

Student Policy Statement on Alcohol and Drugs

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1. Introduction

The University of Greenwich (the university) is committed to providing a to provide a safe and healthy environment for all its students, employees, affiliates, contractors and visitors.

The university recognises that alcohol and drugs will play a part in some peoples' lives, 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 put at risk.

This policy applies to all students and visitors to the university, on all campuses. The university has a separate [policy statement for staff](#).

2. Aims of the policy

To clearly state the university's position on the use of alcohol and drugs.

The university will:

- Ensure compliance with appropriate legislation;
- Have clear rules regarding alcohol and drugs;
- Inform students about the adverse health effects of alcohol and drugs;
- Encourage the early identification of students who may be experiencing problematic alcohol or drug use;
- Provide support for students experiencing problematic alcohol and drug use.

3. Definitions

- **Alcohol misuse.** Alcohol Misuse is defined as any drinking, either intermittent or continual which interferes with a person's health and/or social functioning and/or work capability or conduct.
- **Drugs.** Any drug or psychoactive substance, whether illegal, prescribed or over the counter or solvents such as glue, butane, etc. In the case of prescribed and over the counter drugs, their possession and use is acknowledged as legitimate if taken responsibly and as per the instruction of the GP or Pharmacist where appropriate.
- **Drug misuse.** The use of illegal drugs or psychoactive substances, the deliberate use of prescribed or over the counter drugs (when not for a medical condition) and the use of solvents, either intermittent or continual which interferes with a person's health and/or social functioning and/or work capability or conduct.

4. Policy statement

- a) 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.
- b) The production, possession and supply of drugs is a criminal offence. The university may take disciplinary action in response to any misconduct by those who commit such offences and who may, by their actions, bring the university into disrepute or put others at risk. As such, appropriate cases will be reported to the police.
- c) The university acknowledges that it has a duty of care and a responsibility to provide evidenced-based health information about drug and alcohol use and will refer those who request help to the appropriate support agencies.

5. Education

The university is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles to its students and recognises that many students will consume alcohol in a safe and controlled environment. However, the university has a duty of care to ensure the necessary guidance and support is available if the consumption of alcohol becomes a problem for that student or for others.

The university does not, however, condone the production, possession or supply of drugs in any way and may take strict disciplinary action against anyone who is found in production, possession, or supply of illegal substances. Students who are identified as having problematic use of substances will be signposted to specialist support.

Problematic alcohol and drug use is linked to issues such as; ill-health, absence, reduced work performance, accidents and unacceptable behaviour.

Advice and guidance on the use of alcohol and drugs is available to students via:

- [Student Wellbeing Services](#)
- [Greenwich Students' Union \(GSU\) Policy of Drug and Alcohol Misuse](#)
- [GSU Healthy Living](#)

The university is committed to providing evidence based, balanced information about drug and alcohol use. This includes:

- Providing access to experienced Counsellors and Mental Health professionals.
- Staff guidance, so they feel confident in signposting students with problematic substance use to appropriate resources.
- Promoting student awareness at appropriate times throughout the year.
- Displaying health promotion material.
- Inviting relevant external organisations to offer evidence based, good practice drug education.

6. County Lines

County Lines is where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries, usually by young people who are coerced into it by gangs.

Students that are being coerced or exploited in this way, perhaps to move drugs or cash, can reach out for support and speak anonymously with our [Report and Support team](#).

The university is committed to supporting students who are the victims of County Lines exploitation.

7. Support and advice

Problematic alcohol and drug use may become apparent through several means, the following examples (particularly in combination) may result in problems being suspected. However, be aware that these elements may also have other causes:

- Persistent short-term or unauthorised absence.
- Persistent lateness.
- Poor working relationships.
- Deterioration in appearance.
- Reduced work performance.
- Poor or unacceptable behaviour.
- Absence due to ill health.

Frequently, peers are the first to notice if a student is experiencing problematic substance use.

- If a student or member of staff recognises that a student is experiencing problematic substance use, they are encouraged to disclose their concerns to their personal tutor, [Student Wellbeing Service](#), the [Student Union advice service](#) or GP/health care provider.
- If a student believes that someone else may be experiencing problematic use of substances, they may encourage them to seek advice and support.
- If a student is concerned that someone's misuse of substances may pose a danger to themselves or others, they are encouraged to speak to their personal tutor, programme leader or the [Student Wellbeing Service](#).

8. Supporting a student enrolled in a substance misuse programme

The university will endeavour to support students who are undertaking a programme of rehabilitation with an external service provider, where the student is making efforts to resolve any difficulties.

The university will work with students who are undertaking a rehabilitation programme with one-to-one casework support and a Greenwich Inclusion Plan, should reasonable adjustments be indicated.

Where a student fails to follow an agreed programme of rehabilitation and/or where there is little evidence of the student seeking appropriate support, the matter will be referred under the Fitness to Study procedure, Fitness to Practice procedure, or the Student Disciplinary Regulations (as appropriate).

9. Legal actions and disciplinary measures

- a) 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.
- b) 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.
- c) The use of illegal 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.
- d) For 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.

10. Monitoring and review

This Policy will take effect from June 2024 and will be reviewed every three years (or earlier, where required).

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11. Related policies

- [Accommodation Regulations](#)
- [Student Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures](#)
- [Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure and-procedure](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedures](#)

Appendix A: Table of illegal drugs

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

Class	Drugs include:	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, gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB) gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), ketamine, methylphenidate (Ritalin) synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones (for example 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), khat, nitrous oxide (laughing gas), piperazines (BZP).	Up to 2 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both (except anabolic steroids - it's not an offence to possess them for personal use)	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both
Temporary	The government can ban new drugs for one year under a 'temporary banning order' while they decide how the drugs should be classified.	None, but police can take away a suspected temporary class drug	Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both

Source: www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing (information correct as at April 2024)

Appendix B: Sources of external support

- [Forward Trust](#)
A social business with charitable status that empowers people to break the often interlinked cycles of crime and addiction to move forward with their lives.
- [Medway Treatment and Recovery Service \(RIVER\)](#)
RIVER helps people who have issues with drugs and/or alcohol and want to make a positive change. They also support the family and friends of people who are worried about their loved one's substance use.
- [Change, Grow, Live](#)
Change, Grow, Live (formerly CRI) is a charity providing treatment and support to vulnerable people. It champions people who have faced hardships like addiction and delivers drug and alcohol services across England and Wales.
- [Open Road](#)
The Young Persons' Service in Medway is here to help if you're looking to talk to someone about alcohol or drugs and how they might be affecting you.
- [FRANK](#)
Honest information about drugs. Find out everything you need to know about drugs, their effects and the law. Talk to Frank for facts, support and advice on drugs and alcohol today. Freephone: 0300 123 6600

Websites:

- [NHS: Alcohol misuse-misuse](#)
- [NHS: Getting help for drug addiction](#)
- [www.drinkaware.co.uk](#)