



STUDENT ALCOHOL AND DRUG MISUSE POLICY

Originator: Head of Student Support
Date: August 2018
Approved by: SMT
Type: Policy
Revised:

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1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1 Leeds Arts University is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment and to protecting the welfare of its community. In the context of this policy the phrase 'University premises' refers to all those places in which the University carries out its activities and extends to those sites that are occupied temporarily by the University for events as well as those occupied by students as part of work placements and during educational visits.
- 1.2 Inappropriate use of alcohol or drugs can result in adverse effects on a person's health, safety and academic performance and may have a negative impact on others. The University, whilst in no way condoning the misuse of drugs or alcohol will consider on a case by case basis, the balance between disciplinary action and appropriate support for students.
- 1.3 The objectives of this policy are:
- To increase awareness and knowledge of the effects of alcohol and drugs and their associated risks amongst students (See Appendix 1).
 - To set out the University's expectations of students to ensure that we provide a safe environment for students, staff and visitors to the University.
 - To facilitate the early identification of drug and alcohol misuse in order to encourage students to seek advice, help and assistance voluntarily before their studies, their health, or that of others, are adversely affected. We will achieve this through education, welfare support, counselling or disciplinary approaches.
 - To provide appropriate support for students who suffer from alcohol dependency and drugs misuse where appropriate.

2. The Legal Position

- 2.1 The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 makes the production, supply and possession of controlled drugs unlawful, except in certain specified circumstances, for example, where a Doctor has prescribed them. The Act makes it clear that it is an offence for 'the occupier or someone concerned with the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the smoking of cannabis; or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply any controlled drug'. It is also an offence for any person to have a controlled drug in their possession, unless lawfully authorised to do so or through personal prescription.
- 2.2 The Health and Safety at Work act 1974 requires the University to do what is reasonable to protect the health and safety of staff, students and visitors. Drug and alcohol misuse can have an impact on the health and safety of an individual and also on others.
- 2.3 The University has a responsibility to uphold the law. Students who contravene the points outlined above will be subject to disciplinary action by the institution which may include reporting incidents to the police.

3. Classifications of Illegal Substances

- 3.1 Illegal drugs are drugs that have been banned by law for use in the UK and are classified under

the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. It is illegal to possess or supply banned drugs. The Psychoactive Substance Act 2016 also makes it an offence to produce, supply, offer to supply or possess with intent to supply psychoactive substances (sometimes mistakenly referred to as *legal highs*). For the purposes of this policy illegal drugs includes those psychoactive substances covered by the 2016 Act.

4. University Policy

- 4.1 In general students should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol on University premises. The exception is for official events such as the opening of exhibitions, performances, or Students' Union organised events when alcohol may be provided through the University. In such circumstances drinking in moderation is permitted.
- 4.2 Students should not attend for study under the influence of alcohol. If a student is found to be under the influence of alcohol during periods of study, potentially rendering them unfit to work in the studios, classrooms or workshops, or if they ignore the guidance on University events, then this will be dealt with as a matter of potential gross misconduct under the student disciplinary procedure.
- 4.3 It is expressly forbidden to use any illegal drugs or any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed for the user or are not being used as prescribed whilst on University premises. The University also forbids students from entering the University under the influence of illegal or non-prescribed drugs and if a student is found to be under the influence of illegal or non-prescribed drugs then this will be dealt with as a matter of potential gross misconduct under the student disciplinary procedure.
- 4.4 The University forbids students to bring non-prescribed drugs onto its premises and students must not sell, attempt to sell or give drugs to any other students, staff members or visitors on University premises. If any such incidents take place on University premises or other premises being used by the University, these incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with as possible gross misconduct under the student disciplinary procedure and may be reported to the Police.
- 4.5 Where breaches of the University's student disciplinary procedure are suspected, disciplinary action may be taken against the students involved but where appropriate, the opportunity may also be taken to educate and support students alongside applying any determined penalties. In the event that the breach involves a police investigation interim action may be taken (for example suspension) whilst the police investigation is carried out. Where students are under the age of 18 due regard will be given to communication with parents, guardians or carers in accordance with the University's Children/young people and vulnerable adults policy.
- 4.6 Students should be aware that possession of illegal drugs normally leads to a formal police caution as a minimum penalty for a first offence. Students should note that a police caution is included on all police records, will be included in a Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) report and may restrict future employment prospects, volunteering opportunities involving children and may prohibit travel overseas.

- 4.7 Examples of where students are considered to be unfit or unsafe for duty due to alcohol or drugs includes but is not limited to:
- In the opinion of the University, the individual's performance is impaired;
 - In the opinion of the University, the individual's behavior may cause embarrassment, distress or offence to others;
 - In the opinion of the University, the individual is not fit to operate equipment which they are required to use as part of their studies.
- 4.8 Any member of staff who notices obvious signs of alcohol or drug abuse in a student should report their concerns to the Course Leader who will raise this concern with the student and may also seek advice from the Student Welfare team. There is no prescribed format for the method of reporting as it will be dependent on the individual circumstances of the case.
- 4.9 Where drug or alcohol misuse is confirmed and the student cooperates fully, support and guidance will be offered (see section 6). If however the student refuses to cooperate and there is evidence of illegal drug use on site, the police may be called to investigate the matter formally. In such circumstances the University reserves the right to confiscate any materials or related paraphernalia as evidence.
- 4.10 Personal tutors or Course Leader/Subjects Leader should advise the Student Welfare team, using a risk assessment form, if a student informs them that they are taking prescribed medication that may affect their ability to carry out their practice safely.

5. Awareness Raising

- 5.1 The University will conduct awareness raising campaigns on the dangers of alcohol and drugs. In addition support is available to students through the Student Welfare team.

6. Support and Guidance

- 6.1 The University will provide support and guidance for any student who is experiencing difficulties with alcohol or drug misuse. In some cases students may be struggling with an addiction to either alcohol or drugs. Indicators of a potential alcohol or drug misuse problem may include:
- periods of unexplained or frequently taken absence
 - poor time keeping
 - behavioral, or sudden mood changes
 - deterioration in relationships
 - reduction in performance or productivity
 - dishonesty and theft
 - accidents and near misses
 - smelling of alcohol
 - confusion
- 6.2 For students wishing to discuss problems related to the use of drugs and alcohol, advice is available from Student Welfare and the Students Union. If a student believes that someone has difficulty in controlling their use of drugs or alcohol they should encourage them to seek

support. If they are concerned that they are a danger to themselves or others it is recommended that the

Student Welfare team is informed. Support can also be provided by the local GP practices who will make referrals to external support units, clinics or groups. Further details of support available can be found on the government website www.drinkaware.co.uk or www.talktofrank.com

6.3 The University regards an individual's dependence on either drugs or alcohol as a serious health problem with consequences for fitness to study. If a student engages with the Student Welfare team and agrees a programme of support with a view to rehabilitation, then the University will allow reasonable agreed absences for advice, support and treatment. Appropriate policies and procedures that may apply in these circumstances these are;

- Attendance policy and procedure
- Fitness to study policy and procedure
- Reasonable adjustment policy
- Extenuating circumstances procedure.

In order for these policies to apply the student will be required to maintain contact with the Student Welfare team, inform them of their progress and provide confirmation from their GP or external agency where appropriate of their attendance and progress through treatment.

7. Where to find support and advice

7.1 Student Welfare team

7.2 Chaplaincy

7.3 External Agencies:

7.3.1 Drinkline

Drinkline is the national alcohol helpline. If you're worried about your own or someone else's drinking, you can call this free helpline, in complete confidence. Call 0300 123 1110 (weekdays 9am - 8pm, weekends 11am - 4pm).

7.3.2 Addiction

A UK wide treatment agency, helping individuals, families and communities to manage the effects of drug and alcohol misuse.

www.addaction.org.uk

7.3.3 Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain

The British branch of this worldwide network, AA is an organisation of people who share their experience with each other hoping to solve their problems and help others to recover from alcoholism.

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

0800 9177 650

help@aamail.org

7.3.4 Al-Anon

Al-Anon is worldwide and offers support and understanding to the families and friends of problem drinkers.

Confidential Helpline 0207 40 30 888 open 10 am - 10pm or visit www.al-anonuk.org.uk

7.3.5 Alcohol Concern

The national agency on alcohol misuse for England and Wales. Provides general information about alcohol, and can help put you in touch with your nearest alcohol advice centre.

Call 0300 123 1110 or visit www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

7.3.6 Drinkaware

Drinkaware is an independent charity working to reduce alcohol misuse and harm in the UK. They aim to help people make better choices about drinking.

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

7.3.7 NHS Choices

This site provides advice and information on alcohol and offers a database of support and treatment services

[Alcohol support services page](#)

7.3.8 ADFAM

Information and advice for families of alcohol and drug users. The website has a list of local family support services.

www.adfam.org.uk

7.3.9 Talk to Frank

National drugs awareness site for young people and parents/carers.

www.talktofrank.com

7.3.10 Samaritans

Provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicide.

You can ring the phone line on 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org (they try to get back to you within 24 hours) or visit www.samaritans.org

APPENDIX 1

Information about Alcohol

- Alcohol misuse is a major public health problem, placing a heavy burden on society, and affecting a large number of individuals of all ages.
- Contrary to what many people believe, alcohol is not a stimulant. It is a depressant. This is why drinking too often leads to impaired judgement, slurring of the speech, a tendency to violent behaviour and loss of short-term memory.
- Either on its own or in conjunction with other factors, alcohol is estimated to be responsible for at least 33,000 deaths in the UK each year.
- In Great Britain, just under a third of men (31%) and one in five women (20%) drink more than the advised weekly limits of 21 and 14 units a week respectively.
- More than one in 25 adults are dependent on alcohol, and the UK has one of the highest rates of binge drinking in Europe.
- Around 6% of road casualties and 17% of all deaths on the road occur when someone has been drinking over the legal limit.
- Current medical evidence shows that men should not regularly drink more than three to four units a day and women not more than two to three. "Regularly" means drinking every day or most days of the week. Consistently drinking more than these amounts can risk damaging your health, with the danger increasing the longer you continue and the more you drink. A unit is 10ml or eight grams of pure alcohol (also called ethanol)
- Older drinkers are more likely to feel the effects the following morning, due to changes in the body that develop with age such as a decrease in body water content and an increase in body fat content. Even from the age of 20 onwards, lean body mass (muscle) also reduces, leading to higher blood alcohol concentration for the same amount of alcohol consumed.
- Young men drink twice what their grandfathers drank 50 years ago
- 35% of men aged 16 to 24 say they drink more than eight units on at least one day a week, compared to 18% of those aged 45-64
- Other health problems related to long-term excessive drinking are weight gain, mental health problems, liver problems, depression, reduced fertility, high blood pressure, increased risk of various cancers and forgetfulness.

Information about Drugs

- As well as having immediate health risks, some drugs can be addictive and lead to long-term damage to the body. Heavy or long-term use of some illegal drugs may cause the user to overdose, which may cause permanent damage to the body and can be fatal.
- Drug addiction is when you become dependent on a drug and it forms a central part of your life.
- The misuse of drugs can lead to physical dependency or psychological dependency.
- Physical dependency means that your body has become so used to a drug that you get physical withdrawal symptoms if you stop taking it. This means that you have to keep taking the drug to stop yourself feeling ill.
- Psychological dependency means that you take the drug because it has formed a large part of your life, and you take it to make yourself feel good. You may feel that you cannot stop taking the drug, even though you are not physically dependant. Some drugs can make you both physically and psychologically dependent.
- As you take more of a drug, your body becomes tolerant to it so it does not have such a strong effect. This means that you need to take larger amounts to get the same effect as when you started taking it.
- Drug misuse is when you take illegal drugs, or when you take medicines in a way not recommended by your GP or the manufacturer. Taking medicines in very large quantities that are dangerous to your health is also an example of drug misuse.