



UNIVERSITY OF HULL

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

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University of Hull

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Introduction

1. This policy has been agreed with the campus trade unions and aims to provide support and guidance to members of staff and managers, in all cases of alcohol or substance related problems at work. Substances are defined as drugs, both prescribed and non-prescribed, and solvents. This policy applies to all members of staff. While this policy is to be followed by all staff of the university, it does not form part of a member of staff's contract of employment.
2. While this is a joint policy on drugs and alcohol, the situation regarding drugs will be distinguished from that of alcohol where appropriate due to the legal position on their possession and supply. In addition, problems may also arise from the misuse of certain prescribed drugs, or legal solvents.
3. The University is concerned that the use of alcohol or other substances should not impair health and behaviour to the extent that could have an effect on safety, conduct, or work performance.
4. The University operates a 'no alcohol or drugs' policy for staff performing roles where safety is critical, for example for those staff who drive as part of their work, operate specialist machinery or equipment or handle potentially dangerous substances. All other members of staff are expected to behave in a sensible manner with regard to alcohol so that they may conduct their duties appropriately at all times.

Aims and objectives

5. This policy aims to:
 - Minimise problems at work arising from alcohol and substances.
 - Support those affected with alcohol and substance related problems by encouraging treatment where possible.
 - Support staff in dealing with alcohol and substance misuse problems by providing a clear procedure.
 - Clarify the circumstances in which disciplinary action may be instigated.
 - Clarify the circumstances in which legal action would be taken.
 - Ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff.

Confidentiality

6. Confidentiality will be maintained, so far as is possible, in all cases where an alcohol or drug problem is suspected, and will be maintained throughout the handling of the case.

Recognising alcohol or substance abuse

7. It can be very difficult to recognise when an individual may be suffering from alcohol or substance abuse, as there are such a wide variety of physical symptoms, and related behavioural changes, many of which could be mistaken for other conditions. It is important therefore that any concerns are raised confidentially with HR or Occupational Health as soon as possible.

Managing alcohol and substance related problems

8. Where a person's dependency continually or repeatedly interferes with their work, the University will treat such a case as an ill-health issue. Problem drinking or substance misuse may be an illness and, as a result, the sufferer requires special assistance and treatment to assist recovery.
9. Cases that are not related to a physical or psychological dependence, but are simply isolated cases of intoxication, resulting in unacceptable or even dangerous behaviour, will be regarded as a conduct issue, which may lead to disciplinary action.
10. Except in cases where there is an immediate risk to person or property, managers should contact HR for support and guidance, before taking any action.
11. Health and safety responsibility rests with the manager for each area. Where there is an immediate safety concern as a result of alcohol or substance abuse a manager may require an individual to leave their place of work for the day. Any suspension would be on full pay.
12. Where more general concerns are identified, the manager should raise these with the individual member of staff. Help should be offered in a supportive and confidential way. The manager should explain the basis of the concern and the employee should be asked to comment. If appropriate, the manager should offer help through the Occupational Health Service and also ensure that the employee is aware that they are free to make use of the University Counselling Service, Focus. Outside sources of help should also be mentioned. The discussion should be confined to issues directly related to the employee's work performance and behaviour unless the employee volunteers other matters.

13. Where offers of help are not accepted, the manager should also advise the employee of the seriousness of the situation and the possible disciplinary consequences.
14. Where an offer of help is accepted, the individual should be referred to Occupational Health who will investigate the problem and identify appropriate help, which may involve referral to appropriate specialist agencies.
15. For work activity, which is safety critical, managers should ensure an individual risk assessment is conducted where an employee continues working while undergoing treatment or rehabilitation and the appropriate action taken. Care should be taken to ensure confidentiality throughout this process wherever possible. Advice and guidance on this may be sought from the University's Health and Safety team.
16. Alcohol or substance abuse in itself will not lead to disciplinary action by the University. However, where such instances impact on an individual's ability to undertake their duties appropriately, disciplinary action will be considered. In such cases, the employee's drug or alcohol problem would be taken into account although not necessarily as a mitigating factor. Consideration would also need to be given to the nature and seriousness of the conduct or performance problem and to the willingness of the individual to seek or accept help and support given.

Support for individuals with alcohol or substance dependency

17. Employees who recognise that they may have an alcohol or substance problem should be encouraged to seek help and treatment voluntarily. This assistance may include help from Occupational Health, their Line Manager, Human Resources Advisor, University Counselling Service, Focus, Trade Union Representative, or any outside agency. Ideally, medical help should be sought.
18. Absence for treatment and rehabilitation will be treated as sickness absence.
19. Where an individual is undergoing treatment for alcohol abuse and is able to attend for work but unable to undertake the full duties of their role, consideration will be given to making a temporary adjustment to their duties. Such consideration may also include a temporary transfer to another role, following discussion with the employee concerned. A health and safety risk assessment will be carried out in this case.

Possession of illegal substances

20. Possession of illegal substances is a criminal offence and employees are not permitted to bring, possess, or store such items on any University property. Any employee who is found to be in possession of illegal substances will face disciplinary action and will be reported to the Police. Where applicable, a member of staff's professional bodies will also be notified.

Trafficking or supply of illegal drugs

21. Any such offence suspected by the University may be reported to the Police and the University will co-operate in any investigation as required. Any employee suspected of trafficking or supplying illegal drugs will be immediately suspended on full pay pending the outcome of the University's investigation into the matter which may lead to disciplinary action.

Equality

22. This policy has been produced with the aim of supporting the University's overall strategy to embrace and welcome individuals from all backgrounds on an equal and non discriminatory basis. When using this policy, the University expects members of staff to treat all colleagues fairly and with respect and will take action against acts which breach the policy on diversity.

Data protection

23. The data collected in the course of following this policy will be used for the support and management of each case, and for the purposes of monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. Paper records will be kept on individual staff's central HR file and where necessary, in secure records within other relevant departments such as Occupational Health. Only staff who need the information in order to carry out the duties of their post will have access to this data. The information will be kept on paper record for the life of those records, details of which can be found in the Policy on Data Protection for Employees of the University.

Communication

24. The University aims to raise staff awareness of their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

Monitoring

25. The effectiveness of this policy will be ensured by continuous monitoring, regular review and consultation with the campus trade unions. It will be the responsibility of the Director of HR to monitor the effectiveness of this policy.