



## **Student Substance Misuse - A Joint Approach -**

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Keele University and Students' Unions (Keele SU and the Keele Postgraduate Association) are committed to providing a safe and healthy learning community for students. The overarching premise is one of support and education, focusing on making positive life choices, setting a framework of acceptable and responsible behaviour, and the action that may be taken in the event of a breach of acceptable and responsible behaviour.

The University recognises that the majority of students will not be affected by illegal drug use, but it is important to highlight that the university does not condone the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in, or on, any premises under their control.

### **The purpose of the approach is to:**

- Make students aware of the support and guidance available both within the University and externally for students affected by drug related problems;
- Promote an awareness of the health and legal issues associated with drug use;
- Set a clear framework of acceptable and responsible behaviour and be clear regarding the possible disciplinary action for related misconduct;
- Clarify Keele's approach to issues arising from the possession, supply or use of illegal drugs in order to minimise problems or confusion for members of our community.

### **Scope**

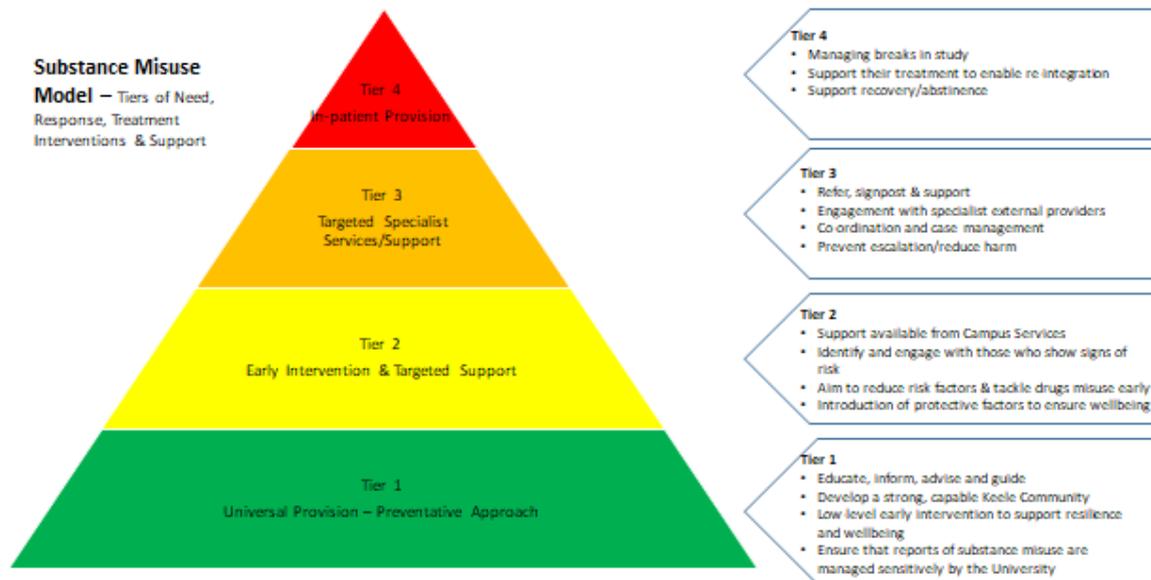
This approach sets out Keele's commitment to ensuring students are educated and supported in regards to drug use, and outlines the guidelines for the students who are in possession, supply or use illegal drugs at Keele University. All students who are working, researching and studying at the University are expected to adhere to the expectations set out in this Student Substance Misuse Policy.

The approach particularly applies to students in circumstances where there is a risk to themselves or others, or where their conduct or quality of work affects others or the reputation of the University or Students' Unions. It applies whether students are on University premises, elsewhere on University business or study activities or in the local community. The approach also applies to the Students' Unions' clubs and societies and sports teams.

### **Our Approach**

We aim to follow a tiered approach as per the Public Health Model, which is intended to provide the appropriate amount of support based on increasing level of need. Primarily, we

are committed to educating students on the dangers of substance misuse and encouraging them to make safe and informed decisions about drug or alcohol use. The second tier is a more targeted approach for students who are in need of support, guidance or advice. This involves early intervention and substance misuse initiatives such as campaigns. The third tier is a more specialised and individualised approach for students who have substance misuse issues to receive appropriate help from either internal or external services. The aim is to promote education, prevention and early intervention, whilst still supporting the students who are most in need.



## Commitments

Keele has a duty of care to all its students and will ensure that support, advice and information is provided to any students who are experiencing problems with drug use (this includes referral to suitable external services). We will ensure this by:

- Assisting students to make informed decisions about drug use;
- Complying with the legal duty of care to staff, students and visitors;
- Promote health, safety and wellbeing through the provision of information, advice, guidance and support;
- Informing students about the potential consequences of drug use.

The wellbeing of the student community is the key driver for this approach and to enable the idea of shared responsibility, we have established a set of commitments from staff and students (further commitments from key stakeholders can be found in Annex 1):

## Students

- Be aware of and understand this approach, supporting documents and services;
- Engage with information and education about drugs to enable healthy choices to be made for themselves and their fellow students;
- Seek help voluntarily if you are concerned about your drug use (see the 'Student Support' section for sources of support);
- Encourage other students to seek help if they have a problem;

- Be aware of the behaviour of students around you and do your best to ensure their support, safety and wellbeing taking action where appropriate;
- Alert an appropriate member of staff to any problems you see developing within the institution, particularly where legal or health and safety concerns are an issue.

## Staff

- Be aware of the approach, procedures, available services and referral procedures available for dealing with student drug use and related issues;
- Encourage students to access appropriate support if there are concerns about their well-being in relation to drug use. Contribute to the development and facilitation of awareness raising activities;
- Be mindful of the potential impacts of drug use when conducting risk assessments on proposed activities;
- Investigate accidents and incidents for signs of drug use and liaise with the relevant departments.

## Education and Awareness

We will endeavour to increase awareness and understanding of drug use and related issues. We will do this by:

- Raising student awareness with posters, leaflets and through the website and social media channels with links to established help sites such as [Talk to Frank](#) and of local recovery agencies such as [T3](#);
- Ensuring students are aware of the dangers of drug use;
- Training relevant staff, such as student services staff, accommodation service managers, personal tutors, bar staff, staff in student residences, i.e. Resident Advisers, Domestic Assistants and security officers;
- Inviting representatives from our partner agencies including the Police Liaison Officer to deliver talks at 'Welcome' events and other appropriate forums;
- Engaging students in awareness raising campaigns such as Alcohol & Drug Awareness Week.

## Student Support

- The University has a legal duty of care to its students, and aims to provide a safe, healthy and high quality study and work environment. This includes addressing the risks posed by drug use, informing students of their responsibilities and providing information, advice, guidance and support on request. All students have a legal responsibility to take care of their own safety and that of others;
- The University recognises that the majority of students will not be affected by drug use but, where a student declares that they have a problem, their case will be treated sympathetically. The University regards a student's dependency on drugs as a health problem;
- Students who feel that their, or a friend's use of drugs is becoming problematic are encouraged to talk to somebody about this. A student may feel comfortable talking in the first instance to family or friends. They can also talk to their Personal tutor or to a member of staff in Student Services (Counselling and Mental Health, Student Services Centre, Chaplaincy);
- If a student discloses such an issue to a member of staff or support service and agrees to engage in support either within the University or through relevant support services in the community, then the university will allow reasonable absences for advice/therapy/treatment as 'sick leave' and will take this into account when

assessing coursework and exam results, as long as the student has kept their School aware of their progress and that it is clear that they are attempting to resolve any difficulties they may have. Students must provide confirmation/evidence from Student Services, their GP or an external agency if appropriate to confirm their attendance and progress;

- Keele has a range of services available to students with drug-use concerns. These services are freely available to all students who wish to access help and support:
  - [Student Services Centre](#)
  - [Keele Health Practice](#)
  - [The Chapel](#).
  - [Advice and Support at Keele \(ASK\)](#)
  - Additional help can be found on the following websites:
    - [T3](#)
    - [Talk to Frank](#)
    - [Re-Solv Stoke](#)
    - [Addaction](#)

## **Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures**

Although each case will be assessed individually, any resident found in possession of substances which either are, or suspected to be, illegal drugs, or is found dealing illegal substances at premises owned by Keele University or Students' Unions, will normally be subject to disciplinary action as detailed in Regulation B1. These disciplinary actions could include mandatory drugs awareness programmes, notice to leave University accommodation, suspension or expulsion from the University.

Minor offences include possession or use of drugs that are prohibited by the University as listed in the [Discipline Procedure](#). This also applies where a student knowingly allows another person to use such drugs within their allocated University accommodation.

Major offences include supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply drugs that are prohibited by the University and which are listed in the [Discipline Procedure](#), or the cultivation or preparation with the intent to supply of such drugs within their accommodation. This also applies where a student within their allocated University accommodation knowingly allows another person to do so.

The University also has a legal duty to inform the police of any incident involving illegal drugs, which could result in criminal prosecution. If a student is convicted of a drug-related offence, there may be additional implications for their future employment and travel.

Students should be aware of the potential implications for professional suitability, professional registration etc., especially with regard to vocational qualifications.

Regulation B1 ([Student Discipline](#)) states any behaviour which improperly interferes with the functioning or activities of the University or those who study or work at the University, or damages the University or its reputation shall be considered as offences under this regulation.

Keele does not wish to criminalise its students or visitors, but it has a legitimate interest in protecting the University community and reputation from the potential consequences of alcohol or drug misuse by students. It is important to acknowledge that students who have or

develop alcohol or drug-related problems may cause harm to themselves and to others and these risks will be considered in any course of action.

## What do we mean by 'illegal drugs'?

Information on the controlled drugs under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, their classifications and potential penalties for breaching the law can be found on the Home Office Website. For further information, please go to <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1971/38/contents>.

## The University Regulations

Keele University defines a list of drugs that are prohibited on campus. These are as follows:

- Illegal drugs covered under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971;
- Prescribed Medications covered under the Medicines Act 1968, that have not been prescribed to that individual student, or which have been tampered with to deface the details of the person to whom they have been prescribed;
- Novel Psychoactive Substances and Compounds that produce a psychoactive effect by stimulating or depressing the central nervous system & affect mental functioning or emotional states;
- In addition, students shall not use without reasonable excuse (or permit the use or preparation within their accommodation) any substances that are unfit for human consumption in a way that is potentially hazardous to health (i.e. the inhalation of solvents or gases).

The above also applies where a student knowingly allows another person to use such drugs within their allocated University accommodation.

## Additional Definitions

**Substance Misuse:** 'the intermittent or continual use of alcohol or substances which causes detriment to an individual's health, social functioning or work performance, and which affects efficiency, productivity, safety, attendance, timekeeping or conduct in the University'.

**Drugs:** the term 'drugs' has been used in this Policy to include all drugs and substances, legal, illegal or prohibited by the university, which adversely affect behaviour or performance.

**Psychoactive Substance:** In the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 'psychoactive substance' means any substance which:

- is capable of producing a psychoactive effect in a person who consumes it; and
- is not an exempted substance

**Legal highs:** A term that is still widely used, and before the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 came into force, related to substances that were used recreationally but were not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971), not licensed for legal use, and not regulated as a medicine (Medicines Act 1968). Now all such substances are illegal and the term 'legal highs' is incorrect.

**Study Drugs:** Study drugs are prescription stimulant medications that are used improperly by a person with a prescription, or more often, illegally by a person without a prescription. Prescription stimulants used to treat ADD and ADHD include Ritalin, Adderall, Concerta, and Focalin.

**Sports Drugs/Performance Enhancers:** There are several types of performance-enhancing drugs, including anabolic steroids, stimulants, human growth hormone and diuretics. There is no specific legislation that makes doping in sport an illegal activity in the UK. However, there are a number of pieces of legislation that cover related activities and make many of them offences. Most notably the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 deals with many of the items on the banned list, that are not either licensed as prescription medicines or recognised as food additives or over-the-counter medicines. For example, synthetic anabolic steroids are controlled as Class C substances under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. There is no possession offence but it is illegal to manufacture, supply or possess/import/export steroids with the intent to supply, without a licence to do so. The maximum penalty is 14 years in prison and/or a heavy fine. British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS), the national governing body for higher education sport are committed to supporting UK Anti-Doping in achieving clean sport. You can see Keele's clean sport commitment statement [here](#).

## Confidentiality and Data Protection

All cases will be dealt with in confidence and all personal information will be processed securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Information may be used by relevant personnel to establish any support that may be needed and to manage the academic relationship. The confidential disclosure of information by students will be respected except in extreme circumstances where the student or someone else is at serious risk of harm. Keele staff should clearly state from the outset that limited confidentiality applies and that confidentiality will not be maintained if the withholding of information constitutes a serious risk to the individual or others.

## Roles & Responsibilities

The Keele Drug & Alcohol Group has strategic oversight of the Approach to Student Substance Misuse and will review and monitor this over time.

## Related Policies & Procedures

**The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** places a duty of care on employers to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of staff, students and other users of its premises.

**The Road Traffic Act 1988** states that a person is guilty of an offence if driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle in a public place while unfit through drink or drugs.

**The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971** states that the misuse of drugs applies to the 'non-medical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment and the use of drugs that have no medical purposes'. Such drugs are controlled under this legislation. The University works within this framework and it is therefore clear that the possession and/or use of illegal drugs on its premises is unacceptable and breaches may be subject to disciplinary or legal action.

**Psychoactive Substances Act 2016** creates the following criminal offences covering the supply of a psychoactive substance:

- producing a psychoactive substance (section 4 of the Act)
- supplying, or offering to supply, a psychoactive substance (section 5)
- possession of a psychoactive substance with intent to supply it (section 7)
- importing or exporting a psychoactive substance (section 8)

- possessing a psychoactive substance in a custodial institution (section 9)

**The Drug Driving (Specified Limits) (England and Wales) Regulations 2014** states that it is illegal to drive if either: a person is unfit to do so because of legal or illegal drugs; or if there are certain levels of certain drugs in their blood

## Document control Information

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# **Annex 1**

## **Commitments**

We have established a further set of commitments from key stakeholders:

### **1.1 University**

- Ensure that the University community is proactive with regard to setting policy and procedures (including site specific restrictions and processes as appropriate) alongside available support services and referral procedures available for dealing with student drug related issues.
- Ensure students comply with the relevant discipline regulations and behave responsibly and respectfully towards our neighbours both on campus (in halls of residence) and in the local community.
- Ensure students do not behave in a way that might damage the University's reputation.
- Provide support services that help to maintain a proactive approach to supporting students with drug related issues and act as a confidential self-referral facility for students.
- Liaise and communicate with internal stakeholders and other drug support agencies to help maintain ongoing focus and development of student wellbeing with regard to drugs.

### **1.2 Keele SU and the KPA**

- Education, information and campaign work relating to drugs will form part of our commitment to student wellbeing and will be run regularly by the Students' Union, in partnership and agreement with Student Services, to encourage students to make healthy choices.
- Work with students to set out (and uphold) clear expectations of student members regarding their behaviour relating to drug use on and off campus.
- Form strong partnership and communication links with the University and external networks for information, education and support relating to drugs and work to ensure that students are engaged with relevant messages and services.
- Offer information and advice about the services available to students who have concerns about their drug use.
- Provide and support educational events, awareness campaigns and activities that promote health and well-being in cooperation with other departments.
- Ensure that student related policies reflect attitudes to drugs which are conducive to student well-being.

### **1.3 Student Services**

- Act as a confidential self-referral facility for students.
- Provide information, advice, guidance and support to students presenting with drug related issues.
- Operate appropriate confidentiality and referral policies to ensure students receive the most appropriate support.
- Develop and publish information for students on the potential impacts of drug misuse.
- Adhere to confidentiality guidelines and the Data Protection Act when a student presents for support for a drug related issue.

- Have in place systems of referral to community based drug support agencies. Raise concerns to appropriate university personnel if a particular drug related welfare issue is presenting repeatedly for the service.
- Take all necessary steps to ensure that students with drug related issues do not present a risk to themselves or others.
- Deliver support and training for University/Students' Union staff – e.g. knowledge and skills development around drug interventions where appropriate.
- Work with all relevant partners to ensure that students are safe and supported during their time at Keele and in the surrounding local area and that, as residents of the local community, they are proactively informed and signposted to the relevant services.

#### **1.4 The Campus Bars (University, Keele SU and KPA)**

All venues will adhere to the following best practice / legislation:

- Venues will operate a zero tolerance policy regarding illegal drug use and work in partnership with Student Support in support and/or statutory action as appropriate
- In order to ensure that the venues are inclusive for all, student customers will be expected to follow a code of conduct designed to prevent 'anti-social' behaviour and eliminate 'lad culture'. Customers failing to follow the venues' code of conduct will be subject to action under the disciplinary procedures of that venue.
- Venues will be proactive in wellbeing campaigns in partnership with the Students' Union.

#### **1.5 Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council**

- Proactively support the University and Students' Unions in delivering a community-based information, advice and guidance approach to student drug use.
- Take practical steps to ensure that direct communication and innovations from students are included in the local activity and information relating to drugs.