



HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

Health and Safety Policies

Animals/domestic pets on Campus: Our Policy

Version: v004

Date: August 2022 – due for renewal August 2025

1. Introduction

This procedure applies to all enrolled students, employees, workers and visitors at Harper Adams University, (HAU, we).

This procedure was developed by the Health and Safety Office, with reference to the School of Animal Health, Behaviour and Welfare, the Disability & Learner Support Services, and the Office of the University Secretary

This procedure may be amended at any time. We may also vary this procedure, including any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

HAU is a specialist university in an agricultural environment with its own livestock, where the health, welfare and biosecurity of all livestock is of paramount importance. We are therefore obliged to have stringent controls for any animals entering the campus.

We do not permit staff, students or visitors to bring animals or their domestic pets inside any University owned, leased or controlled buildings, vehicles or structures. However, we recognise that exceptions may arise to this general rule from time to time. This policy sets out the situations when it is acceptable to bring animals onto campus, together with the requirements and standards expected at all times from the animal owner/handler.

2. Definitions

Animals Visiting the Veterinary Services Centre (VSC) for Rehabilitation Purposes: animals attending consultations, following veterinary referral, for rehabilitation purposes along with their owner(s). The animals will have access limited to the VSC building and its immediate surroundings. The owners of these animals will be present on the premises during the consultation with a fully trained member of staff.

Assistance Dogs: dogs which are trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people with visual impairments, alerting people with hearing impairments, pulling a wheelchair, or alerting the owner when a seizure is likely. Assistance Dogs are working animals, not pets. The work or task an Assistance Dog has been trained to provide is directly related to the person's disability.

Assistance Dogs will be registered and fully trained by a reputable assistance dog training organisation, such as Assistance Dogs (UK). The Assistance Dog will have formal identification in the form of branded harness, lead, collar or ID tags on the collar.

All Assistance Dogs will have completed and passed an assessment and be fully insured against public liability.

Authorised Areas: those areas of the campus that HAU has informed the Authorised Handler may be accessed by the animal in question.

Authorised Handler: the owner, member of staff or third party who has been given authority by HAU for the animal to be present on campus.

Care Plan: a plan prepared by the Authorised Handler setting out the Assistance Dog's inoculation schedule, public liability insurance details and other arrangements for the care of Assistance Dogs when not 'working' including any day-care arrangements, names of any other Authorised Handlers and third-party contacts in case of emergencies.

Disabled Person: as defined in the Equality Act 2010 - a person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on that person's ability to do normal daily activities. We recognise our duty to make reasonable adjustments in our approach to or provision of education to ensure that our services are accessible to disabled people as well as everybody else.

Pets: an animal belonging to a person that may provide comfort but has not been trained to assist a Disabled Person with the effects of the disability or activities of daily living. We do not currently allow Pets in the workplace, in student accommodation or to be brought onto campus.

Therapy and Support Animals: (also known as an emotional support animal): an animal that provides emotional support or passive comfort as part of a programme of treatment that alleviates one or more of the identified symptoms or effects of disability. Unlike Assistance Dogs, a Therapy Animal does not assist a person with a disability with activities of daily living, nor does it accompany a person with a disability at all times.

Working Animals (Dogs/cats) for Training Purposes: animals (dogs/cats) that are used by staff for their teaching duties in the Animal Health, Welfare and Behaviour Department. In addition, there may be animals belonging to charities, such as Pets as Therapy and Hilbrae Rescue, for both teaching purposes and during examination periods. These Working Animals have been familiarised with being handled by various people, without their owner necessarily being present.

Working Animals may also be used by HAU undergraduate and postgraduate students for their research projects which are based in/immediately surrounding the Veterinary Services Centre/Veterinary Education Centre/Companion Animal House.

3. Animals on Campus - Process

Requests to bring any animal on to the HAU campus should be made in the first instance to the Health and Safety Manager. This request **must** be made in advance of any planned visit. Prospective students wishing to bring an Assistance Dog should make this known as soon as possible to the Disability & Learner Support Services (LearnerSupport@harper-adams.ac.uk). They should be aware that a request to be accompanied by an Assistance Dog may also affect any accommodation application (see Process for Assistance Dogs below) as suitable accommodation is limited.

All requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Permission will be granted wherever possible but may be subject to particular conditions and access will be limited to Authorised Areas. We reserve the right to withdraw permission if those conditions or other requirements of this policy are breached.

As the behaviour of Therapy and Support Animals is harder to guarantee than that of trained Assistance Dogs, we do not anticipate that such animals would meet the standards of control expected. However, requests will be considered on a case-by case basis and the animal will be subject to the same standard assessment as Assistance Dogs, (see below). Before an assessment is carried out there is a minimum requirement for the animal to have successfully completed the Bronze level of the Good Citizen Dog Training Scheme and to be covered by full public liability insurance.

The use of Working Animals should be authorised by the relevant Head or Associate Head of the Department. All working animals will have completed animal behaviour training to an acceptable standard and be fully insured against public liability. Approved Working Animals are only permitted to access Authorised Areas for training and teaching purposes and to the Authorised Handler's place of work.

In all cases the Authorised Handler is responsible for the welfare and behaviour of the animal. Authorised Handlers must ensure animals are kept on leads or otherwise under control at all times and are not allowed into any other buildings or onto playing fields other than Authorised Areas. The Authorised Handler is responsible for collecting and properly disposing of animal waste.

The Authorised Handler will ensure animals are secured in an appropriate and secure place when they are not 'working'. It is not considered appropriate to leave an animal unaccompanied for long periods of time. If this is unavoidable, the Authorised Handler should make arrangements with a third party/animal sitter to ensure the animal's welfare.

HAU conforms to the RSPCA recommendations that animals should not be left alone in parked vehicles. Any person choosing to do this should consider their actions very carefully as they could be fined or prosecuted by the Police or by the RSPCA if they are found to be doing this. Dogs should not be brought onto campus and tied up outside buildings.

Visitors are not permitted to bring pets/animals on to Campus with the exception of Assistance Dogs. (See below for Guidance.)

We recognise that some staff who live on campus as part of their role, may keep pets with HAU's agreement. Pets should be kept within the residential property boundaries as far as possible. When dogs are exercised and this involves passing through the HAU grounds to a suitable public right of way, the owners must abide by any restrictions imposed by the Health and Safety Manager and ensure at all times that animals are kept on leads and are not allowed into any buildings or onto playing fields. The owners will be responsible for collecting any waste deposited and disposing of it responsibly.

From time to time we may consider requests from external clients wishing to hold events on campus involving animals, including dogs. All requests will be considered on an individual basis and will be discussed with those persons whom manage particular areas of campus that may be affected by such a presence, prior to a decision being made.

4. Process for Assistance Dogs

We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone and recognises that an Assistance Dog kept and used by a Disabled Person wholly or mainly for the purpose of assisting that person to carry out day to day activities will require access to parts of HAU's estate and student accommodation (where applicable).

We will consider all such applications on an individual basis with the aim of agreeing a suitable arrangement. Agreement may depend on our ability to make the necessary adjustments to the teaching, working and living environment.

Requests by prospective students to bring an Assistance Dog onto the HAU campus should be made in the first instance to the Disability & Learner Support Services (LearnerSupport@harper-adams.ac.uk). All other requests should be made to the Health and Safety Manager (hands@harper-adams.ac.uk). Requests **must** be made in advance of any planned visit. A request would be given consideration pending other arrangements that may need to be implemented, such as assessing accessible areas for learning and teaching and a full on-campus assessment.

Where accommodation is required for students:

- further enquiries should be directed to the Disability & Learner Support Services (LearnerSupport@harper-adams.ac.uk) at the point of an accommodation application, which must be well in advance of arrival on the campus.

Where accommodation is required for visitors:

- further enquiries should be directed to, the Conference Team (SCCO@harper-adams.ac.uk) for full details and availability.

All Assistance Dogs intending to remain on campus for longer than a one-day visit will be subject to an assessment by our trained staff to ensure the Assistance Dog can reliably show appropriate behaviour around other animals, staff and students and can be left alone for short periods of time without being caused distress.

Assistance Dogs accompanying students or staff on a long-term basis will require a Care Plan to be prepared by the Authorised Handler and approved by HAU prior to introduction of the Assistance Dog onto campus.

There are health and biosecurity hazards associated with having Assistance Dogs on campus so some restrictions may apply in some areas, such as, but not limited to, the Laboratories, Food Innovation Centre, Veterinary Education Centre and the Farm. Assistance Dogs are permitted to access all other Authorised Areas of the University premises under the control of their Authorised Handlers, who may be students, staff members or visitors to the University. Only Assistance Dogs will be permitted in food outlet areas.

There are likely to be periods of time when the Assistance Dog will not be able to accompany the student, for instance during some laboratory work or practical work on the farm. During these times the student must ensure the Assistance Dog is secured in an appropriate environment, which may be the student accommodation. Should the Assistance Dog become a nuisance, through behaviour such as continuous barking or scratching furniture, then we will ask the student to consider alternative accommodation arrangements for looking after the dog in the student's absence.

Assistance Dogs in student accommodation must be provided with a crate so that they may be secure during short periods when they are left unattended. For longer periods, such as student visits to a third party or establishment the student should make arrangements with an authorised 'pet sitter' or another suitable carer.

The University will not be held responsible for looking after an Assistance Dog in the event of an emergency and the student should ensure that alternative arrangements are in place for this eventuality with full details set out on the Care Plan.

Note for Head of Department and other Staff

Please note that Assistance Dogs are highly trained working dogs, performing tasks to assist disabled persons.

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.

5. Complaints Procedure

There may be occasions when the presence of an animal on campus causes unintended problems or complaints. Any issues in relation to working/assistance animals on HAU premises that cannot be resolved informally should be raised in accordance with HAU's applicable complaints procedures.

Guide for Assistance Dogs Owners

Responsibilities

When Assistance Dogs are in HAU properties, their owner or other Authorised Handler must comply with the following:

- **Information:** Assistance Dog owners shall provide information about the animal and its tasks/duties, if reasonably requested by HAU Staff. In the event that an Assistance Dog is accepted to reside in HAU accommodation, the information given about the Assistance Dog would need to be circulated to other residents.
- **Identification:** Assistance Dog owners must ensure that their Assistance Dogs are clearly identifiable by the use of special collars, harness and/or ID tags when on duty.
- **Insurance:** Assistance Dog owners are responsible for ensuring that their Assistance Dogs are covered by full public liability insurance.
- **Access restrictions:** Authorised Handlers must respect access restrictions established by HAU on grounds of health and safety. Authorised Handlers must ensure that Assistance Dogs do not enter staff and students' privately assigned spaces, such as bedrooms and flats within residences, without permission.
- **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 damage to HAU property.
- **Cleanliness:** 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. Authorised Handlers must take responsibility for the clean-up of the animal's waste, consistent with reasonable capacity. Authorised Handlers shall use reasonable endeavours to use the designated toileting areas identified by HAU.

On any occasion when the Assistance Dog does foul an area outside of these designated areas, the Authorised Handler must report this to the Health and Safety department, who will arrange for the area to be cleaned and sanitised.

- **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. Assistance Dog owners must ensure the Assistance Dog has its requirements in relation to feeding, watering and toileting fully met. Authorised Handlers 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.
- **Toilets with Disabled Access:** HAU provides toilet facilities for disabled workers and students. Where there is a specific need for enhanced access that supports an Assistance Dog, we will identify appropriate locations and inform the owner as soon as is practical, once a need has been identified and communicated.
- **Animal training:** Assistance Dog owners are responsible for any additional training needs for their assistance dogs and for the correct and safe performance of their duties.

Conflict situations

The presence of animals, however well-trained, can sometimes cause difficulties for other people. We will always try to resolve any problems informally via mediation between the parties. The guidelines below set our expectations of standards and the likely action we would take in certain circumstances.

- **Removal of Assistance Dog:** HAU reserves the right to remove or bar entry to an Assistance Dog when it poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others. Unresolved animal misbehaviour, such as continuous barking and scratching doors or flooring, may also provide grounds for removal, after all reasonable measures have been taken to address this. In this situation, no less than two weeks' notice would be given to the owner, to make alternative accommodation arrangements.
- **Damage;** Assistance Dog owners are responsible for any damage to individuals or HAU property.
- **Restricted access:** HAU may restrict access of Assistance Dogs to additional areas for health and safety reasons. Restricted areas may include specified halls of residence, research laboratories, medical facilities, areas where protective clothing is required, boiler rooms, or areas containing livestock. Applications for exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- **Conflicting disabilities:** Where an Assistance Dog poses health risk to another student or member of staff HAU will seek medical documentation from the affected party/parties to 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 Dogs and their owners.

Complaints

Any issues in relation to Assistance Dogs on HAU premises that cannot be resolved informally should be raised in accordance with HAU's applicable complaints handling procedure.