



## Assistance Dog Policy

### 1. Introduction

Focus is keen to help support anyone to be able to attend Focus.

This policy has been developed to provide clarity or set a standard regarding Assistance Dogs for Focus. This is to ensure that no one is denied equitable access to events held by Focus based on their reliance on mobility aids, as well as ensuring Focus meets its legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010.

### 2. Assistance Dog Accreditation

An Assistance Dog is one which has been specifically trained to complete specific tasks or duties to aid a person with a disability. Accreditation in the UK is usually completed through a recognised organisation such as Assistance Dogs UK ([www.assistancedogs.org.uk](http://www.assistancedogs.org.uk)). Such Assistance Dogs have formal identification and are permitted to accompany their owners at all times and places within the UK, unless there is a genuine health and safety risk (e.g., hospital areas such as operating theatres). There are currently seven registered organisations who are members of Assistance Dogs UK. These are as follows:

- Canine Partners
- Dog A.I.D
- Dogs for Good
- Guide Dogs
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
- Medical Detention Dogs
- Support Dogs

Requests which fall outside of the Assistance Dogs UK accreditation route require careful consideration to ensure that Focus is meeting its legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010, as well as being satisfied that the appropriate checks and criteria have been met to ensure the health and safety of staff and other delegates at Focus.

The aim is to determine that that dog itself is suitably trained, and or qualified, to be classed as an assistance dog.



Regarding the assistance dog being owner trained and having access to Focus we would require clear evidence of the following:

- That the dog meets the standards and criteria required of an assistance dog
- Confirmation regarding the types of tasks the assistance dog is trained to provide.
- Confirmation that there is a need for an assistance dog. This would be provided in the form of medical evidence confirming your diagnosis, in which the University will then be able to review the reasonable adjustments required.

In addition, the Assistance Dog Owner would be required to comply with the responsibilities set out in section 5 of this policy.

It would also be helpful to understand why the individual has decided to go through the route of owner training their assistance dog as opposed to going through Assistance Dogs UK Accreditation, which is designed to be supportive in nature. We are aware that through Assistance Dogs UK Accreditation, the partnership between assistances dogs and their owners is periodically checked to ensure there are maintaining the standards under which the dog achieved accreditation. Therefore, to best review your application, please provide further information as to how you would undertake these checks independently.

It should be noted that Focus will not accept any requests from delegates for therapy or family pets on campus, due to them not meeting the standards set out by Assistance Dogs (UK), as well as the requirement as set out in Focus's Management of Hazards and Risks to Health and Safety

Whilst Assistance Dogs are at Focus, their owners must comply with the following responsibilities:

- Assistance Dog Owners are required to have valid formal identification about the Assistance Dog, its owner and details of the training organisation, which should be visible to everyone at all times. Assistance Dog Owners must also be able to provide information about their dog, its tasks and duties, if reasonably requested to do so by Focus Staff.
- Assistance Dog Owners must request permission from Focus to bring their Assistance Dog on to Focus site prior to arrival.

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- Assistance Dog Owners must ensure that their Assistance Dog is kept on a lead at all times when walking round the Focus Site, (we realise that an Assistance Dog cannot be expected to work all day, and requires a minimum of an hour off the lead time every morning and evening, however we ask that this 'off the lead time' is carried out away from busy areas, and as much as possible, from other Focus attendees).
- Assistance Dog Owners must ensure that their assistance dogs are covered by full liability insurance.
- Assistance Dog Owners are required to ensure that their Assistance Dog is relevantly vaccinated.
- Preventing and rectifying the misbehaviour of an Assistance Dog is the owner's responsibility. Assistance Dog Owners are responsible for any harm or injury caused to others, their property or Focus property by their Assistance Dog
- Assistance Dog Owners are responsible in ensuring that their Assistance Dog is not ill, in poor health, unclean or unkempt. If these standards are not met, the owner may be required to remove the dog from the Focus site.
- Assistance Dog Owners must adhere to access restrictions established by Focus on the grounds of Health and Safety
- Registered blind people are not required to clean up after their Assistance Dogs but are expected to have received appropriate training to avoid dog waste on site. Assistance Dog Owners must take responsibility for the clean-up of their dog's waste as far as they are able and, as far as reasonably possible, make use of the designated area identified by Focus.

In the event that an Assistance Dog fouls:

- inside a Focus building, the owner must report this to a member of the Team to request a sanitisation of the area.
- on an outdoors areas of the Focus site, the owner must report this to the Team to request a sanitisation of the area.

Focus reserves the right to decline or remove Assistance Dogs from site for the following reasons:

- The Assistance Dog has not been specifically trained and qualified by a member of Assistance Dogs (UK)

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- It cannot be determined that the assistance dog is suitably trained, and or qualified, to be classed as an Assistance Dog.
- The Assistance Dog Owner does not act in accordance with the criteria set out above.