

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of the policy is to prevent students, staff and visitors from the use/misuse of both illegal and prescribed drugs. The policy also covers the abuse of any other illegal substance which can be dangerous when used inappropriately or excessively.

Position statement

The college acknowledges the fact that drug use and abuse is a current and significant issue which concerns the whole community. In response to this, the policy aims to address the needs of students, staff, parents/guardians and the wider community. The college's role is to inform, discuss and present choices rather than to proscribe, judge or blame.

In this document the term 'drug' will be used to cover the misuse of illegal and medicinal drugs, alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances for classes of illegal drugs (as outlined by the Misuse of Drugs Act).

The policy

The college shall be an environment entirely free from illegal drugs, the paraphernalia of drugs, substances intended to resemble drugs and the "culture" of drugs.

The college will promote a safe, healthy and supportive environment for staff, students and visitors, and will promote supportive and caring harm-minimisation strategies which reduce the risks associated with drug use or misuse,

A breach of this policy will be regarded as a serious breach of discipline.

Legal responsibilities

The college has a responsibility to uphold the law in all matters. Working within the framework provided by the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1971* and other relevant legislation, the college is clear that the supply, possession and/or use of illegal drugs on its premises is unacceptable.

Implementing the policy

A programme of education relating to drug use and misuse will form part of the wider health programme delivered to all students through the tutorial programme and other means. The issues will be addressed in an open, frank and positive way as a vital part of student learning. The college will continue to actively co-operate with a range of external groups and agencies in order to deliver a health and safety programme. Appropriate training will be given to relevant college staff to support the implementation of the policy.

Discipline

The college has procedures for dealing with breaches of discipline for both staff and students. Drug-related incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant discipline procedures.

Welfare responsibilities

The college has a duty of care to its community and a responsibility for ensuring its welfare. It is important that action is taken to protect people where their well-being is affected or put at risk by the drug use or misuse of others. Further, it is essential that students and staff should feel able to seek advice, support, guidance and counselling about drug-related concerns and problems without fear or reprimand or punishment. This, in turn, requires respect for, and a commitment to confidentiality, clarity and openness concerning the limits of this, and a widespread knowledge of appropriate internal and external advice and referral channels.

Scope of the policy

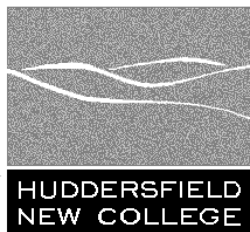
The policy applies to students, staff and visitors to the college site.

Responsibility and review

The policy is the responsibility of the Pastoral Group via the Assistant Principal for Staffing and Student Support and Guidance, and it shall be reviewed every two years.

Associated policies and documents

Personnel procedures (Staff)
Staff code of conduct
Smoking policy
Student disciplinary procedures
Guidelines for staff dealing with suspected drug use or misuse



HUDDERSFIELD NEW COLLEGE

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH SUSPECTED DRUG USE OR MISUSE

This procedure is intended to give guidance in cases of drug use for staff working in the college. It is hoped that the guidance will further enhance the tutorial and curriculum provision which already exists.

Introduction

In this document the term 'drug' will be used to cover the misuse of illegal and medicinal drugs, alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances for classes of illegal drugs (as outlined by the Misuse of Drugs Act).

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that cases of drug use

- are managed in a manner that gives central importance to the welfare of the user.
- are handled in a manner consistent with the view that such users may be at risk.
- are treated with consistency across college.
- have the benefit of the co-ordinated resources of the college, police, LEA, Connexions and the other helping agencies.

Advice

When a student is discovered to have been using drugs the first priority is to establish whether any medical help is required. Depending on the circumstances this may be obtained from the emergency services, from the school nurse if available, or nominated first-aiders.

In cases where the suspicion of drug use or possession is confirmed and supported by evidence, and the student is under 18 years of age; their parents/guardians should be notified at the earliest opportunity. Parents/guardians should be informed that help and guidance are available, and that the college will need to take action.

There may be legitimate grounds for not immediately informing parents/guardians, for example, if it would appear likely that parents/guardians may cause physical injury to the student.

Discipline

The College will take very seriously any situation where students either use drugs on college premises, or where as a result of drug use, a student's work or the work of others is affected. Any situation of suspected drug use, possession or supply on college premises will be regarded as an act of serious misconduct under the college disciplinary procedures.

Support for drug users

- Individuals who place themselves in a position where their safety at college and/or the safety of others may be adversely affected by their taking drugs immediately prior to or while working may be in breach of Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act. Any breach of such law will result in disciplinary action being taken.

- Where prescribed medications impair the ability to work safely, the student or staff member should inform their teacher, personal tutor or line manager so that work of a hazardous nature can be avoided.

The college will assess the options available depending upon the seriousness of the incident. Clearly the health and safety of all students and staff has to be of major importance. However, care should be taken to ensure the relevance of punishment to the welfare of the user. An immediate punitive response may simply push drug use underground and place the problem elsewhere.

What is serious?

The question of whether or not an incident of drug use is serious is obviously a crucial one. To a large extent this must be left to the discretion, professionalism and experience of the Senior Management Team. Before any action is taken the following should be considered:

- Is this a one-off event which needs to be dealt with and perhaps monitored?
- Has the user got a drug problem? (Drug use is the main preoccupation with everything else secondary).
- Is outside professional help required?
- Is the drug use part of a more complex problem which may need support from other agencies?
- Is the user supplying drugs to others in or around college?

What should I do?

- If a student approaches a member of staff to confide a drug problem, the student should be encouraged, sensitively, to take up counselling via the Open Door Service or appropriate outside agencies such as **Drug Sense** or **Outlook – Lifeline Kirklees**.
- Where staff become suspicious about the possibility of a student having a drug problem, they are advised to share their concerns with a Student Support Manager who will agree a course of action. Where a drug problem is confirmed, the individual shall be advised to seek counselling support as above.
- The Student Welfare Nurse and Healthy College Co-ordinator will maintain links with relevant agencies to provide access to information on drug-related issues through the tutorial system and special events, or assistance for individual students and/or the college as required.
- Appropriate resources will be maintained in college to support student learning on drug-related issues.

Confidentiality

Clearly involvement in drug use can have serious consequences for the user's social and academic development. Under normal circumstance, a student's parents/guardians would be informed but there may be legitimate grounds for not immediately informing parents/guardians eg. if it would appear that parents/guardians may cause physical injury to the student.

There is no legal duty to inform the police about the use, possession or sale of drugs. However, under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, it is an offence to allow premises to be used for the supply or use of controlled drugs. The Principal has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent such activities continuing.

The decision on whether or not to contact the police rests with the Principal. The police will be able to offer support and advice if required. At all times the police will maintain a low profile approach, the main concern being the welfare of the student.

Discovering and confiscating substances in or around college premises

If a tutor/other responsible adult comes into possession of an illegal drug, he/she should act promptly. **If possible remove, receive or retrieve the substance in the presence of a witness.** Retrieving substances from a student should be done within the bounds of professional discretion e.g. without physical contact.

The substance should be taken immediately to a member of the Senior Management Team. Should this not be possible the substance must be kept in a secure place. It should be placed in a sealed envelope with date, time and place noted on it. There should be two names on the envelope the finder and the witness. A record of place, date, time and circumstances should be kept.

The Senior Management Team will decide whether to:

- (a) Destroy the substance
- (b) Give the substance to the police. If this is done there is no legal obligation to give names or how it was received. What information to give is a decision that rests with the Principal. Good liaison between the college and the police is of vital importance.

There may be a situation where a substance finds its way into the possession of a member of staff alongside the need for medical assistance. In such a case, the substance should be handed to the emergency services. If at all possible, this should be witnessed.

It may come to the attention of the college that drugs are available in the local area. What action the college takes will be determined by the Principal. *There is no legal requirement for the college to take any action.*

In the case of rumours about drug use, the Principal has discretion to seek verification and obtain Police advice. If the sale of drugs in the local area is confirmed the Principal will pass the information to the police.

Injection equipment must always be handled with care. There is a 'sharps bin' in the 'Open Door' room.

Document History

Version	Date	Author	Comments	Authorised