**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

You are being invited to take part in research exploring the views of university students on companion animals and Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAI) for students. Jillian Bradfield (MScR student) at the University of Edinburgh is leading this research, supervised by Prof Jo Williams. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important you understand whythe research is being conducted and whatit will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?**

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the role of companion animals on university students' lives and the acceptance and interest of university students of a campus dog intervention.

**WHY HAVE I BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?**

You are invited to participate in this study because you are a student at a university who has expressed interest in participating.

**DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART?**

No – it is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Deciding not to take part or withdrawing from the study will not affect you in any way. Simply close the browser to withdraw from the study.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DECIDE TO TAKE PART?**

You will be asked a number of questions regarding the role of pets in your life and your experience with and views on AAI sessions for university students. In addition, you will be asked about your current mental health status.

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?**

By sharing your experiences with us, you will be helping Jillian Bradfield and the University to better understand what university students are looking for in an AAI session.

**ARE THERE ANY RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH TAKING PART?**

There are no significant risks associated with participation. This study will involve some questions regarding your personal mental health. Should you feel uncomfortable at any time due to this, please see the list of resources on the survey termination page.

**WHAT IF I WANT TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?**

Agreeing to participate in this project does not oblige you to remain in the study nor have any further obligation to this study. If, prior to survey completion, you no longer want to be part of the study, simply close the survey browser. All incomplete surveys will be removed from the data set. You should note that your data may be used in the production of formal research outputs (e.g. journal articles, conference papers, theses and reports) prior to your withdrawal. Please note that due to the anonymity of the survey format, specific data sets cannot be removed once the survey has been completed, as it is impossible to determine whose response is whose. Therefore, you are unable to request to have your data removed once you have completed the survey.

**DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your data will be processed in accordance with Data Protection Law.  All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential. Your data will be anonymised in our records. Your data will only be viewed by the researcher/research team. All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected computer file.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY?**

The results of this study may be summarised in published articles, reports and presentations. Quotes or key findings will always be made anonymous in any formal outputs. With your consent, anonymised information may also be kept for future research.

**WHO IS ORGANISING AND FUNDING THE RESEARCH?**

This study has been organised by Jillian Bradfield (MScR in Clinical Psychology).

**WHO HAS REVIEWED THE STUDY?**

The study proposal has been reviewed by the Health in Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

**WHO CAN I CONTACT?**

If you have any further questions about the study, please contact the lead researcher, Jillian Bradfield: J.Bradfield@sms.ed.ac.uk

If you would like to discuss this study with someone independent of the study please contact the Programme Director, Helen Sharpe: helen.sharpe@ed.ac.uk

If you would like to make a complaint about this study, please contact Professor Matthias Schwannauer: headofschool.health@ed.ac.uk

In your communication, please provide the study title and detail the nature of your complaint.

For general information about how we use your data go to:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/privacy-notice-research