Newbattle Abbey College
Colaiste Abaid a'Bhatail Nuaidh

ASSISTANCE AND THERAPY ANIMALS POLICY

1. Purpose
Newbattle Abbey College is committed to promoting and safeguarding the inclusion, health, safety and wellbeing of all individuals accessing its premises, services and activities.

While the College generally prohibits animals being brought onto College premises by staff and students, it recognises the importance of Assistance Dogs for individuals who require them to carry out day-to-day activities.

This policy sets out the arrangements for the presence of Assistance Dogs and, in exceptional circumstances, Therapy or Support Animals on College premises.

2. Scope
This policy applies to all individuals accessing or using Newbattle Abbey College premises, services or activities, including:

- enrolled students
- staff
- visiting or exchange students (including those studying through partner institutions)
- residential users
- visitors, including those attending events, conferences or corporate programmes
- contractors and partners

The policy applies across all College buildings, grounds, residential accommodation and associated facilities.

3. Equality Statement
The College is committed to advancing and promoting equality and diversity in all its activities and aims to establish an inclusive culture free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity and respect.

4. Definitions and Guidelines
4.1 Assistance Animals
An Assistance Animal is an animal, usually a dog, which has been trained to perform tasks for a person with a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Assistance Dogs may be trained by members of Assistance Dogs (UK) (ADUK) or by other recognised organisations, including those based outside the UK.

Examples of ADUK member organisations include:

- Canine Partners
- Dog A.I.D (Assistance in Disability)
- Dogs for Good
- The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
- The Seeing Dogs Alliance

- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
- Medical Detection Dogs
- Support Dogs

Assistance Dogs are typically identifiable through:

- branded ID tags, jackets, harnesses or leads
- an identification booklet issued by a training organisation
- appropriate alternative documentation where trained outside the UK

The College will accept a range of appropriate evidence of training and purpose. Registration with ADUK is not a requirement where alternative credible evidence is available.

Assistance Dogs are permitted to accompany their owner in all areas of the College. The College may put in place reasonable arrangements to support safe and effective access, and any restriction will only be applied where there is a demonstrable and proportionate health and safety risk.

4.2 Arrangements for Assistance Dogs
Students
Students who require an Assistance Dog should:

- contact Student Wellbeing and Support (studentsupport@nac.ac.uk);
- participate in a needs assessment process;
- support the development of appropriate arrangements, including risk assessments, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans and reasonable adjustments;
- provide appropriate evidence of the dog's training and role;
- provide evidence of public liability insurance.

Staff
Staff who require an Assistance Dog must:

- inform their Line Manager;
- provide appropriate evidence of the dog's training and role;
- provide evidence of public liability insurance.

The Line Manager will liaise with relevant colleagues, as required, to ensure appropriate consideration of risk and workplace adjustments.

Visitors and External Users
Visitors and external users who require an Assistance Dog should notify the College in advance where reasonably practicable via the Business Development Manager.

For international visitors, arrangements will follow the principles set out in this policy, taking account of equivalent recognition and requirements for Assistance Dogs in the visitor's home country, where appropriate.

4.3 Owner Responsibilities and Expectations
Individuals bringing Assistance Dogs onto College premises must:

- provide information about the dog and its role if reasonably requested;
- ensure the dog is appropriately identifiable where possible;
- ensure the dog is covered by suitable public liability insurance;
- comply with any access restrictions identified through risk assessment;
- ensure the dog does not pose a risk to others or to property;
- take responsibility for cleanliness and waste management;
- ensure the dog's welfare needs (feeding, watering, toileting) are met;
- ensure the dog remains under control at all times.

4.4 Therapy and Support Animals
Therapy or emotional support animals provide comfort or emotional support but are not trained to perform specific tasks in the same way as Assistance Dogs.

Such animals will only be permitted on College premises in exceptional circumstances, where:

- there is clear evidence of need;
- the adjustment is considered reasonable under the Equality Act 2010;
- the individual cannot be effectively supported through alternative measures;
- the impact on others and the welfare of the animal have been considered.

4.4.1 Application Process
Students must:

- contact Student Wellbeing and Support;
- participate in a needs assessment process;
- provide evidence of public liability insurance;
- provide supporting evidence where required.

Staff must:

- inform their Line Manager;
- provide evidence of public liability insurance;
- provide supporting evidence where required.

Visitors and External Users must:

- notify the College in advance via the Business Development Manager where reasonably practicable;
- provide evidence of public liability insurance;

- provide supporting evidence where required.

4.4.2 Decision-Making
Decisions regarding the presence of Therapy or Support Animals will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Applications will be coordinated as follows:

- Students: Student Wellbeing and Support
- Staff: Line Manager
- Visitors and external users: Business Development Manager

All applications will be considered by the appropriate member of the College Management Team, with oversight from the Depute Principal.

Decisions will:

- be evidence-based and proportionate;
- consider health and safety, equality duties, and operational impact;
- take account of the needs of both the requesting individual and others affected.

4.4.3 Review and Appeal
Where an individual is dissatisfied with a decision, a request for review may be submitted in writing to the Depute Principal.

The outcome of the review will be confirmed in writing and the decision is final.

4.5 Pets
Pets must not be brought onto or kept on College premises by staff or students, except where permitted under this policy or with the express permission of a member of the Senior Management Team.

5. Conflict Situations
Individuals are responsible for the behaviour of any animal they bring onto College premises. The College reserves the right to exclude an animal where necessary.

5.1 Threat or Behavioural Issues
The College may remove or refuse entry to an animal where it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others or where behaviour is not appropriately managed.

5.2 Damage
Owners are responsible for any damage caused.

5.3 Restricted Access
Access may be restricted in certain areas for health and safety reasons. Exceptions will be considered case-by-case.

5.4 Conflicting Needs
Where the presence of an Assistance Dog or Therapy or Support Animal gives rise to a potential conflict with the health, wellbeing or needs of another individual, the College will take a balanced and proportionate approach to resolving the situation.

This may include circumstances where an individual experiences:

- a medically evidenced allergy to animals
- a significant fear or phobia
- a condition or need that may be adversely affected by the presence of an animal

The College will consider appropriate adjustments for all affected individuals. This may include, where reasonable and practicable:

- timetabling or location adjustments
- use of alternative spaces or routes
- adjustments to seating or proximity within shared environments
- additional support arrangements

Decisions will be informed by appropriate evidence where required and will seek to ensure that no individual is placed at a substantial disadvantage.

The presence of an Assistance Dog will not be unreasonably restricted. However, where necessary, the College will work with all parties to identify a solution that is fair, proportionate and consistent with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

5.5 Religious or Cultural Considerations
Religious or cultural beliefs cannot be used to deny access to Assistance Dogs or their owners.

11. Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR Regulations 2018
11.1 The processing and handling of personal data will only be undertaken in the legitimate operation of the business of the College.

12. Review
Please refer to the College 'Policies and Procedures Lists and Status' for review timetable.
This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents, whether specifically listed below or subsequently published or amended:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy and Procedure
- Staff and Student Disciplinary Policies
- Complaints Procedure
- Student Appeals Policy

The College reserves the right to update, introduce, or revise policies and procedures from time to time.
Compliance with the most current versions of applicable policies and procedures, as published, is expected.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents, whether specifically listed above or subsequently published or amended.

The College reserves the right to update, introduce, or revise policies and procedures from time to time.

Compliance with the most current versions of applicable policies and procedures, as published, is expected.

Title:	Assistance and Therapy Animals Policy
Lead Officer:	Depute Principal
Date last reviewed	February 2026
Next Review date:	February 2029
Approved By:	Board
Date first approved:	February 2026