

Policy and Procedures Relating to Alcohol and Drug Abuse 2016-2017

1. Alcohol

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Alcoholic drinks are used safely by most people most of the time but their misuse can have adverse consequences for the individual and other people. The University has obligations, both legal and moral, to students and visitors of the University, who make up its community and this policy concerns the steps that can be taken to limit misuse of alcohol and deal with the consequences of such misuse.

1.1.2 Alcohol misuse can also result from an addiction, which is regarded by some as an illness. For the purpose of the policy, alcohol dependence is defined as:

“The habitual drinking of intoxicating liquor by a student, whereby their ability to perform is impaired, and their attendance is interfered with, or they endanger the safety of others”.

The University will always encourage those students who are ill as a result of alcohol misuse to seek appropriate treatment, when it is known or brought to the attention of University authorities/Student Support Services Manager.

1.1.3 Where conduct or work performance falls below an acceptable standard due to the misuse of alcohol, this will be dealt with using the University’s disciplinary procedures if necessary, independently of any steps taken to help with an alcohol related problem.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 The policy applies to all students of the University.

1.3 Aims of the policy

1.3.1 To provide a healthy and safe working environment for all students, and visitors.

1.3.2 To help those with an alcohol problem to be restored to health quickly to the benefit of themselves and the University, and to return to an acceptable pattern of working.

1.4 Availability of Alcohol in the University

1.4.1 The University has licences to sell intoxicating liquor for consumption on the premises. The University permits liquor to be sold only to students, staff, their bona fide guests and all delegates attending conferences or functions.

1.4.2 As per the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Noise Act 1996, there are five actions that are illegal here and anywhere else:

- Serving alcoholic drink to a customer who is already drunk in the opinion of the licensee or their agents serving;
- Serving alcoholic drink to persons under the legal age limit of 18 years
- Allowing a person to be on the premises, if that person appears in the opinion of the licensee or their agents to be intoxicated;
- Allowing gambling to take place;
- Allowing arguments or unsociable behaviour to take place.

1.5 University Policy

1.5.1 The University expects its students to comply with the law. University licensees are required to attend a suitable training course, and trained staff should take all practicable measures to prevent disturbances during or following opening hours.

1.5.2 The licensed premises in the University are normally open during the evening with extensions during term time for the union bar until 2:00am on some occasions. Whether a lunchtime drink is in order or not is for the individual to decide in the light of the activities to be undertaken in the remainder of the working day.

1.6 Health and Safety

1.6.1 The operation of many types of machinery and the conduct of many types of laboratory work are obvious examples where any reduction in alertness or disturbance of critical faculties could compromise the health and safety of the operator or other people. In these situations, the University requires you to refrain from drinking alcohol earlier that day, and not too much in the evening before and of course, drinking no alcohol during working hours. If an accident did occur, evidence of recent consumption of alcohol would be likely to tell strongly against the person or persons involved.

1.6.2 Managers who are responsible for health and safety must consider which of the activities within their jurisdiction ought to be defined as alcohol-free and so define them. It is of course important that these decisions be known to all concerned because non-compliance would lead to suspension from the activity and to disciplinary action.

1.6.3 Occasions like the Freshers' Ball, May Ball and similar events, which are intended to be inclusive, should allow all people to attend them without embarrassment and intimidation from drunken behaviour from misuse of alcohol.

1.6.4 On field trips, whether educational or recreational, somebody must be responsible for the health and safety of the participants and this responsibility requires reasonable steps to be taken to ensure students are aware of the ramifications of the misuse of alcohol.

2. Drugs

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The University will seek to increase the understanding of its members about the implications and probable consequences of the abuse of illegal drugs, the misuse of medicinal drugs and the use of “legal highs”.

2.1.2 For the purpose of the policy, drug dependence is defined as:

“The habitual taking of drugs by a student other than prescribed as medication, or habitually exceeding the dosage of prescribed drugs, whereby the employee’s ability to perform is impaired, and their attendance at work is interfered with or they endanger the safety of others”.

2.2 'Legal highs'

2.2.1 ‘Legal Highs’ are substances which produce the same, or similar effects to drugs such as cocaine and ecstasy, but are not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act. They are however, considered illegal under current medicines legislation to sell, supply or advertise for “human consumption”.

2.3 The law

2.3.1 The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and Drugs Act 2005 classify drugs according to the harm they can do to an individual as well as the penalties that can be given by a court.

2.3.2 If a police officer has reasonable grounds to suspect that someone is in possession of a controlled drug, the officer has the right to search that person, their home and their vehicle and seize anything which seems to be evidence of an offence. The police have a power of arrest for anyone found in possession of drugs.

2.3.3 A person prosecuted in possession of small scale dealing (which can include giving drugs to a friend) will not necessarily go to prison, but could end up with a criminal record which can make getting a job very difficult and affect travel to some countries, including USA.

2.4 University Policy

2.4.1 The University will apply zero tolerance to the possession and abuse of illegal substances and “legal highs”, and the misuse of medicinal drugs.

2.4.2 The University recognises its responsibility to comply with the law and, in particular, to cooperate with the appropriate external agencies and authorities in any action required to ensure that no criminal activity takes place on campus.

2.4.3 Under Section 6 of the Terms & Conditions of Residence, access to bedrooms is permitted to University staff for the purposes of safety & welfare. This includes assisting relevant authorities including the Police, to gain access when there is reasonable suspicion of contravention of University policy.

2.4.4 In the case of possession of controlled drugs the University recognises that a disciplinary approach is required that reflects the current legal position.

3. Alcohol, Drugs and Work Performance

3.1 Identifying people to who need help

3.1.1 If the individual repeatedly turns up in such a state, disciplinary warnings or other actions may be justified. These can be issued through the procedures that already exist for dealing with staff. If alcohol or drugs are believed to be the contributing factors, the individual will be encouraged to discuss his/her dependency problem.

3.1.2 The indication that someone needs help with an alcohol or drug problem will normally be raised by that person's performance or behaviour. This is consistent with the view that people's private habits become the business of the University if they interfere with their own performance or affect other people's work activities undesirably. Supervisors and colleagues will normally notice if someone shows signs of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If lowered performance or other behaviour apparently influenced by alcohol or drugs is consistently repeated, this should be brought to the attention of the line managers or HR.

3.1.3 Any member of staff who is concerned that he/she may have a dependency problem is encouraged to seek help and advice voluntarily from his/her General Practitioner and/or the University's Occupational Health Nurse.

3.1.4 The University will regard anyone seeking help as having a health problem and will cooperate to enable appropriate help/treatment to be obtained.

3.1.5 Confidentiality will be ensured at all times, as far as possible.

3.1.6 If because of alcohol or drug dependency a person's performance, work and/or behaviour is suffering and this would normally result in disciplinary action being taken, such action will be suspended for an appropriate period during treatment. However, staff refusing treatment, where appropriate, will be advised that unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with in accordance with normal University disciplinary procedures. Such procedures may result in the termination of an individual's appointment.

3.1.7 If because of substance dependency a member of staff behaves in such a way that they may endanger themselves or others, prompt corrective action will be taken as necessary to prevent damage being done. In this situation the alcohol or drug problem of the member of staff will be taken into account but it will not automatically exempt the person concerned from the normal consequences of his/her poor performance or serious misconduct.

3.2 Putting People in Contact with Help

3.2.3 The University cannot compel a student to seek medical advice, still less act on it. However, if performance is sufficiently impaired or explicit rules are being broken, the University will encourage the individual to seek and act upon appropriate advice. This may be done at the same time as suspension in the interests of safety and as already stated disciplinary proceedings may be appropriate.

3.2.3 The Student Support Services Manager and the Nurse can provide information and details on counselling, support and wellbeing.

Support

The following local and national organisations offer confidential support and counselling to anyone with alcohol and/or drug problems:

- Clinic – 01285 652531, extension 2216
www.clinic@RAU.ac.uk
- The Validium Student Assistance Programme - 0800 3584858 www.validium.com
- Independence Trust – 0845 8638323
www.independencetrust.co.uk
- Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol Service – 01452 553343
E-mail: infor@qdas.co.uk
- Drinkline – 0800 917 8282

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.alcoholics-anonimous.org.uk

Narcotics Anonymous – 0845 373 3366

www.ukna.org

Young People's Substance Misuse Service – 01452 503186

www.webgini.com

NHS Direct – 0845 4647

www.nhsdirect.nhs.com

Contact us

For any queries concerning this policy please contact Student Support Services