

## POLICY ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL MISUSE (Students)

### 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University of Aberdeen has a duty of care to all students. The University recognises that alcohol/drug dependency is an illness and will be treated in the same way as other illnesses.
- 1.2 This policy is not intended to intrude upon the privacy of individuals, particularly in health matters where their condition does not affect conduct or academic performance. The University is, however, concerned where the inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol impairs conduct or has an adverse impact on other members of the University Community. Where this happens, the purpose of this policy is to ensure any issues are dealt with effectively and consistently.
- 1.3 Drugs in the context of this policy relates to all illegal drugs controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) and all legal drugs (including alcohol, volatile substances, over-the-counter and prescriptive medicines).
- 1.4 Misuse in the context of this policy is defined as the habitual or intermittent use of alcohol, drugs or other substances which causes detriment to an individual's health, safety, work performance or social functioning.
- 1.5 Impairment is defined as an individual's inability to function normally due to the misuse of drugs or alcohol. This includes being over the legal alcohol limit for driving in the UK, and adverse reactions to legal or prescription drugs.

### 2 SUPPORT

- 2.1 The University seeks to adopt a supportive and sympathetic approach to any student who experience difficulties as a result of alcohol or drug misuse.
- 2.2 Those who are concerned about their use of alcohol or drugs are encouraged to seek help and treatment voluntarily by making a direct approach to their General Practitioner, Student Support, the AUSA Student Advice Centre, or an appropriate external agency.
- 2.3 If a member of staff or fellow student believes that a student's wellbeing and/or conduct is being affected by the misuse of drugs or alcohol, he/she should seek advice from the Student Support Service. A Student Support Adviser will make arrangements to meet with the individual, for a confidential discussion. In the first instance, the matter will be handled as a health issue and the student will be advised of support available to him/her.

### 3 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- 3.1 The levels of misconduct that may result from alcohol or drug misuse extend over a considerable range. The University may consider disciplinary action in cases where the health and safety of members of the University Community is placed at unacceptable risk or their wellbeing is affected. Any disciplinary action will be taken under the University's [Code of Practice on Student Discipline \(Academic\)](#) or [Code of Practice on Student Discipline \(Non Academic\)](#) and a range of possible penalties can be applied, up to and including suspension or expulsion from the University. For degrees with professional accreditation, the matter might also be considered by the relevant Fitness to Practice Committee. Where the University recognises that alcohol or drugs may be a contributory factor to misconduct and is aware that the student has acknowledged this, the University may be willing to consider suspending disciplinary action. This will depend upon the willingness on the part of the individual to engage with the support available and a significant improvement in their subsequent behaviour.

3.2 Where an incident involves the supply of illegal drugs this will be investigated under the terms of the University's disciplinary procedure. In such circumstances, the University reserves the right to refer the matter to the police.

#### **4 RESOURCES**

4.1 Further information on drugs and alcohol is available from:

[www.drugsactions.co.uk](http://www.drugsactions.co.uk)

[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)