# Assistance Dogs on Campus Procedure

## Purpose and Context

To provide a framework to ensure the access for the health and safety of assistance dog users on campus and a brief outline of the facilities available to them.

## Scope

This Procedure applies to all students and staff who may have an assistance dog and wish to bring it on to campus during work or study, to aid independent movement around campus or to provide essential support.

## Introduction

The University is committed to ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for all those who access the campus. For the purposes of this policy, the University seeks to ensure that anyone with a disability who requires access the campus is able to do so independently with an assistance dog and are able to do so responsibly and without prejudice.

This **Procedure** is designed to provide guidance to staff, students and visitors regarding the provision available for assistance dogs on campus, the responsibility of the University in maintaining that provision and the responsibilities of assistance dogs’ owners to other students and staff. This **Procedure** also briefly outlines staff and student etiquette towards students or staff who have an assistance dog with them on campus.

## Assistance Dogs on Campus

An assistance dog is one that has been trained to complete specific tasks or duties to assist a disabled person such as a guide dog, an autism assistance dog or a hearing dog. The Equality and Human Rights Commission1 states that assistance dogs are:

* highly trained
* will not wonder freely around premises
* will sit or lie quietly on the floor next to their owner
* are unlikely to foul in a public place

Assistance dogs should be qualified and registered as a member of the organisations listed below. For more information about membership of each of the organisations, please see the web sites:

* [Assistance Dogs International](https://assistancedogsinternational.org/resources/member-search/) (ADI)
* [International Guide Dog Federation](https://www.igdf.org.uk/about-us/) (IGDF)
* [Assistance Dogs](https://www.assistancedogs.org.uk/members/) (UK)

The expectation is that all assistance dog owners are able to provide verification of a registered membership of one of the above organisations, if requested by staff.

## The University’s Responsibilities

Under the Equality Act 2010, the University must ensure that its buildings and facilities are accessible to disabled people. Some students, staff or visitors may be accompanied by a fully trained assistance dog to support them with a range of access requirements, navigation or medical needs.

With regard to staff or students with a visual impairment, prior to coming onto campus, some individuals may have undertaken some mobility or orientation training through a relevant organisation such as Guide Dogs or through statutory services in their Local Authority. Where this is not the case (particularly with prospective students and visitors) relevant staff should be made available to provide assistance with orientation on campus to find the spending pen and return to a place of familiarity. For example, in relation to provision for a visually impaired student or applicant, this will normally be provided by a Sighted Guide sourced through the Learning Support Service. Provision for staff may be provided via Access to Work or arrangements made by their line manager.

The University will make available the following provision for anyone accompanied by an assistance dog onto campus;

* A fenced-off assistance dog toileting area with a gate, which is regularly serviced and maintained
* Provision of a dog waste bin, near to the assistance dog toileting area
* Provision of waste management
* Assistance dog toileting area in a space that is discreet and does not have high pedestrian activity
* The surface will be partially grass and partially concrete to ensure that a wide range of assistance dogs can access it.

### Staff arrangements:

Staff members should inform their line manager if they are accompanied by an assistance dog. The line manager should then:

* Check information about the tasks and duties of the assistance dog to ensure the necessary arrangements are put in place
* check the verification of the assistance dog
* provide access to this procedure
* share information with other staff about the assistance dog where necessary and with consent of the assistance dog owner
* discuss any further support and adjustments the member of staff may be eligible for at the University.

### Prospective and **current students'** arrangements

Students applying for a place or currently enrolled at the University should be encouraged to [register with the Disability Service](https://students.hud.ac.uk/help/disability/register/) inform Disability Services if they will be accompanied by an assistance dog. Initial enquires in relation to the support available can be emailed to [disability@hud.ac.uk](mailto:disability@hud.ac.uk). Disability Services should then:

* Check information about the tasks and duties of the assistance dog to ensure the necessary arrangements are put in place and outlined in a Personal Learning Support Plan
* check the verification of the assistance dog
* provide access to this procedure
* discuss further support and adjustments to support access to study and resources

Students who are planning to live in halls of residence should also make their accommodation provider aware of their needs during the application stage. Failure to register with the relevant services or accommodation provider may result in delays to putting in place adjustments to meet a student’s specific needs. Students may also wish to contact [HudLets, Huddersfield Students’ Union Accommodation Office](https://www.hudlets.co.uk/), for support and guidance.

### Visitor arrangements

Visitors to an event should be directed to contact the individual, service or school responsible for arranging or facilitating the event to inform them that they will be accompanied by an assistance dog. This procedure can then be made available and individual arrangements can be undertaken.

## Assistance Dog Owner’s Responsibilities

Staff, students or visitors to the University who have an assistance dog with them should ensure they are aware of their responsibilities including:

* Ensuring the dog can be clearly identified by the use of specific collars, jackets, harnesses, leads or ID tags.
* Always ensuring that the dog is on a suitable lead/harness which should only be released for use inside the spending pen and remaining mindful to any risks of potential harm or injury to others or property.
* Ensuring that the dog is taken to the assistance dog toileting area at regular intervals.
* Clearing up waste from the toileting area if possible or informing Disability Services (students), line managers (staff) or event organisers (visitors) if this is not possible.
* Making staff aware in the unlikely event that that the dog has fouled in another area of the campus.
* Requesting permission to enter any non-public areas assigned to specific people.

The assistance dog owner is expected to be responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate insurance covering any liability in relation to the injury of others or damage to property. They are also expected to ensure the dog has regular health checks and the appropriate vaccinations etc.

## Complaints

Complaints surrounding assistance dogs, their owner or any University of Huddersfield student's or staff’s conduct in relation to the dog or owner, should be made using the relevant procedure. For example this may be the disciplinary procedure held in staff Human Resources or the complaints procedure held in student regulations.

## Assistance Dog Etiquette

All staff and students have a responsibility to respect the wishes of assistance dog owners and to treat the dog with respect.

The following points should be taken into consideration.

* Speak to the handler and not the dog
* Be mindful of the handler’s needs. Offer assistance only when appropriate and check with the handler first before attempting to handle the dog.
* Do not pet, distract, interact with, offer food to or give commands to an assistance dog whilst it is working. If you are interested in petting the dog, always ask the handler’s permission first.

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