

How do I find a suitable trainer?

Animal training is not a registered profession in Australia and as such anyone can call themselves a trainer or a behaviorist. A trainer and a behaviorist is the same thing. When it comes to engaging the services of an animal trainer or behaviorist to help you to train your Assistance Animal, it is best to take your time and to make sure that you find one who is experienced, qualified and accredited.

The minimum qualification any trainer or behaviourist should hold is Certificate IV Animal Behavior and Training (ACM40321) or its predecessor Certificate IV Companion Animal Services (ACM40221). These courses can only be taught by Registered Training Organizations (RTOs) that meet stringent national standards. It is highly recommended that the trainer has completed the 5 Assistance Animal units as part of their study, and has experience working with Assistance Animals and people with disabilities.



Further information about these courses can be found at training.gov.au.

Experienced trainers and behaviorists typically also maintain a membership with a relevant industry body that promotes training standards and requires that trainers maintain currency in the industry through continuing professional development (CPD).

Accreditation of professional trainers and behaviorists is available with a number of independent organisations including:

- Professional Dog Trainers of Australia (PDTA)
- International Association of Animal Behaviour Consultants (IAABC)
- The Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour (ASAB)
- Association of Animal Behaviour Professionals (AABP)
- Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors (APBC)
- The Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT)
- International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP)
- plus many others!

In addition to this, the Working Animals Federation of Australia (WAFA) offers a number of credentials for handlers, trainers and other professionals who have completed additional requirements which we believe make them suitable to work with Assistance Animals and their handlers.



WAFA only accredits the gold standard of Assistance Animal trainers who have proven themselves to have the necessary knowledge and practical experience to successfully train Animals who are suitable for public access. WAFA-accredited trainers meet stringent standards including minimum education, experience, membership and continuing professional development (CPD) requirements and are guaranteed to maintain the highest of standards outlined in our Codes, Policies and Professional Standards.

Learn more at workinganimals.com.au