



## **Estates Facilities & Residences Department**

### **Animals on Campus Policy**

#### **Introduction**

This document provides detailed guidance on Aberystwyth University's (AU) policy and procedure for the presence of all animals on its Estate. It is the responsibility of the Estates, Facilities & Residences Department to ensure this policy is adhered to. It is designed to assist students, staff and visitors in identifying the services offered to support animals that are legitimately on Campus and to clearly identify in which circumstances animals can be brought on to AU Estate.

The main hazards and concerns associated with having animals in University premises are:

- Stalled or delayed evacuation of a building in an emergency situation;
- Aggressive behaviour of animals;
- Allergic reactions and transmission of disease;
- Zoophobia (phobia of animals that causes distress or dysfunction in an individual's everyday life);
- Slips, trips and falls;
- Animal waste;
- Damage to University property.

It is acknowledged that these hazards also apply to University Grounds.

## Policy

- It is the University's policy that, subject to the limited exceptions, animals are not allowed into its workplaces (including vehicles), or its residential accommodation.
- No animals should be left in parked vehicles on campus.
- Animals must not be tied up outside buildings.
- Animals are not permitted on our playing fields or sports facilities.

## Exceptions

- Assistance animals for disabled persons, or those being trained for such a purpose;
- Assistance animals for the health and wellbeing of staff or/and students;
- ;
- Aberystwyth University approved working animal;
- Police dogs on duty;
- Visitors walking on the public right of ways through the University grounds.

## Assistance Animals

This policy aims to outline the arrangements AU make to provide a welcoming and safe environment for assistance animals and their owners. It is the line manager's responsibility to ensure that staff with assistance animals are aware of this policy and that other members of staff respond appropriately to the member of staff and the assistance animal. AQRO would ensure students are aware of this policy as part of the admissions procedure.

## Definition of an Assistance Dog

For the purpose of this policy, an assistance dog is one that has been specifically trained to assist disabled people.

Assistance dogs on the AU Estate must:

- be trained by a member of Assistance Dogs UK (AD(UK)), a coalition of assistance dog organisations listed below or an equivalent organisation in another country;
- have a formal identification in the form of branded jackets or lead slips;
- have the yellow ID booklet from the AD (UK) member organisation. This ID book contains information about the owner and their dog, details of the training organisation who trained the dog and its owner.

There are eight registered charities that form AD (UK), these are:

- Canine Partners
- Dog A.I.D.
- Dogs for Good
- Guide Dogs
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
- Medical Detection Dogs
- Support Dogs
- The Seeing Dogs Alliance

## Types of Assistance Dog

Guide dogs – assisting people who are blind or are visually impaired.

Hearing dogs – assist people who are deaf or are hearing impaired.

Support dogs/Dogs for the Disabled – who provide support for many tasks that their owners may find difficult, such as:

- Opening and closing doors;
- Calling an ambulance;
- Picking up objects;
- Assisting with dressing and undressing;
- Accompanying their owner whilst undertaking chores such as shopping;
- Acting as a physical support;
- Raising an alarm;
- Operating control buttons;
- Switching lights on and off;
- Carrying items;
- Loading and unloading a washing machine;
- Fetching the telephone and other items.

Seizure alert dogs - are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure, which may appear as misbehaving to others.

Autism assistance dogs.

### **Owner's responsibilities**

Assistance animal owners must request permission from the Estates, Facilities & Residences Department to bring assistance animals onto the Estate in advance of arrival on AU premises. They must provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties, when requested by AU staff.

Assistance animal owners must ensure that their assistance animals are clearly identifiable by the use of special collars and/or harnesses when on duty.

Owners are responsible for ensuring that their assistance animals are covered by full liability insurance and provide a copy to the Estates, Facilities & Residences Department.

Assistance animal owners must respect access restrictions established by AU on grounds of health and safety. Owners must ensure that assistance animals do not enter staff and students' privately assigned spaces, such as bedrooms and flats within residences, without permission.

Preventing and correcting assistance animals misbehaviour is the owner's responsibility. Owners must make sure that their assistance animals do not cause harm or injury to others and damage to AU property. Owners must ensure that the animal behaves in an appropriate manner at all times so as not to disrupt others.

Registered blind people are not required to clean up after their guide dogs but they are expected to have received the appropriate training to avoid dog waste on Campus.

Assistance animal users share responsibility for the clean up of the animal's waste, consistent with reasonable capacity. Owners must use the designated areas identified by AU and not allow animals to foul the buildings, paths or grounds on Campus. In the unlikely event that the animal does foul outside of these designated areas, the owner must report this to the Estates, Facilities & Residences Department who will arrange for the area to be cleaned and sanitised.

Animal care is the owner's responsibility and they must ensure regular health checks, vaccination and an adequate standard of grooming are carried out. Owners must ensure the assistance animal 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 Campus or safely harnessed when unsupervised for short periods.

Owners of assistance animals that are ill, in poor health, excessively unclean or unkempt will be requested to remove the animal from AU premises.

AU is not responsible for the loss, ill health, or death of the assistance animal.

Owners are responsible for the training needs of their assistance animals, for the correct and safe performance of their duties.

### **Aberystwyth University responsibilities**

When assistance animals are in AU properties, reasonable site-specific guidelines will be agreed with the owner. These will be agreed by the Director of Estates, Facilities & Residences in conjunction with relevant Heads of Departments for staff and Student Support Services for students and the assistance animal user, and will deal with specific points, for example access to communal open areas. Assistance animal users are required to comply with the conditions of those guidelines.

The department will provide a spending pen for assistance animals and water bowls. The Estates, Facilities & Residences Department will maintain the pen to a state that ensures the animal's health and the owner's safety. They will provide provision for disposing of refuse (for assistance dogs only).

### **Familiarisation with and orientation on the campus as part of an induction.**

When a resident student has an assistance animal, the Accommodation Office are responsible for informing other students in the accommodation who are likely to come into contact with the assistance animal, and ask them to confirm that they would not be adversely affected by the presence of the animal.

Student Support Services will advise students with assistance animals and signpost them to this policy to make them aware of the help provided by AU and their rights and responsibilities. Student Services will liaise with the student's academic department and accommodation to ensure that any reasonable adjustments needed have been made.

Student Support and HR will be responsible for liaising with student/staff/assistance animal provider re training on assistance dog etiquette.

AU is happy to listen to the suggestions of assistance animal owners as to how provision for the assistance animal may be improved.

### **Interacting with Assistance Animals and their Owners**

Please note assistance animals are at work, performing tasks to assist disabled persons and are *not* pets.

- Talk to the owner and not the animal – If you are assisting a person with an assistance animal then give your directions to the person, they will give the correct commands to follow you. Do not call the animal, as it needs to focus on its owner.

- Do not feed, pet or praise the animal – you can put the owner in danger if you distract them.
- Do not get frustrated if the owner does not want to talk to you about their animal.
- Do not deliberately distract or startle an assistance animal.
- Separate or attempt to separate an assistance animal from the person using the animal's service.

## Health and Wellbeing

Aberystwyth University recognises that many people experience health and wellbeing benefits from interaction with animals. We will support events such as Canine Calming Days organised by the Students Union during examination periods. All events need to be reported to the Estates, Facilities and Residences Department in advance.

## Approved working animal

An animal that provides other services within the University such as Sheep Dogs.

## Visitors walking on the public right of ways through the University grounds.

It is appreciated that it is very difficult to police such a policy in regards to visitors on campus and it is therefore intended to provide strategically placed signage that will inform them of their responsibilities. In addition, the signs will point the owners to the location of this policy for further information. AU will not provide animal waste bins as the norm as owners would be expected to manage this independently and AU does not have the resource to empty such bins.

## Complaints about animals on campus

If a student or staff member wishes to make a complaint or express concern about an animal on Campus then they should report this to the Health, Safety and Environment Section in the Estates, Facilities & Residences Department. This will be raised with the individual and their line manager/Head of Department/Student Support Services. Every attempt will be made to resolve the matter informally with the owner, including where necessary appropriate mediation. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, or the informal resolution is not complied with, then the issue will be escalated and dealt with through the staff or student disciplinary procedure.

AU reserves the right to refuse access for any animal if regular infringements of this policy occur.

In the event of an animal (other than those covered in the points above) being discovered in any AU building, grounds or vehicle please notify **Site Security on 01970 622649 (x 2649 from an internal phone)**.

In the case of a stray dog or fox, no attempt should be made to try and handle or harness the animal, please wait for the arrival of assistance.

*NB For the purpose of this policy animals have been referred to as animals but it is understood that in the majority of cases it will be a dog.*