further training, assessment or accreditation be required, owners are responsible for the cost. More information on owner-trained Assistance Dogs can be obtained from Dog A.I.D[12].

Note, compliance with section 4 is expected regardless of the animal purpose. For more information on local arrangements in University public buildings, see section 4.10.

[10] https://assistancedogsinternational.org/ (accessed March 2026)
[11] https://assistancedogsinternational.org/resources/member-search/ (accessed March 2026)
[12] https://dogaid.org.uk/ (accessed March 2026)

4.14 Pets

This policy deals explicitly with Assistance Animals for Disabled People and not pets. Employees and students shall only be permitted to bring their pet inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures if separate policy (specific to such premises) allows this. For clarity, students are not permitted to bring or keep pets within University owned, leased or controlled accommodation.

4.15 Conflict Situations

Removal of an Assistance Animal

The University reserves the right to remove or bar entry inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures to an Assistance Animal when it poses a direct threat to the health & safety of the owner or others. Unresolved animal misbehaviour may also provide grounds for removal of the Assistance Dog from University property and revoking the University ID card (see section 4.3), after all reasonable measures have been taken to address this.

Damage

Assistance Animal owners are responsible for any damage to persons or University property.

Restricted access

The University may restrict Assistance Animal access to certain areas for health and safety reasons. Restricted areas may include research laboratories, medical facilities, areas where protective clothing is required, boiler/plant rooms, food preparation areas etc. Applications for exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Conflicting disabilities

Where an Assistance Animal poses adverse health risk to an/other member(s) of the University community (e.g. a person with confirmed allergies), the University will determine suitable alternative and equitable arrangements for either or both parties.

Religious or cultural conflicts

Religious or cultural beliefs cannot be used to prohibit access to Assistance Animals and their owners. Further support and advice for concerns relating to religion is available from The Chaplaincy on campus[13].

4.16 Complaints

Any issues in relation to Assistance Animals on University premises that cannot be resolved informally should be raised in accordance with the University's feedback and complaints resolution procedure[14].

[13] https://warwick.ac.uk/services/chaplaincy/about_us/team/ (accessed March 2026)
[14] https://warwick.ac.uk/services/feedbackcomplaints/ (accessed March 2026)

Key contacts

If there are any questions regarding this Policy, please contact:

Students – Disability Services (disability@warwick.ac.uk)

Staff – Contact your People Team Business Partner, (https://warwick.ac.uk/services/peopleteam/internal/ourteam/)

## 5 Associated Documents

**External policies and practices**

https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/guidance/assistance-dogs-guide-businesses-and-service-providers

https://www.assistancedogs.org.uk/

https://assistancedogsinternational.org/

https://www.rnib.org.uk/eye-health/registering-your-sight-loss

https://assistancedogsinternational.org/resources/member-search/

https://dogaid.org.uk/

**Internal policies and practices**

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/socialinclusion/about/strategy/

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/community-safety/contact/

Adjustments

https://warwick.ac.uk/study/international/meetus/visit/guidance

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/rescommunity/lifeinhalls/regulations

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/conferences/guestinfo/accessibility/

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/chaplaincy/about_us/team/

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/sg/spa/centraltimetabling/webroombooking/roombookings/termsandconditions

## 6 Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Checklist for Applying for an Assistance Animal University ID card

The aim of this checklist is to enable disabled members of the University community with Assistance Dogs from an ADUK member organisation (or verified equivalent status/animal) who will be living in University owned, leased or controlled accommodation buildings and/or regularly supporting their disabled owner inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures to obtain a University ID card for their Assistance Animal. Please refer to the University of Warwick for more information about when a University ID card is required or may be beneficial.

This checklist is to be completed by the Assistance Animal owner in collaboration with Human Resources (staff) or Disability Services (student). Please see the renewal checklist for the annual renewal

1. Name of University Staff/Student. Click or tap here to enter text.
2. Department of University Staff/Student. Click or tap here to enter text.
3. University ID number of Staff/Student. Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Do you consider yourself disabled as defined by the Equality Act 2010? ☐
5. Name of Assistance Animal. Click or tap here to enter text.
6. Type and Breed of Assistance Animal. Click or tap here to enter text.
7. Age of Assistance Animal. Click or tap here to enter text.
8. Date access required from (e.g. start of employment/course)? Click or tap to enter a date.
9. Date access required until (e.g. end of employment/course/up to 12 months after start date)? Click or tap to enter a date.
10. Is the Assistance Animal trained by a member or candidate of Assistance Dogs (UK), or relevant verified equivalent? Please specify. ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.
11. Is the Assistance Animal trained by a member of Assistance Dogs International, or relevant verified equivalent? Please specify. ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.
12. Is the training of the Assistance Animal owner led? Please specify. ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.
13. Is the Assistance Animal a Therapy or Support Animal? Please specify. ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.
14. Please briefly outline the main practical assistive tasks the Assistance Animal is trained to do.

Click or tap here to enter text.

15. Is the Assistance Animal trained to alert to life- threatening medical conditions? Please specify.

☐ Click or tap here to enter text.

16. Will you be looking to live in University owned, leased or controlled accommodation buildings with your Assistance Animal? Please specify locations if known.

☐ Click or tap here to enter text.

17. Will your Assistance Animal be regularly supporting you inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures? Please specify primary locations if known.

☐ Click or tap here to enter text.

18. I have seen the University's [Title] and agree to comply with the guidelines set out in section **Error! Reference source not found.**.

☐

**19.** I have read the information about Assistance Dog spending facilities on campus and know where the nearest facility is to my regular locations, or will endeavour to do so when I first arrive on campus.

☐

**20.** *My department are aware and have carried out any additional risk assessments.*

☐

**21.** Please attach a copy of formal identification for the Assistance Animal e.g. that provided by ADUK or suitable equivalent. Also a passport sized photograph of the dog and a copy of liability insurance. *

☐

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## Appendix 2 – Checklist for Renewing Assistance Animal University ID card

The aim of this checklist is to enable disabled members of the University community with Assistance Dogs from an ADUK member organisation (or verified equivalent status/animal) who will be living in University owned, leased or controlled accommodation buildings and/or regularly supporting their disabled owner inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures to obtain a University ID card for their Assistance Animal. Please refer to the University of Warwick [Title] for more information about when a University ID card is required or may be beneficial.

This checklist is to be completed by the Assistance Animal owner in collaboration with Human Resources (staff) or Disability Services (student). Please see the renewal checklist for the annual renewal

1. Name of University Staff/Student. Click or tap here to enter text.
2. Department of University Staff/Student. Click or tap here to enter text.
3. University ID number of Staff/Student. Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Do you consider yourself disabled as defined by the Equality Act 2010? ☐
5. Name of Assistance Animal. Click or tap here to enter text.
6. Type and Breed of Assistance Animal. Click or tap here to enter text.
7. Age of Assistance Animal. Click or tap here to enter text.
8. Date access required from (e.g. start of employment/course)? Click or tap to enter a date.
9. Date access required until (e.g. end of employment/course/up to 12 months after start date)? Click or tap to enter a date.
10. Have your, or your animals' circumstances changed since your first checklist application?
11. I have seen the University's [Title] and agree to comply with the guidelines set out in section **Error! Reference source not found.**.

☐

12. I have read the information about Assistance Dog spending facilities on campus and know where the nearest facility is to my regular locations, or will endeavour to do so when I first arrive on campus.

☐

13. *My department are aware and have carried out any additional risk assessments.*
    ☐

## Appendix 3 – Examples of formal identification for Assistance Dogs

Assistance Dogs trained by member organisations of ADUK[15] will have formal identification

- ID tags on the dog's collar,
- a harness,
- an organisation-specific branded dog jacket or harness,
- a lead slip,
- Whilst all ADUK member trained Assistance Dogs will wear one, it is not a legal requirement for Assistance Dogs to wear a harness, jacket or lead slip.

People who have an Assistance Dog from an ADUK member organisation[16] will also have a yellow ADUK branded Identification Booklet.

[15] https://www.assistancedogs.org.uk/the-law/ (accessed March 2026)
[16] https://www.assistancedogs.org.uk/members/ (accessed March 2026)

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# Appendix 4 – Risk Assessment Template for Assistance Animals

**Risk Assessment for Assistance Dogs**

**Department of:** **Assessor:**

**Date of amended assessment:** **Review Date:**

| RISK | PEOPLE AT RISK | ASSESSMENT | ACTION TO BE TAKEN | ACTION TAKEN |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Severity of risk:**<br>**Probability Hazard will occur:**<br>**Overall risk:** | • | |

**Other Sources of Information:**

- Safety issues should be referred to the **Health & Safety Adviser** (23208).
- Occupational health problems should be referred to the Occupational Health Adviser (75493).