

Student Drugs and Alcohol Procedure

1. Purpose of procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to provide general guidelines for School students and staff regarding action to be taken when dealing with a drug or alcohol related incident.

2. Dealing with drug and alcohol related incidents

It is recognised that there is a broad range of possible drug and alcohol related incidents, which vary according to, among other things, the nature of the evidence of use/misuse and according to the nature of the substance used/abused. The School's aim is to deal with all such incidents in a way that balances its legal, Health and Safety, welfare, educational and confidentiality responsibilities.

3. Different types of drug and alcohol related incidents

3.1 There are four broad types of drug and alcohol related incidents, as follows:

3.1.1 Emergency intoxication/influence:

where intoxication/influence involves a perceived threat to the health, wellbeing and/or safety of the individual(s) involved and others

3.1.2 Non-emergency intoxication/influence:

where no immediate danger is apparent

3.1.3 Discovery:

where an individual finds a student in possession of, or using what is thought to be, an illegal drug or drug-related paraphernalia (eg, syringe)

3.1.4 Disclosure, Suspicion or Rumour:

where an allegation is made by a third party that a student is misusing drugs and/or alcohol, where this allegation may be substantiated by evidence.

3.2. The School recognises the legal distinction between alcohol and other drugs, and so would not normally take disciplinary or other actions for excessive use of alcohol unless there was evidence that this was causing harm to the individual, to their studies, or resulting in unacceptable behaviour towards other people or School buildings and facilities. The School expects those in positions of authority to promote a responsible attitude among students regarding the consumption of alcohol.

4. Key stages for dealing with a drug or alcohol related incident

Each case will be handled differently, and may involve different personnel, but all will involve three key stages:

4.1 Stage 1: Assessment of incident and immediate action

A "front-line" person will make an initial assessment of the situation, and take any necessary immediate action, followed by referring the incident to a responsible person, which could be the Head of Security Team, or his/her deputy, the Front House Manager or the Warden for the Halls of Residence. This action may

involve, as appropriate, confiscation of drugs/suspicious substances, contacting the police and ambulance services, and collecting of witness statements.

4.2 Stage 2: Referral

The responsible person will liaise with key individuals inside and outside the School (the Pro-Director and, as necessary, the Director of Residential Services, the LSE Health Service, SU Education and Welfare Officer, and the local Police station). The appropriate welfare referrals will be enacted and disciplinary procedures commenced where deemed necessary under the Code of Conduct for Disciplinary Proceedings in Halls or the Disciplinary Procedure for Students.

4.3 Stage 3: Recording

After the issue has been resolved, the general information about the case (stripped of any information that might identify the student involved), will be passed onto the Head of Security for collation. The collated information will be used to determine the level of drug misuse in the School, and to inform directions in School Policy concerning student and staff information and training needs.

5. Sanctions

5.1 Each case will be considered on its own merits, and may involve disciplinary action under either or both of the misconduct procedures that apply to a student's licence agreement and student contract. Any discovery of drug usage could result in suspension or expulsion from the School and/or expulsion from a Hall of Residence. Criminal sanctions are also possible if the Police decide to press charges.

6. Appeals

6.1 The relevant misconduct procedure/s will set out a student's right to appeal against any suspension or disciplinary sanction applied to them. The relevant procedures will also set out a student's right to approach an external complaints service, Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), when their appeal is complete.

This procedure was agreed by Council on 25th June 2002