

Policy and Procedure for Animals on Campus

Including Assistance Dogs and
Emotional Support Animals



1. Purpose

- 1.1 To outline the University's position regarding animals on all Bath Spa University, BSU campuses, including Assistance Dogs and Emotional Support Animals.
- 1.2 BSU is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment and values the diversity of its staff and student community. The University recognises the important role of Assistance Dogs and Emotional Support Animals who provide valuable, even life-changing, assistance for disabled people. Student Wellbeing Services (SWS) also offers opportunities for students and staff to engage with an accredited [Care Dogs scheme](#).
- 1.3 However, BSU does not permit the bringing of any other animals into the workplace or University accommodation, and except for public footpaths or rights of way, animals are not allowed to be brought onto any BSU campuses. Any dogs using public footpaths or rights of way must always be kept on a lead.

2. Definitions

Assistance Dogs

- 2.1 Assistance Dogs are specially trained to assist and carry out specific duties for disabled people. These animals are covered under legislation (Equality Act, 2010) and are legally permitted to always accompany their owner, in all places (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2017).
- 2.2 Assistance Dogs which have been suitably owner-trained or are registered with one of the Member Organisations listed by Assistance Dogs International (ADI), Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK) and the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) meet these criteria. A list of fully registered members can be found on the [ADUK website](#).

Emotional Support Animals

- 2.3 The University recognises the positive impact animals have on wellbeing and in providing emotional assistance. However, there is currently no recognised accreditation of Emotional Support Animals.
- 2.4 Emotional Support Animals are not specifically trained to carry out any specific task. Rather, their role is to be a source of comfort or support to a disabled person. There is no legal status for these animals at this time in the UK:

"ADI does not classify emotional support dogs as assistance dogs. As a result, the owners of emotional support dogs are not entitled to claim their dogs have public access rights in the UK under the grounds of 'reasonable adjustments' that apply to assistance dogs".

Assistance Dogs UK, 2018

There are no ADUK accredited assistance dog charities at the present time that train dogs for people with mental health issues where this is the only disability”.

Assistance Dogs UK, 2018

3. Policy

Assistance Dogs

- 3.1 Students and staff wishing to apply to bring an Assistance Dog onto University premises and/or housed in University accommodation must provide documentation that the animal is properly trained and/or registered with one of the ADUK member organisations or an equivalent international body.

Emotional Support Animals

- 3.2 Unregistered and untrained Emotional Support Animals will only be permitted to join staff at work or students in University accommodation in exceptional circumstances, assessed on an individual case-by-case basis.

Responsibilities

- 3.3 Owners of Assistance Dogs and Emotional Support Animals are responsible for ensuring:
- Permission is received from the University to bring their animal onto campus.
 - Their animal is always under control.
 - Their animal does not cause injury or harm, ill health, offense, nuisance or distress to other members of the University community.
 - Their animal does not cause damage to University premises.
 - Their animal does not introduce parasites to University premises.
 - Their animal is covered by relevant and up to date insurances.
 - Their animal does not roam freely throughout any University building or outside within the University Estate.
 - Their animal is not left in vehicles on campus or tied up outside University buildings, where applicable.
 - Their animal does not foul areas of campus and waste is cleaned up, consistent with reasonable capacity, and disposed of in the designated areas identified by the University.
 - They have available with them all necessary equipment and products to deal with the cleaning of any fouling or mess.
 - Their animal is only exercised in agreed areas, where applicable.
 - Their animal is identifiable as an Assistance Dog or Emotional Support Animal when outside University accommodation, where applicable.
 - Being able to provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties (where applicable), when requested by staff.

For Students

- 3.4 The SWS Disability Service is responsible for:
- Confirming and validating insurance coverage.
 - Liaising with the Accommodation team to review requests and evidence provided.
 - Liaising with other departments, including Estates and Academic Schools, where relevant and required.
 - Confirming whether there are any specified or restricted areas.
- 3.5 The Campus Life Accommodation Service is responsible for:
- Confirming and vetting processes for the behaviour of the animal living in University accommodation.
 - Liaising with students around the practical requirements and arrangements of having an animal in University accommodation.

For Staff

- 3.6 Human Resources is responsible for:
- Providing advice and guidance to staff with Assistance Dogs and Emotional Support Animals, and their line manager.
 - Supporting staff to liaise with Estates as required.
 - Providing a copy of this policy and the accompanying procedure so staff are fully aware of all processes and responsibilities.
 - Confirming and validating insurance coverage.
- 3.7 Line Managers are responsible for:
- Receiving and reviewing requests from staff they manage, making an informed decision as to whether to accept requests on a case-by-case basis, supported by HR as needed.
 - Conducting a risk assessment prior to an animal accompanying a member of staff to work for the first time, and review at regular intervals.
 - Covering related matters, including emergency evacuation procedures, toileting, health and safety or hygiene.
 - Considering any implications for other staff, to minimise any impact on colleagues.

4. Procedure

Offer-Holders and Students

- 4.1 Offer-holders and students who want an Assistance Dog or Emotional Support Animal to accompany them on campus, including to live in University accommodation must complete the Assistance Dog or Emotional Support Animal request form on MyServices.

4.2 For **Assistance Dog** requests, the following supporting documentation must be provided:

- Evidence that the animal is properly trained and/or registered with one of the [ADUK member organisations](#), or an equivalent international body.
- Evidence of Pet Insurance, including Public Liability Insurance.

4.3 For **Emotional Support Animal** requests, the following additional documentation is required:

- A supporting letter from a vet confirming the animal can live in a small bedroom, and where relevant that the behaviour of the animal is suitable.
- Formal supportive medical or diagnostic documentation confirming:
- A long-term or permanent disability or condition (that has or is anticipated to last 12 months or longer).
- Confirmation of the need or requirement, by a medical or clinical professional, for an Emotional Support Animal in the proactive management of the condition.
- Confirmation that the animal provides a long-standing and established support mechanism to manage the condition. This will need to demonstrate evidence that this is a successful adjustment and that there is no alternative provision that has the same impact.

4.4 Student Wellbeing Services are responsible for reviewing all offer-holder and student requests.

Staff

4.5 Staff who want to bring an Assistance Dog or Emotional Support Animal onto campus must complete the request form on MyServices.

4.6 HR and a Senior Manager from the relevant department or School are responsible for reviewing requests.

4.7 For **Emotional Support Animals**, suitability of available accommodation or work environment and the welfare of animals will be considered in the decision-making process, particularly with reference to the potential hazards and risks associated with having animals at the University, which include:

- Delayed evacuation of a building in emergencies
- Noisy or 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)
- Exacerbation of the risk of slips, trips and falls
- Animal waste
- Damage to University property

4.8 If a request is accepted, arrangements will be co-ordinated, including:

- Any requirements for a spending pen, installed in a suitable location.

- Any cleaning requirements and provision of waste bins and disposal facilities.
- Any requirements for orientation and campus familiarisation.
- Liaison with other departments as required.

4.9 In all cases, the member of staff is responsible for the overall care, health, and wellbeing of the animal, including any routine or emergency veterinary care.

5. Complaints

Complaints from Animal Owners

- 5.1 Students wishing to make a complaint about the treatment of themselves or their animal should report the incident to SWS via [My Wellbeing](#) in the first instance. SWS will investigate the complaint and make every effort to resolve the matter informally. If this is not possible, the issue will be escalated and dealt with through the University Complaints procedure.
- 5.2 Staff wishing to make a complaint should report the incident to their line manager who will investigate the complaint and make every effort to resolve the matter informally. If this is not possible, the issue will be escalated and dealt with through the University Grievance procedure.

Complaints about Animals

- 5.3 Anyone wishing to make a complaint about an animal should raise the concern with SWS via [My Wellbeing](#) in the first instance for student owned assistance dogs, or with HR for staff owned assistance dogs.
- 5.4 Every effort will be made to resolve the matter informally. If this is not possible, the issue will be escalated and dealt with through the relevant University Complaints/Grievance Procedure.

Document Details

Responsible Offices: Student Wellbeing Services, Human Resources

Responsible Officers: Director of SWS, Director of HR

Approving Authority: Vice-Chancellor

Date of Latest Approval: 25 September 2025

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Related Policies and Procedures: Student Complaints Policy

Supersedes: Assistance Animals Policy for Students

Next Review Due: September 2030