



ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH

Assistance/Support animals policy

Introduction

This policy sets out how the university manages requests for the access and accommodation of assistance dogs or other support animals by disabled students, staff and visitors both on campus and in AUB halls of residence.

Managing requests for accommodating support animals is a complex matter. AUB is committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure our accommodation and campus are accessible and inclusive for disabled students, staff and visitors. However, consideration must also be given to other people (including those with allergies or phobias), to the practical implications of accommodating animals (e.g. health and safety considerations, noise, levels of cleanliness, etc.) and the welfare needs of each animal concerned.

This policy is designed to enable AUB to make informed decisions on individual requests, manage the complex, and often competing, demands arising from each request, and manage the accommodation of an animal following an approved request.

All requests for accommodating an animal must be made in advance of bringing the animal to AUB. Retrospective requests, after an animal has been brought to campus or moved into accommodation, will not be considered and the animal will need to be removed immediately.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply. All animals will fall into one of the following three categories.

- Accredited assistance dogs - A dog who has been professionally trained and provided by an organisation that is part of Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK). Details of ADUK are included in Appendix 1. Any assistance dog should be neutered/spayed.
- Emotional support animals (ESAs). ESAs are pets considered necessary for supporting an individuals' mental health or disability-related need. For an animal to be designated as an emotional support animal, clinical evidence is required from a licensed medical or mental health professional, confirming that an individual has an impairment that meets the Equality Act definition of a 'disabled person', and that the presence of the animal is necessary for the management of symptoms and their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. They may be dogs, but other species may be professionally recommended as emotional support animals. ESAs do not have any legal status in the UK and are not specifically trained to carry out any particular task.
- Therapy animals are trained to provide affection, comfort and support to people,

and are trained to interact with all kinds of people, not just their handlers. In contrast to assistance dogs, therapy dogs are not trained to assist individuals with their day-to-day physical needs.

- Pets - all other animals not covered by one of the above two categories.

Section A - On campus

Pets:

Visitors to the campus may bring a pet dog for short periods of time (e.g. attending an open day or public event) but access is limited to outside areas only. Owners are responsible for the conduct of their dogs. Dogs should never be left unattended or in cars.

Emotional Support Animals:

Emotional support animals do not have the same rights to public access as an accredited assistance dog, and emotional support animals will not be permitted on campus, except in accordance with the guidance for pets (above).

Therapy animals

Therapy animals can be brought onto campus for organised therapy sessions and are welcome on campus for the duration of the session.

The animal must be registered as a therapy animal and have an appropriate level of public liability insurance cover. Evidence of insurance must be provided to Campus Services prior to the animal coming onto campus.

A risk assessment, including evidence of a behavioral assessment, is required for all sessions involving a therapy animal. The sessions must be run on an opt-in basis for those attending and who will have contact with the animal or be in the vicinity of the session.

Consideration must be given to other people within the vicinity of the session (including those with allergies or phobias), to the practical implications of accommodating animals (e.g. health and safety considerations, noise, levels of cleanliness, etc.) and the welfare needs of each animal concerned.

Other Events involving animals:

Occasionally, there will be requests for events or sessions to be held that involve animals (examples include photography sessions and the AUBSU petting farm). These requests will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and must be fully risk assessed should they be given approval to proceed.

Accredited Assistance Dogs:

Arts University Bournemouth permits accredited assistance dogs to accompany their owner into all areas of the University including office areas, library, food outlets and university accommodation.

Students wishing to bring an assistance dog onto campus should contact the Senior Disability Advisor (email disability@aub.ac.uk) and provide a copy of the yellow ID booklet from the ADUK member organisation, and a record of the animal's health and

vaccination records certified by a registered vet. Staff should follow the same process but contact campuservices@aub.ac.uk .

If a request to bring a registered assistance dog to campus is approved, owners must ensure that their assistance dog:

- is covered by full public liability insurance with an appropriate level of cover. Evidence of insurance must be provided to the University annually.
- is vaccinated and has health records certified by a registered vet. Certified health and vaccination records must be provided to AUB annually.
- wears identification at all times when working, usually in the form of a collar or harness/jacket provided by the organisation/charity.
- is kept on a lead or in a harness at all times when on university premises.
- is under the owner's control at all times.

Owners are fully responsible for:

- the behaviour of their dog on university premises, including not causing injury or damage to property or persons.
- the costs of any losses or damage to persons or property caused by their dog.
- full care of the dog, including cleanliness/grooming, feeding, watering, toileting and exercise, regular health checks, vaccinations and treatments for fleas, ticks and worms.
- all training needs of their assistance dogs and for the correct and safe performance of the assistance dog duties.
- ensuring that assistance dogs do not enter staff and students' privately assigned spaces without permission.
- preventing and correcting assistance dog's misbehaviour
- ensuring that dogs toilet in designated areas and waste is disposed of appropriately. Registered blind people 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 campus. Assistance dog owners are responsible for the clean-up of the animal's waste. 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 AUB) of an assistance dog is not acceptable.

Responsibilities of AUB:

- Arts University Bournemouth accepts no responsibility for the ill health, loss or death of an assistance dog.
- Assistance dogs that are ill, in poor health, excessively unclean or unkempt may be required to be removed from the AUB campus by their owner.
- AUB assesses requests to bring an assistance dog onto the AUB campus on a case-by-case basis.
- AUB reserves the right to remove or bar entry to an assistance dog in response to unresolved misbehaviour or when the university considers it poses a threat to the health & safety of others. Owners not complying with the removal of the dog will be in breach of the policy and subject to further action within university procedures.
- AUB may restrict access of assistance dogs to certain areas for health and safety reasons. Restricted areas may include practical facilities, areas where protective clothing is required etc.

Where an assistance dog poses an adverse health risk to another student(s), AUB will seek medical documentation from the affected party/parties to determine suitable alternative and equitable arrangements for either or both parties. Religious or cultural beliefs cannot be used to prohibit access to assistance dogs and their owners.

Section B - AUB Halls of Residence

Pets:

No pets are permitted in AUB halls of residence.

Assistance dogs:

To consider accommodating an accredited assistance dog in halls of residence AUB must be satisfied that the animal is a registered assistance dog and relevant training has been provided. Students should contact the Senior Disability Advisor and provide a copy of the yellow ID booklet from the ADUK member organisation, and a record of the animal's health and vaccination records certified by a registered vet.

The responsibilities outlined in Section A apply equally to halls of residence.

Emotional support animals:

AUB will only consider the accommodation of emotional support animals where there is clear clinical evidence from a licensed medical or mental health professional that the disabled student has an impairment that meets the Equality Act definition of a 'disabled person', where the presence of the animal is necessary for the management of symptoms and their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, and where the animal can be accommodated in a way which is conducive to the welfare of the animal concerned and all residents.

Requests for emotional support animals which are venomous, or which cannot be easily accommodated in our residences without causing significant practical difficulties (for example, animals which are likely to cause distress to other residents if they were to escape) are likely to be rejected because of the risks involved, even if the request meets all other requirements.

Evidence needs to be provided by a licensed medical professional on their clinical practice's official letterhead, be signed and include their licensed medical registration number. The medical professional must have assessed and/or treated the student within the last 3 months. The evidence must detail the relevant aspects of the student's disability which relate to their need for the requested support animal and how, in their clinical opinion, the requested support animal will be essential to enable them to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The evidence must also advise whether the student could be supported effectively in other ways without this animal living with them. Please note that we cannot accept evidence from a therapist or counsellor.

The decision on whether the medical evidence is sufficient rests with AUB. AUB may make further requests for medical evidence, either from the same source or different sources, if the evidence initially provided by the student is deemed to be insufficient.

In addition to providing sufficient supporting medical evidence a through risk assessment will be conducted to ascertain any risks to others and any actions which may mitigate them.

AUB decisions on the acceptance of emotional support animals in halls are final; there is no right of appeal.

A disabled student who is granted permission to be accommodated with a support animal will be required to sign a Support Animal Agreement, which sets out the

student's responsibilities throughout the duration of the animal's stay in halls of residence.

The full list of responsibilities can be found in the Support Animal Agreement. The student must take full responsibility for the support animal, committing to ensure they have full control over the animal at all times, and accepting all practical, financial and legal liabilities relating to the animal and its behaviour. The student must comply with all legal requirements relating to the animal in question (including animal welfare standards, control of the animal, microchipping, collar and tag requirements, etc.) and is personally responsible for the costs and arrangement of insurance to cover the animal (including healthcare, accident and public liability insurance).

The student is also responsible for ensuring that the animal receives regular veterinary checks and all recommended and required preventative treatments (vaccinations, flea/worming tablets, etc.). Support animals must not be left in the property overnight without care or be cared for by another student. It is the student's responsibility to have in place a contingency plan of care for their animal in case of unexpected circumstances, which must be agreed and shared with university and halls staff.

The disabled student must accept sole responsibility for any damage caused by their animal to either property or persons, and no liability for such damage rests with Arts University Bournemouth. The student must also ensure that the support animal does not interfere with the routine activities of other residents or staff members, or cause any other difficulties for other residents or staff members – including undue noise, smells, soiling/mess, interfering with another student's movements through the building, allergic reactions, etc. Any such interference or difficulty may lead to changes being made as to how/where the animal and its owner are accommodated. If there are concerns about the welfare of a support animal, AUB reserves the right to reverse its decision to accommodate the animal or to take action against the owner by reporting to relevant organisations.

AUB reserves the right to refuse a request for an animal which does not comply with this policy, impose restrictions on the movements of any animal, transfer the animal's owner to alternative accommodation, and/or reverse a decision to permit an animal to be accommodated, if this is deemed to be necessary to manage practical issues arising from the request or the animal's accommodation.

The agreement to accommodate an emotional support animal is on the understanding this has been agreed to support the student with their transition to and first year at university only. Acceptance of an emotional support animal does not entitle a student to live in halls of residence for further years. It is the student's responsibility to consider the impact of having an emotional support animal on their future accommodation options and plan accordingly. AUB will not be responsible for providing ongoing accommodation due to difficulties identifying private rented accommodation due to animal ownership.

Students should be aware that the presence of an emotional support animal will be limited to certain halls and room types.

This policy has been subject to an equality analysis to ensure consideration with regard to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Date of last EA review: July 2023

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Appendix 1 – Assistance Dogs UK

Accredited assistance dogs are dogs that have been trained by accredited member organisations of Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF). Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK) is a coalition of eleven assistance dog charities that have successfully passed an extensive accreditation process that covers all aspects of their training and administration – ensuring they meet the exacting standards set by ADI and IGDF. Accredited dogs receive an ID booklet which contains information about the owner and their dog, and details of the training organisation who trained the dog and its owner.

Currently the following organisations are registered full members of ADUK –

- 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
- Autism Dogs
- Service Dogs UK
- Veterans with Dogs
- Darwin Dogs

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