

Student Wellbeing Service: Policy Statement on Alcohol and Drugs (Students)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University of Greenwich (the university) has a legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for study and work for all of its students, employees, affiliates, contractors and visitors.
- 1.2 The university recognises that alcohol and drugs will play a part in the lives of some people, however the university is committed to ensuring that this does not have an adverse effect on the teaching, learning and social conditions of students, employees and visitors; and will take appropriate action when the health and safety of those individuals is threatened or compromised.

2. Aims of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all students and visitors to the University on all campuses. The university has a separate policy statement for staff. A copy of the 'Policy Statement on Alcohol and Drugs at Work' is available from the Human Resources department.
- 2.2 This policy aims to:
 - 2.2.1 Enable the university to raise awareness of alcohol and drugs issues and act as the framework for providing a caring, healthy and safe environment in accordance with the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
 - 2.2.2 Encourage students to seek advice and support where they are concerned that their studies may be adversely affected by substance misuse.
 - 2.2.3 Provide appropriate information and advice on the possible actions taken by the university in relation to reports of students, employees or visitors use, possession and selling of illegal drugs on any of its premises.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The university does not condone the misuse of alcohol or drugs, or possession and selling of illegal drugs on any of its premises, including individual student rooms in our halls of residence.
- 3.2 The use, possession and sale of illegal drugs is a criminal offence. Accordingly the university undertakes to deal with students, employees and visitors who commit such offences and who may, by their actions, bring the university into disrepute and put others in danger or at risk. As such, appropriate cases will be reported to the police.

3.3 The university acknowledges that it has a duty of care and a responsibility to provide health education and information about the dangers of illicit drug use and will refer those who request and need help to the appropriate support agencies.

4. Definition of Drug Misuse

4.1 Drugs include any substance that it is unlawful to use, possess or sell that results in mental, physical or behavioural changes in the user. This includes controlled prescription drugs where they are used outside of a GP's direction or are knowingly given or sold to another person.

4.2 Substance misuse refers to taking drugs or a controlled substances intermittently or continuously, thereby interfering with an individual's health, study/work capability or conduct, or which affects the environment of others.

5. Education and Prevention

5.1 The university will aim to increase awareness and understanding about issues related to alcohol and drug misuse. This will include:

5.1.1 Providing access to experienced Counsellors,

5.1.2 Staff training, for example personal tutors and resident assistants, to identify and provide support to students,

5.1.3 Holding Wellbeing events throughout the year for both students and employees,

5.1.4 Displaying publicity material aimed at raising student awareness,

5.1.5 Inviting external organisations, for example Drugline, to give talks.

6. Advice and Support

6.1 Support for Students

6.1.1 Students are encouraged to report any matters of concern about their dependency on alcohol or drugs to their Personal Tutor, Student Wellbeing service, Student Union advice centre, their own GP, Campus GP, or their health care provider.

6.1.2 If a student believes that someone else appears to be experiencing difficulties in controlling their use of drugs or alcohol they should encourage them to seek advice and support. If the student is concerned that they may pose a danger to themselves or others, the student should inform their personal tutor or programme leader, or the Student Wellbeing service at the earliest opportunity.

- 6.1.3 The university will aim to support students to undertake any agreed programme of rehabilitation, where it is clear that the student is making efforts to resolve any difficulties.
- 6.1.4 The student will be required to attend a case management meeting which will include the personal tutor, or a Faculty nominee and a representative from the Student Wellbeing service. Where appropriate, a recommendation would be made that the student is required to seek support from their GP, or health care provider. The student will be required to provide evidence of attendance on a recommended rehabilitation programme, and progress made towards recovery.
- 6.1.5 The university will provide support for students who are undertaking a rehabilitation programme, by ensuring that reasonable adjustments, where appropriate are put in place to support the student during their recovery.
- 6.1.6 The student disclosure and the nature of the subsequent support, or intervention will be confidential and there will be no unnecessary disclosure of information.
- 6.1.7 Where a student fails to follow an agreed programme of rehabilitation and where there is little evidence of the student seeking appropriate support, the matter will be referred under the Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study procedure, Fitness to Practice procedure, or the Student Disciplinary Regulations, whichever is deemed to be appropriate.

6.2 Support for Employees

- 6.2.1 The university's Human Resources department has a published policy statement on alcohol and drugs within the workplace. This sets out a process for supporting employees, as well as providing guidance on identifying potential warning signs of substance misuse.

7. Legal actions and Disciplinary Measures

- 7.1 The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, states that it is an offence for the occupier, or someone concerned in 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 of any controlled drug.
- 7.2 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires that the university takes reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of employees, students and visitors. Substance misuse can have an adverse impact upon other people, for example students who live in shared accommodation.

- 7.3 The use of illicit substances is considered as a major offence under the university's Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures. Where students contravene the legislation and university regulations, they may be subject to disciplinary action. Incidents may also be reported to the Police.
- 7.4 With regard to students who live in, or visit University Halls, the University Accommodation Regulations section 6.5 states that possession and/or use of illegal drugs is prohibited and will be dealt with under the university's disciplinary procedures, which could result in the termination of the licence agreement, or other sanctions.

8. Implementation and Review

- 8.1 The Policy is implemented through student training, workshops and awareness raising events.
- 8.2 The use and effectiveness of the Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 8.3 Review date: August 2019

Linked Policies:

Accommodation Regulations

https://docs.gre.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1572154/Sample-Accommodation-Licence-Agreement-2018-19.pdf

Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures

<https://docs.gre.ac.uk/rep/sas/student-disciplinary-procedure>

Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedure

<https://docs.gre.ac.uk/rep/sas/fitness-to-study-policy-and-procedure>

Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedures

<https://docs.gre.ac.uk/rep/sas/fitness-to-practise-procedure>

9. Appendices

Appendix A: Table of Illegal Drugs

Substances within the context of this policy include but are not limited to:

| Class | Drug | Possession | Supply and production |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| A | Crack cocaine, cocaine, ecstasy (MDMA), heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, methadone, methamphetamine (crystal meth) | Up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both | Up to life in prison, an unlimited fine or both |
| B | Amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, codeine, methylphenidate (Ritalin), synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones (eg mephedrone, methoxetamine) | Up to 5 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both | Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both |
| C | Anabolic steroids, benzodiazepines (diazepam), gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), ketamine, piperazines (BZP) | Up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both | Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both |
| Temporary | None* | None, but police can take away a suspected temporary class drug | Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both |

*The Home Office can ban new drugs for 1 year under a 'temporary banning order' while they decide how the drugs should be classified.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing> August 2013

Appendix B: Sources of external support

Young People's Services - drugs and alcohol

West Kent and Medway areas: (Dartford, Gravesham, Maidstone, Medway, Sevenoaks, Swale, Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells)

YPS,

West Kent & Medway, 205 - 217 New Road, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4QA

Tel: (01634) 338640

Fax: (01634) 338649

Help-Lines:

Drug Intervention Programme (DIP) - 0808 8000015

FRANK (National) - 0800 776600

KCA (UK) – Young People (01227) 456744

Websites:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/alcohol-misuse

www.drinkaware.co.uk

Appendix C: Guidance on how to recognise substance misuse

In many cases of substance misuse there are 'warning signs' to indicate a potential problem. These signs may appear singly or in combination, and in varying degrees. It is important to recognise however that these signs can have more innocent explanations too, for example, a diabetic who has not taken their insulin, or an individual with a mental or emotional disorder.

Below is a list of some of the potential warning signs:

1. Study Patterns

- Inconsistency in quality of work
- Lapses in concentration
- Missed deadlines
- Difficulty in recalling instructions
- Taking more time to complete work

2. Absenteeism

- High rate of absenteeism
- Frequent lateness
- Unusually high incidence of colds, flu, upset stomach, headaches
- Leaving classrooms more than necessary (e.g. frequent trips to the toilet)

3. Accidents

- Taking of needless risks
- Disregard for safety of others
- When he/she has caused an accident and considers it "no big deal"

4. Behaviour

- Frequent mood swings
- Appearing anxious or depressed
- Irritable
- Behaving in a way you find suspicious
- Withdrawn or inappropriately talkative

5. Physical signs

- Weariness, exhaustion
- Untidiness
- Yawning excessively
- Blank stare
- Slurred speech
- Sleepiness
- Unsteady walk