

Therapy Dog Handler Course



At a glance...

Assessed Customised Provision

Delivery Method:	Classroom and practical demonstration and assessment
Recognised by:	Lantra Awards
Prerequisites:	The handler should have a dog with a suitable temperament to be a potential Therapy Dog.

Introduction

Through this Therapy Dog Handler Course, you and your dog will learn how to offer comfort, connection and emotional support to those who need it most.

Overview in brief

This Lantra-accredited Customised Award is exclusively developed and delivered by a Lantra-approved Training Provider, who meets our quality standards. The course is specifically tailored to meet learners' needs. For further details about the course content and delivery locations, please contact the Training Provider using the details provided below.

The minimum age to undertake this course is 18.

Our twelve-month therapy dog course blends expert knowledge, flexible online learning, and powerful in-person experiences to help you and your dog become a confident, compassionate therapy team.

Through structured lessons, monthly live Zoom training, and a three-day workshop, you will gain the skills, insight and support needed to thrive in this rewarding role.

The course consists of twelve online units of study. Each unit consists of a number of lessons to work through. You will be required



to answer online multiple choice questions, submit video evidence of dog behaviour and submit two essays.

There will also be a final live assessment where you will be able to showcase your ability to work confidently with your dog in a real-life setting.



The finer details

The course is designed for the handler and the dog as a unit therefore, if the handler gets a new dog a refresher course will have to be taken to ensure that there is;

- A good bond between the handler and new dog.
- The dog demonstrates reliable obedience.
- The dog has the temperament and physical condition suited to emotionally supportive work.

Handler's, and their dogs, will be required to take follow up training every year to maintain their affiliation and to ensure skills are being maintained. The objectives of the follow up will be to:

- Reinforce key skills in handler communication and canine responsiveness.
- Address any challenges encountered since the initial course.
- Deepen understanding of safeguarding and welfare protocols.
- Provide tailored feedback based on progress and goals.

Units of Study include:

1. Introduction to Therapy Dogs - focussing on what a therapy dog is, the benefits of a trained therapy dog, the dog's temperament, training, qualities needed to be an effective therapy dog handler.
2. Dog Training Principles - different training methods, with a focus on positive reinforcement methods only.
3. Obedience Training - how to train basic behaviour in a dog.
4. Canine Body Language - recognising dog body language.
5. Canine Behaviour - behaviours and how to deal with them.
6. Canine Nutrition - nutrition and food labelling.
7. Canine Husbandry - the importance of good husbandry.
8. Professional Standards - legal and ethical responsibilities, training and competence, dog welfare and advocacy, documentation and reporting, professional standards pledge, living the standards, data protection and GDPR standards.
9. Working with Therapy Dogs in the Community - familiarisation of the dogs, maintaining wellbeing and ethics, time management, working with children, the elderly and individuals.
10. Risk Assessment - risk assessments in a variety of settings.



11. Report Writing / Keeping Records.



Who should attend?

Individuals who have a suitable dog and who have the qualities needed, (patience, empathy and compassion and committed to training), to be an effective therapy dog handler.

What will be covered?

By the end of this course, you will:

- Developed a basic to advanced handling techniques to train basic obedience.
- Have the knowledge of and be able to read canine body language and react appropriately.
- Understand dog training principles.
- Have a comprehensive understanding of the responsibilities and legal requirements of a Therapy dog in the community.
- Gain the necessary skills to work a therapy dog in the community with care and empathy.
- Understand the importance of how good animal husbandry promotes a dog's health, comfort and emotional readiness.

Other areas of interest

[School Dog Training](#)

