



## **Working with Animals Policy – Alternative Provision on Farm**

### **1. Purpose**

This policy outlines the standards and expectations for working with animals at our Alternative Provision (AP) based on a commercial working farm. It is designed to promote the safety and wellbeing of both animals and students while supporting structured, therapeutic learning through farm-based activities.

### **2. Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All students enrolled in the AP
- All staff, volunteers, and visiting professionals involved in animal care or supervision
- All animal interaction and handling zones across the farm site

### **3. Principles of Animal Care**

We are committed to the **highest standards of animal welfare**. Students are expected to treat animals with:

- **Respect**
- **Patience**
- **Calm and appropriate behaviour**
- **Proper handling techniques**

Animals are living beings, not tools or entertainment, and must be approached responsibly.

### **4. Student Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Correct Care and Conduct**

- Students will be taught proper animal care procedures and handling techniques.
- All tasks involving animals must be completed **gently, respectfully, and according to instructions**.
- Students must report any concerns about an animal's health, distress, or behaviour immediately.

#### **4.2 Supervision Requirements**

- Students are **not permitted to enter animal pens, enclosures, or stables alone**.
- An **instructor or trained member of staff must always be present** during animal interactions.
- Safety instructions must be followed without exception.

#### **4.3 Safety Zones**



- Feeding and high-risk activities will be carried out in clearly marked **Safety Zones**.
- These zones are only to be entered under **direct staff supervision**.
- Physical boundaries and barriers (gates, ropes, fencing) must never be crossed without permission.

#### 4.4 Prohibited Conduct

- Any behaviour deemed **abusive**, threatening, or dangerous toward animals will result in **immediate removal from animal activities** and may trigger a formal safeguarding review.
- This includes:
  - Hitting, kicking, shouting at, or teasing animals
  - Deliberately ignoring safety instructions
  - Attempting to approach animals unsupervised

#### 5. Staff Responsibilities

- Staff must ensure animals are kept in safe, clean, and appropriate conditions at all times.
- All student activity with animals must be **supervised and risk-assessed**.
- Staff are responsible for teaching students safe and ethical handling practices.

#### 6. Removal from Animal Work

Students may be temporarily or permanently removed from animal-related activities if:

- They display behaviour that puts animals, themselves, or others at risk
- They repeatedly fail to follow staff instructions
- They demonstrate poor emotional regulation that affects animal wellbeing

Supportive intervention and review meetings will be held where appropriate.

#### 7. Training and Induction

- All students will receive an **animal handling induction** as part of their onboarding process.
- Refresher sessions will be provided regularly, especially when new animals or routines are introduced.

#### 8. Welfare Monitoring

- Animals will be monitored daily by staff for signs of stress, injury, or illness.
- Any concerns will be reported and actioned immediately, including veterinary care if needed.

#### 9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to:



- A safety incident
- A change in farm operations
- Updates to safeguarding or animal welfare regulations