

Student Drugs Policy	
Operational Owner:	Head of Security Services
Executive Owner:	Chief Student Officer
Effective date:	1 May 2021
Review date:	31 April 2024
Related documents:	Student Drugs Policy – Supporting Procedures Student Disciplinary Regulations Residents’ Guide and Conditions of Residence Guide to disciplinary action in residences Procedure for Support to Study Regulations for Fitness to Practice

Approval History

Version	Reviewed by	Brief reason for review	Approved by	Date
1	James Acres, Commercial Lawyer David Carey, Senior Residential Warden Mark Chatterton, Head of Security Services Melaine Coward, Head of School of Health Sciences Lucy Evans, CSO Michael Hassell, Equality and Diversity Adviser Glenn Moulton, Head of OSCAR Matthew Purcell, Director of Health and Safety Laura Smythson, Head of Wellbeing and Welfare Judy Turner, OSCAR Case Manager Chris Ward, Wellbeing Adviser	Update required and re-purposing of policy to be about support and education of the use of drugs as well as disciplinary	Executive Board	29/4/2021

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of this policy and related procedures is to set out the University's approach to drug awareness and the misuse of drugs and provide information on educative activities, disciplinary action and pastoral care which may be applicable.

1.1.2 This policy seeks to align with the Government's National Drug Strategy 2017 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-strategy-2017>) which is focused on reducing the harm and cost that alcohol and drugs misuse can cause in society.

1.1.3 The aims of this Policy are to:

- affirm the University's commitment and legal obligations to providing a safe and healthy environment for its students, staff and visitors
- educate students about the risks of drugs misuse and the consequences, through awareness and information programmes, noting that criminal convictions for the misuse or supply of a controlled substance can restrict future career and life chances.
- Support those affected with drug-related problems, especially facilitating early intervention encourage students to seek advice, help and assistance voluntarily.
- Identify circumstances in which disciplinary action will be instituted for drugs supply or misuse and referral to the police.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 The policy applies to all students and provides an overview of the responsibilities and actions required of students and stakeholders to respond to students involved in drug misuse. The objective is two-fold namely to make students aware of the risks of drugs and the support available to help them and for the University to take appropriate action regarding their use within the context of that support and wellbeing alongside the University Student Disciplinary Regulations.

1.3.1 Definitions

1.3.1 The Government's National Drug Strategy 2017

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-strategy-2017>) is focused on reducing the harm and cost that alcohol and drugs misuse can cause in society. The Strategy sets out expectations for action from a wide range of partners, including those in education.

1.3.2 **Controlled substances** are defined as: 'illegal drugs, prescribed and non-prescribed medication, solvents and new psychoactive substances'. Substances covered in this document are those that come under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reducing-drugs-misuse-and-dependence>

For the purpose of this document, we use the term 'drugs' to mean controlled substances.

1.3.3 **Offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971** include (amongst others) the possession, supply, or production of controlled drugs.

- Possession of a controlled drug - occurs when an individual is in physical possession or in control of the substance and had knowledge of possession of the item, even if they did not know it was a controlled drug.
- Supplying, or offering to supply, a controlled drug - includes supply and distribution and does not require proof of payment or reward.
- Production of a controlled drug - is when an individual has some identifiable participation in the process of producing, by manufacture, cultivation, or any other method, a controlled

drug

For criminal penalties see: www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing

1.3.5 **OSCAR** – Office of Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations (www.surrey.ac.uk/oscar).

2 Policy Principles

2.1 The principles underpinning the policy reflect the University's diverse responsibilities. The University:

- a) will aim to provide a safe, healthy and educative environment for its students and staff;
- b) will seek to promote knowledge, awareness and understanding to enable its community to make informed choices;
- c) will seek to encourage supportive and caring harm minimisation strategies which reduce the risks associated with drug use/misuse including promoting drug free lives and recovery where appropriate; and
- d) will not tolerate students while registered with the University and have procedures to manage:
 - i) the possession or misuse of illegal drugs
 - ii) the supply of any illegal drugs
 - iii) any other acts contravening the misuse of drugs act or related legislation.

The implementation these principles are detailed as follows

2.2 Support and Advice (see 2.1. a. and c.)

2.2.1 The University regards an individual's dependency on drugs as a health problem.

2.2.2 If a student reports the matter to a member of staff the University, they would expect to refer the student to the Centre for Wellbeing or Security in an emergency.

2.2.3 For those wishing to discuss problems related to the use of drugs, advice is available from the Centre for Wellbeing and recommended external agencies, such as [Surrey Drug and Alcohol Care](#).

2.2.4 If a student believes that someone has difficulty in controlling their use of drugs, they should encourage them to seek support. If they are concerned that they are a danger to themselves or others, it is recommended they contact the Centre for Wellbeing, an external agency or their personal tutor, supervisor or residential warden. If they wish to report this anonymously they can do so using [Report + Support](#). In an emergency they should immediately contact Security (01483 683333) or Emergency Services (999).

2.2.5 The University will offer students' guidance as to where support is available, for example Centre for Wellbeing. The University offers a range of advice, guidance and support services to students with drugs concerns.

2.2.6 Additional help can be found on the following websites:

[Talk to Frank](#)

[Drug Scope](#)

[NHS](#)

[Catalyst Support](#)

[Surrey Drug and Alcohol Care](#)

2.3 Promote knowledge and awareness (see 2.1. b)

2.3.1 The University will endeavor to increase awareness and understanding of drug-related issues. This includes:

- raising student awareness with links to established help sites e.g. www.talktofrank.com, www.drugwise.org.uk;
- promoting awareness of the dangers of the use of drugs, including through educational materials;
- inviting representatives from our partner agencies including the Police Liaison Officer to give talks at 'Fresher' events and other appropriate forums; and
- ensuring the University's accommodation license agreement specifically prohibits the misuse

of drugs on University premises.

- 2.4. Summary of Procedures to respond to drug misuse (to be reviewed alongside the Supporting Procedures guidance)
- 2.4.1 Any student found having misused or suspected of having misused drugs will have the opportunity to engage with University and external support services. The University's priority is to safeguard the wellbeing of the individual and all other students and staff.
- 2.4.2 Each case will be assessed individually, however, any student found in possession of, using, producing or supplying illegal drugs (or what are reasonably suspected to be illegal drugs), whether on our off campus, will normally be subject to disciplinary action and/or fitness to practice. These disciplinary actions could include mandatory drugs awareness/education programmes, notice to leave University accommodation, suspension or expulsion from the University.
- 2.4.3 The Policy covers all students but specific expectation of behaviors in Student Accommodation are outlined in the [Residents' Guide and Conditions for Residence](#).
- 2.4.4 The University will also report any significant offences, which could result in criminal prosecution. This will be communicated as part of this Policy.
- 2.4.5 If a student is convicted of a drug-related offence, there may be additional implications for their future employment and travel, including their visa. Students should be aware of the potential implications for professional suitability, professional registration etc., especially regarding professional qualifications.
- 2.4.6 Where breaches of the University's Student Drugs Policy are suspected, action will be taken following the University's Student Disciplinary Procedures or Fitness to Practice Procedures, as appropriate,
- 2.4.7 Any person who is not a student or member of staff of the University found on University premises, possessing or suspected of being involved with drugs will be removed from the premises immediately. Where appropriate the police may be informed, and the person concerned could be banned from the University. Any member of the University who had invited them on to the premises will be subject to investigation themselves for allowing the incident to take place.

3 Governance Requirements

3.1 Responsibility

- 3.1.1 Overall responsibility for the University's response to student use of drugs rests with the Chief Student Officer.
- 3.1.2 All members of the University are expected to play an appropriate role in supporting students to promote a safe, healthy and supportive environment for its students and staff as set out in the aims and principles of this policy. Support and advice are detailed above.

3.2 Implementation / Communication Plan

- 3.2.1 The University will endeavour to increase awareness and understanding of drug-related issues (see awareness section under Principles) through communications, training, inductions and joint initiatives with the Students' Union, in coordination with national drugs training organisations or local police.
- 3.2.2 This Policy will be publicised to staff via the Leaders' Alert and SurreyNet. There will be direct email communication to colleagues in relevant offices.
- 3.2.2 This Policy will be publicised to students through direct communication, through MySurrey and through collaboration with the Student's Union.

3.3 Exceptions to this Policy

- 3.3.1 Providing a safe environment and response to known risks in order to reasonably protect students from harm is required by legislation. There are no exceptions to this Policy. Each case will be treated in line with this Policy and individual circumstances.

3.4 Review and Update

- 3.4.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if a change in legislation requires that this is necessary. Any minor changes, such as changes to roles, will be undertaken by the operational owner.

3.5 Legislative context

- 3.5.1 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on the University to do what is reasonably practicable to protect the health safety, and welfare of staff, students and visitors. www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37
- 3.5.2 Drug misuse can have an impact on the health and safety of an individual and for others, for example students in shared accommodation or staff having to handle illegal substances and drug-related paraphernalia.
- 3.5.3 In line with the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1968/67/contents) and Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/2/contents/enacted), the University has a responsibility to uphold the law. Students who contravene the legislation outlined above, may be subject to disciplinary action by the University and this may include reporting incidents to the Police.
- 3.5.4 The following government information is relevant: UK Government's National Drug Strategy (2017) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drug-strategy-2017>
- 3.5.5 A list of controlled drugs, classification and legal penalties is available from: www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing
www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlled-drugs-list

3.6 Stakeholder Statements

3.6.1 Equality:

The University is strongly committed to equality of opportunity and the promotion of diversity for the benefit of all members of the University community. The University's approach is to promote equality across the full range of its activities, in employment, teaching and learning and as a partner working with and within local, national and international communities. Equality Analysis is a process which examines how the impact of the policy has been considered on the diverse characteristics and needs of everyone it affects. This policy has been reviewed and no negative impact on equality has been identified.

3.6.2 Health & Safety:

The ability of a student to adequately and safely pursue studies, particularly involving 'practical' work, while being under the influence of drugs may be significantly impaired.

The University has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its employees, students and others at work (see legislative context).

The University has procedures to address such matters under the [Procedure for Support to Study](#) and [Regulations for Fitness to Practice](#) managed by OSCAR.