



Writtle
University
College

Assistance Dogs Policy

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Policy Owner	Department
Safeguarding & Wellbeing Manager	Wellbeing Team
Version Number	Date drafted/Date of review
2.7	Feb 20 / Feb 21
Date Equality Impact Assessed	Has Prevent been considered (see Policies Guidance if unsure)
Feb 20	N/A
Reviewed and Approved by (see Policies Guidance for approval process)	Date
E&D Steering Group (plus extended group) Academic Board Education Committee UCLG P&R Committee of Governors	April 19 / Jan 20 (ver 2.6) July 19 (draft ver) February – led to update 2.7
Access (tick as appropriate)	
Public access (website) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff and Student access <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
And/Or	Or
Internal access (MyWi) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff access only <input type="checkbox"/>

1. Policy Statement

Writtle University College (WUC) values the diversity of its workforce and student body and is committed to providing an environment which is welcoming for all. In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act, WUC will work with people with disabilities to identify support needs and make reasonable adjustments in order to provide a safe and inclusive place to work and study.

Staff and students whose access to employment and education is facilitated by the use of mobility aids should not be refused entry on the basis of their disability or reliance on mobility aids, including Assistance Dogs.

WUC does not permit pets in halls of residence and/or on campus facilities.

This policy has been specifically developed to apply to Assistance Dogs. It excludes other animals that may be permitted on WUC premises, such as research, clinical and teaching animals.

The policy refers to the owner, where the owner is not the keeper/user of the dog the responsibilities detailed are transferred as appropriate.

2. Purpose

Writtle University College (WUC) recognises that Assistance Dogs play an important role in the safety and wellbeing of disabled people and has therefore developed this policy to include specific guidelines concerning the safe and acceptable use of them on campuses and in residences for the benefit of all (Assistance Dogs, the owners of Assistance Dogs, staff, students, University College partners and members of the public).

The University College allows access to assistance, working and therapy dogs and is prepared to make reasonable adjustments for their safe access and conduct of duties.

The Policy on Assistance Dogs applies to all University College premises. This includes but is not limited to WUC's halls of residence, faculty buildings, administrative offices, specialist facilities and maintained

grounds. It applies to all Assistance Dogs, but excludes other animals that may be permitted on WUC's premises such as:

- research, clinical and teaching animals
- animals brought in to perform a task for the University College (this includes organisations like Canine Concern and Pets as Therapy with prior agreement through the Wellbeing team)
- owners bringing their animal on campus to access a University College service (eg. dog grooming, hydrotherapy or dog training)
- working dogs, such as police dogs
- dogs allowed on campus as they are the responsibility of an external booking (eg. The Dogs Trust)

Under the provision made within this policy, the University College requires that:

- Access requirements involving Assistance Dogs are legitimate and pre-agreed with WUC Student Support Services
- Suitable arrangements for the animals' safe access to and conduct of work in the University College are made
- All concerned parties (classmates, other residents, etc.) are consulted and advised on safe practice and appropriate behaviour
- The Assistance Dog owner agrees to the terms and conditions of use of Assistance Dogs within the University College

It should be noted that WUC would not under any circumstances permit:

- Access to any animal subject to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act (DWAA).
- The use of any dogs which are classed as a banned breed.
- The use of any dogs subject to a Dog Control Order.

This policy document addresses:

- Organisational and physical arrangements provided by Property & Estates to safely and comfortably accommodate Assistance Dogs and their owners
- The University College's role and responsibilities in relation to Assistance Dogs
- Assistance Dogs owners' responsibilities
- Processes and procedures (including in the event of conflict situations)

This policy is also intended to raise awareness and understanding for staff, students and visitors of Assistance Dogs.

3. Key Definitions

University College premises – Property that is owned, operated, or maintained by Writtle University College.

Disability – applies to a person if they have a physical or mental impairment which is having a substantial, adverse and long-term (lasting or likely to last 12 months or more) effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities (Equality Act 2010)

Reasonable adjustments – changes offered at University College expense, where needed, and where disabled users would otherwise be at a substantial disadvantage compared with non-disabled people without them. What is reasonable will be decided on a case by case basis.

Assistance Dog – an animal specially trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Guide dogs are the most common type of Assistance Dog, used by individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Other conditions that may require the use of Assistance Dogs include hearing loss, mental health conditions, physical impairments, epilepsy or seizure-related disorders, autism spectrum conditions.

Therapy animal – an animal prescribed to an individual as part of a treatment process for a physical or mental condition. Unlike an Assistance Dog, a therapy animal does not facilitate mobility for its owner nor assist in daily tasks and is unlikely to need to accompany its owner at all times.

Working animal – an animal, usually a dog, that provides other services within the University College, such as assisting in law enforcement.

The focus of this policy is adult Assistance Dogs. Where therapy animals are requested (including to be in halls of residence), consideration will be given on a case by case basis. Appropriate evidence would need to be provided (eg. a letter from an appropriately qualified medical/mental health professional) to confirm the support/aid the animal provides the owner in managing their disability/condition to allow WUC to review the request in detail. Consideration would also need to be given to the suitability of the animal's behaviour and temperament, the animal's welfare (eg. it would not be acceptable to leave a dog in halls of residence all day whilst attending lectures), as well as whether:

- key principles/requirements of this policy could still be met
- there are barriers to access and participation
- there are alternative reasonable adjustments that could be considered.

If following consideration, a therapy animal is approved to be on campus, a plan of how this can be accommodated will need to be agreed between the owner and WUC and must be adhered to.

4. Organisational and Physical Arrangements

Writtle University College offers the following arrangements to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for Assistance Dogs, their owners, and other members of the residential and campus community:

1. Support and advisory services from the University College's Student Support teams
2. A mutually agreed Student Information Documents (SID) that sets out any reasonable adjustments required
3. Pre entry information visit to assess potential reasonable adjustments to the estate
4. Arrival or pre-arrival site orientation
5. Visits by the Assistance Dog's trainer are encouraged in the early settling in days and then annually thereafter
6. Route safety check (for hazards and obstructions)
7. Provision or identification of designated spending and exercise area(s) for the toilet needs of Assistance Dogs on the premises or locally off-site
8. Within rooms and enclosed spaces on University College premises, to ensure there is sufficient space for Assistance Dogs within reach of their owner
9. Provision of water bowls and access to water (if requested)
10. Provision of a sighted guide when required, or in circumstances when the Assistance Dog is unable to carry out its duty
11. Setting out processes and procedures for adverse incidents in relation to the presence or admittance of Assistance Dogs, such as allergies, fear of animal presence, religious objections, and animal misbehaviour
12. Setting out processes and procedures for the care and handling of Assistance Dogs and their owners in emergency situations.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Compliance, Awareness and Training

- Local management will ensure that staff, students and other members of the University College community are provided with adequate information to respond to the needs of the Assistance Dog, its owner, and all those in contact with the dog.
- Local management to ensure that practice is conformable to current legislation and that all WUC community members are aware of Assistance Dogs and their role.

Notification

- Student Support Services will provide prior notice to staff, students and University College partners living or working in close proximity to the Assistance Dog.
- Consultation and advisory services will be offered to all affected parties.
- Where appropriate, the Student Support Team will liaise with the student's academic department and accommodation team to ensure that additional individual reasonable adjustments are discussed and considered.

Infrastructure

- Property & Estates co-ordinates the identification and, if necessary, installation of appropriate relief areas such as spending pens.
- Property & Estates will manage the upkeep of spending pens, including the regular provision of refuse bins.
- Property & Estates to ensure entrances (including internal passages) are clearly signed for blind and visually impaired and to ensure access routes are clear and easy to navigate and obstructions removed or are identified as a potential hazard.

Emergency Evacuation

- The University College sets out a safe and suitable emergency evacuation plan for Assistance Dogs and their owners.
- Site managers/Course Managers to brief Assistance Dog owners on local emergency evacuation procedures and to make information on emergency evacuation available for reference in accessible formats.

- University College Managers to ensure that emergency responders are advised to make reasonable efforts to keep Assistance Dogs with their owners in the event of an emergency situation. However, the emergency responder's priority should be toward the safety of the owner.

Orientation

- Site/Course Managers to conduct pre-arrival and arrival site orientation
- When relevant/appropriate Site/Course Managers to organise guided assistance in the event of route variations, relocation, or when access to specific areas are restricted.

6. Assistance Dogs Owners' Responsibilities

Animal training

Assistance Dogs often undergo intensive training before commencing duty. They also receive further training throughout their working lives, especially in the event of change in work location or work pattern. Owners are responsible for the training needs of their Assistance Dogs, to ensure the correct and safe performance of their duties. A copy of the relevant certification/proof of training should be provided to the University College on application (where available). Where there has not been any external assessment of a dog's behaviour, we would normally request that one is carried out by someone suitably qualified (such as a Clinical Animal Behaviourist with the Animal Behaviour & Training Council). This is being requested in the interest of other members of our community, as well as health and safety requirements, given the nature of our campus and facilities. This assessment should meet the International Association of Assistance Dog Partners' (IAADP) published minimum training standards for public access <https://www.iaadp.org/iaadp-minimum-training-standards-for-public-access.html> or recognised equivalent.

Information

Assistance Dog owners must request permission from the University College to bring Assistance Dogs into the estate in advance of arrival on University College premises. Appropriate evidence would need to be provided (eg. a letter from an appropriately qualified medical/mental health professional) to confirm the support/aid the animal provides the owner in managing their disability/condition. Information should be provided about the animal and its tasks, duties and trained response behaviours.

Identification

Assistance Dog owners must ensure that their Assistance Dogs are clearly identifiable by the use of special collars, jackets, harnesses and/or ID tags.

Insurance

Owners of Assistance Dogs must have in force a valid public liability insurance at all times whilst their Assistance Dog is on the estate of the University College which covers their personal legal liability in respect of their ownership or keeping of the Assistance Dog arising from:

- bodily injury to any third party persons
- damage to property belonging to persons other than the owner
- a minimum of £2,000,000 limit of indemnity in respect of any one incident

A copy of the schedule or any certificate of cover must be provided to the University College prior to the Assistance Dog entering the estate.

Access Restrictions

Assistance Dog owners must respect access restrictions established by the University College on grounds of health and safety. Owners must ensure that Assistance Dogs do not enter staff and students' privately assigned spaces, such as students' rooms within residences without permission. To access some areas, additional individual risk assessments may need to be discussed and developed. Once it is approved an assistance dog may be on campus, a student and their dog should be allowed to access/use WUC transport. As such, a copy of completed Section 11 should be provided to the Transport team for their information.

Animal Misbehaviour

Owners must make sure that their Assistance Dogs do not cause harm or injury to others and/or damage to University College property. The owner/handler of the animal must be in control of it at all times. Additionally, an animal's behaviour should not have a detrimental impact on the ability of others in the community to teach and/or learn. Preventing and correcting Assistance Dog's misbehaviour is the owner's responsibility. WUC reserves the right to request an independent dog behaviour assessment at any point if it is felt necessary/appropriate. See Section 7 for further information about unresolved ongoing or serious animal misbehaviour.

Cleanliness

Registered blind people are not required to clean up after their guide dogs and 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, consistent with reasonable capacity. Owners must use the spending pens or designated areas identified by the University College. In the unlikely event that the dog does foul outside of these designated areas, the owner must immediately report this to an appropriate staff member so that arrangements can be made for the area to be cleaned and sanitized.

Animal care and supervision

Animal care is the owner's responsibility. The owner ensures regular health checks, vaccination, adequate standard of grooming, and the supply of food and drink at all times. Owners must ensure that Assistance Dogs are kept on a lead at all times when walking around the University College estate or safely harnessed when unsupervised for short periods of time. Without additional permissions being granted, the only areas where dogs are allowed off their lead briefly are in any designated and agreed areas for toileting and exercise; WUC recognises that some Assistance Dogs may be required to leave their handler to alert for support or first aid assistance. Owners must ensure the Assistance Dog has its requirements in relation to toileting and feeding met. Owners whose Assistance Dogs are ill, in poor health, excessively unclean or unkempt may be required to remove the animal from University College premises. An owner must ensure that any symptoms of oestrus are well managed whilst their dog is on campus. If in halls of residence, an owner chooses to ask another resident student to look after their Assistance Dog for a short period of time, the owner remains ultimately responsible, but the person looking after the dog needs to ensure all elements of this policy are adhered to. The out of hours residential student support team should be advised of any temporary arrangement put in place.

7. Conflict Situations

Removal of Assistance Dogs

The University College reserves the right to remove or bar entry to an Assistance Dog when it poses a direct threat to the health & safety of others. Unresolved animal misbehaviour may also provide grounds for removal, after all reasonable measures have been taken to address this.

Damage

Assistance Dog owners are responsible for any damage to persons or University College property.

Restricted Access

The University College may restrict access of Assistance Dogs to certain areas for health and safety reasons. Restricted areas may include laboratories, the farm, stud, animal/equine unit, areas where protective clothing is required or bio security restrictions are in place. Applications for exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Conflicting Disabilities

Where an Assistance Dog poses adverse health risk to a/other student/s, the University College will seek medical documentation from the affected party/parties to determine suitable alternative arrangements for either or both parties.

Religious or Cultural Conflicts

Religious or cultural beliefs cannot be used to prohibit access for Assistance Dogs and their owners.

Complaints

Any issues in relation to Assistance Dogs on University College premises that cannot be resolved informally should be raised in accordance with WUC's Complaints Policy for Students & Employers.

8. Procedure

If you have an Assistance Dog that meets the requirements outlined above, we would request that you make WUC aware at the earliest possible opportunity. If you are applying for a course, please declare it on the Self Assessment form (that you will be sent upon declaration of a disability). A meeting will then be arranged with a member of the student support team (and potentially relevant academic staff) to discuss and consider this policy and your individual needs. At that meeting and during orientation visits, any concerns about the animal's behaviour should be raised.

In the case of this being a member of staff with an assistance dog, this should be declared on application (or at the earliest opportunity) and the Human Resources team will oversee the process and effective implementation of this policy. In the case of a Conferencing or Short Course Attendee, it will be the Conferencing or Short Course Team.

9. Advice to Members of the WUC Community

Please note that Assistance Dogs are highly trained working dogs, performing tasks to assist disabled persons. As such members of the WUC 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 animal's service.

It should be understood that medical detection dogs are trained to behave differently when they detect a potential seizure and they can appear to be misbehaving (examples include excessive pawing, or climbing on its owner).

10. Feedback

WUC is happy to listen to the suggestions of Assistance Dog owners as to how provision for Assistance Dogs may be improved at the institution. WUC staff will advise students or others with Assistance Dogs and signpost them to this policy to make them aware of the help provided by WUC and their rights and responsibilities.

11. Assistance Dog Registration & Approval

For completion by the Assistance Dog owner:

Name of Owner:	
Student Number:	
Name of Dog:	
Name of organisation the Assistance Dog is affiliated/registered with*:	
Training (incl Public Access Test or equivalent) completed? (Evidence should be provided)*	
Insurance Details:	
Colour of Dog:	
Breed of Dog:	
Details of tasks/duties the dog performs:	
Details of request/need? (eg. To accompany the owner at all times? To live in halls of residence?)	
Details of dog's normal response behaviours*:	

*where appropriate/relevant/available

As the owner of an Assistance Dog, I confirm that I have read and understood all the requirements placed upon me by WUC's Assistance Dogs Policy (sign below).

	Sign & Print:	Date:
Owner of Assistance Dog:		

For completion by Student Support Services/Conferencing (for conference users)/HR (for staff)/Short Courses Team (for short course attendees):

	Tick / Add Detail*
Copy of insurance taken	
ID seen and copy taken*	
Copy/evidence of training/accreditation certificates (incl behaviour assessment eg. Public Access Test)*	
Medical/mental health evidence?	
Restricted Access Areas?	
Additional Individual Risk Assessments Required?*	
Additional Individual Risk Assessment Completed & Attached*	
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan Completed & Attached* (PEEPS) – share as appropriate (incl out of hours residential student support staff)	
Notify those who will be in close proximity to the AD – incl request site managers conduct site orientation	
Add info to SID/support plan	

*where/as appropriate/relevant

Completed & Approved:

	Sign & Print:	Date:
WUC staff member:		

Copies of completed to be provided to Property & Estates, Accommodation (where relevant), Admissions, Course Teams (for sharing on a 'need to know basis' with Site Managers etc), H&S Officer, Out of Hours Residential Student Support Team & the Transport team (if the student is likely to need to use WUC transport).

This policy supersedes any other policy and procedural guidelines, which may be in other existing University College documents. Writtle University College may amend this policy from time to time and any such amendments will be notified via the website, through Writtle Weekly or by email.

If this information is difficult to access, read or understand, it can be provided in another format, for example in large print, or by someone talking it through with you.

Version Control

Version Number	Purpose/Amendment	Date
1.0	New policy – draft version for consultation	10/04/19
2.0	Updated draft following consultation with extended E&D Steering Group	07/06/19
2.2/2.3/2.4/2.5/2.6	Updated draft – following feedback around required accreditation and training and to take account of conferencing, short course attendees and transport considerations. 2.6 takes account of feedback to request external behaviour assessment.	07/01/20
2.7	Updated version following Education Committee on 5/2 – final version ready for publication	12/02/20