



POLICY AND GUIDELINES ON THE USE OF ILLICIT DRUGS - 2012

1 Introduction and Background

The incidence of known and reported substance use and abuse by students at this University appears to be remarkably low in comparison with evidence from national surveys. Although the University has not until now had a formal policy statement or code of practice relating to use of illicit drugs, procedures have been developed to deal with recent incidents, based on the fact that possessing, giving away, or selling a drug covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) is against the law.

Whilst there is at present no evidence to suggest that levels of illicit drug use present a major problem at the University, the risk still remains and we should be prepared and equipped to deal with it. Therefore, this has been written to set out the University's position on illicit drug use and to provide operational guidelines for dealing with cases which might arise.

Please read through this carefully. Any queries should be directed to the Academic Secretary.

2 The University's Policy Statement on Illicit Drug Use

"Possession and supply of drugs covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) is against the law. Accordingly, the University undertakes to deal with students who commit such offences and who may thereby bring the University into disrepute. In addition to this, however, the University recognises that it has a duty of care towards its student members. It will therefore endeavour to provide health education and information about the dangers of illicit drug use and will refer those who need help to the appropriate support agencies."

It has been agreed that this policy will be implemented with the help of these procedures and operational guidelines.

3 Promoting the University's Policy

3.1 EDUCATIONAL AND PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

One of the first priorities is to try and promote an environment in which use of illicit drugs is discouraged. Ways towards achieving this include ensuring that the policy is known by staff, is well publicised among all new and existing students and that health campaigns such as those organised by the Guild of Students are promoted.

3.2 TRAINING FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF

- 3.2.1 Opportunities will be provided for Wardens, Security Officers, other Domestic Services staff, Guild Officers and other staff as appropriate to learn about the University's Policy, how to recognise the signs of illicit substance use, how to deal with incidents (including first aid measures) and what welfare services are available to provide support and advice.
- 3.2.2 In conjunction with the police the Registrar and Secretary will arrange for the appropriate staff, once a year, to undertake a Training Scheme.

The following is intended to help you meet this training requirement and should be retained as a reference document for the future.

4 Practical Guidelines

4.1 WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A SUSPICIOUS SUBSTANCE

If you come across what you think might be an illegal drug, you should immediately inform:

- the Warden, if the find takes place in a Hall of Residence; or
- your Head of Department or Section, if the find takes place elsewhere on University property.

The Warden or Head of Department/Section should then ensure that the Security Office is notified immediately so that the Security Officer may, as appropriate, liaise with the police and arrange for the substance to be identified and destroyed. He shall also report the matter to the Academic Secretary.

The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) allows you to take possession of an illegal drug in order to prevent someone else committing an offence, provided that the substance is either handed to someone authorised to possess illegal drugs (eg a police officer) or destroyed.

4.2 IF YOU DISCOVER ILLEGAL DRUGS BEING USED (NON-EMERGENCY SITUATION)

This section deals with what to do if you find students in possession of or in the process of using what you think is an illicit substance. The nature of the incident discovered will of course have a considerable bearing on how to deal with it. The issue should be kept in perspective at all times. The following guidance relates to incidents which do not constitute a medical emergency. (For guidelines on dealing with emergencies, see sections 4.3 and 4.4)

- (a) Seek help from the Warden or Assistant Warden (or in their absence, some other responsible person) if the incident takes place in a University residence, or from the Head of Department or Section (or other responsible person) if the incident takes place elsewhere. With this persons' help:
- (i) call the Security Officer, who will decide what police involvement is required, if any, having due regard to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act;

- (ii) if practical, take the substance away, but avoid confrontation as it is important not to threaten or crowd the drug-takers, or expect normal behaviour: they could react with uncharacteristic violence. Help them stay calm and give reassurance;
- (iii) write down details of the incident clearly and accurately. This will help those who are involved later.

The students concerned must then be referred and strictly advised to go to the appropriate support agency, as detailed in section 6.

4.3 WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

Acute intoxication, physical collapse or unconsciousness can result from even one experiment with drugs or solvents. These conditions constitute a medical emergency.

In such cases:

- (a) call an ambulance:
 - DIAL 3999 FROM ANY UNIVERSITY EXTENSION and give details to the Estate Patrol
 - or
 - DIAL 999 FROM BT LINES AT OFF-CAMPUS HALLS AND OTHER PREMISES. Then call Estate Patrol (Exeter 263999)
- (b) carry out immediate first aid measures (see section 4.4 below), and
- (c) contact the Student Health Centre
Streatham Campus 264414 or Extension 4414
St Luke's 264701 or Extension 4701
- (d) keep any tablets or substances that are found; they will be checked at the hospital. If the person has been sick, keep a sample of the vomit for the hospital to analyse.

The students concerned must then be referred and strictly advised to go to the appropriate support agency, as detailed in section 6.

4.4 FIRST AID MEASURES*

(*Adapted from the DFE booklet 'Drug Misuse and the Young - a guide for the education service')

In any drug-related emergency, always bring in a trained first aider if there is one within reach and call for professional medical help. If there is any delay before help arrives, take the following steps:

- (a) If the person is 'high', aroused, woozy or un-coordinated:

- (i) try to take away the drugs or solvents - without a confrontation
- (ii) do not lecture them: they will not be able to take it in
- (iii) do not crowd or threaten them, or expect normal behaviour: they could react with uncharacteristic violence. Help them stay calm and give reassurance
- (iv) do not put them to bed to sleep it off. People have died from choking on vomit in their sleep. Keep a careful watch on them; and
- (v) write down details of the incident clearly and accurately. This will help those who are involved later.

(b) If the person is unconscious but the pulse rate and breathing are normal:

- (i) put them in the recovery position (or lying on their side);
- (ii) open windows and loosen tight clothing around their neck and chest, but keep them warm and stay with them until medical help arrives.

(c) If the person is unconscious and the pulse and breathing have stopped:

- (i) carry out cardiopulmonary resuscitation (mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and heart massage) if you or anyone at the scene is trained to do so
- (ii) keep the casualty warm to prevent shock, and stay with them until medical help arrives.

Detailed first aid advice and information about local training is available from the St John's Ambulance Association.

5 Disciplinary Issues

5.1 INITIATING DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Depending on the location of the incident the following procedure should be initiated:

- (a) **Halls of Residence:** Incidents involving the use of illicit drugs should initially be dealt with by the Warden. Wardens have the authority to impose a penalty for a minor offence at their discretion. All other cases will be reported to the Academic Secretary. In all cases the Warden should keep a careful note of the details of the incident and any penalties he or she imposes;
- (b) **Elsewhere on University Property:** Incidents involving the use of illicit drugs should be dealt with by the Academic Secretary.

The students concerned must then be referred and strictly advised to go to the appropriate support agency, as detailed in section 6.

5.2 DISCIPLINARY BOARDS

Serious cases of illicit substance use by students of the University shall be referred by the Academic Secretary to a Disciplinary Board as constituting a major offence. Such referral will await the outcome of any criminal proceedings.

A Board may impose the following penalties:

- (a) a fine not exceeding £250 (in addition to appropriate restitution for damage), or
- (b) temporary suspension from the University.

It may also recommend to Senate expulsion from the University.

5.3 APPEALS AGAINST PENALTIES

Students have the right to appeal against penalties imposed summarily or by a Disciplinary Tribunal. In brief, a student who has been penalised must lodge his or her appeal by writing to the Academic Secretary within seven working days of being informed of the penalty. Students facing disciplinary action or wishing to appeal against penalties may seek help from the Guild Welfare Advice Centre on appropriate procedure or representation.

5.4 NON-MEMBERS

If non-members of the University are found on University premises in possession of, supplying or using illicit substances, the Security Officer should be informed, in order that the appropriate University and/or other action may be initiated.

Full details of disciplinary procedures can be found in the University Calendar under 'Regulations for Students'.

6 Advice and Support Services

A range of confidential sources of support and advice is available to students involved in substance use. The students must be advised of the help that is at hand and encouraged to make use of it:

(a) UNIVERSITY COUNSELLING SERVICE

For professional counselling or onward referral to specialist agencies outside the University: telephone Exeter 264381 or extension 4381.

(b) STUDENT HEALTH CENTRE

For medical advice on substance abuse telephone:

Streatham Campus: Exeter 264414 or extension 4414

St Luke's Campus: Exeter 264701 or extension 4701

(c) GUILD WELFARE ADVICE CENTRE

Health education and advice: telephone Exeter 263520 or extension 3520

(d) CHAPLAINCY GROUP

Operates a listening service available to all staff and students: telephone:

Streatham Campus: Exeter 264240 or extension 4240

St Luke's Campus: Exeter 264802 or extension 4802

(e) NIGHTLINE

Student-run listening service: telephone Exeter 674000/1.