



A Joint Approach to Student Substance Misuse

2022

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Introduction

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.

1.1 Purpose

- Make students aware of the support and guidance available both within the University and externally for students affected by alcohol or drug related problems;
- Educate and promote an awareness of the adverse consequences of alcohol and drug misuse;
- Make students aware of the support for those in recovery, or those supporting others in recovery;
- Set a clear framework of acceptable and responsible behaviour and be clear regarding the possible disciplinary action for related misconduct arising from the possession, supply or use of prohibited drugs.

1.2 Scope

This approach sets out Keele's commitment to ensuring our students are supported and educated in regard to substance misuse and associated issues (including those in recovery).

This applies to all students across the university. We also recognise that in some cases there may be legal or discipline implications and these are also outlined within this document.

This approach aims to mitigate the risks to individuals and to the University and the Students' Union. In addition to the main campus, it also applies to any other university related activities regardless of location

Policy

Our Approach & 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 alcohol or drug misuse (this includes referral to suitable external services). We will ensure this by:

- Educating students on the harms of substance misuse including both physical and mental health;
- Offering advice, guidance and support to any students who disclose a substance misuse issue (including those in recovery) including making appropriate referrals to specialist services;
- Ensuring that we act responsibly as a university to support the wellbeing of our student community through individual support and also by meeting professional and statutory requirements.

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 the university and its students.

Students

- Be aware of, and understand this approach, supporting documents (such as the Accommodation License Agreement) and services;
- Engage with information and education about alcohol and drugs to enable healthy choices to be made for themselves and their fellow students;
- Seek help voluntarily if you are concerned about your alcohol or drug misuse (see the 'Student Support' section for sources

of support);

- Encourage other students to seek help if they have a problem whilst being respectful of their choices to ensure their dignity is upheld;
- 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.

University

- Provide support services that help to maintain a proactive approach to supporting students with alcohol or drug related issues and act as a self-referral facility for students.
- Liaise and communicate with internal stakeholders and other substance misuse support agencies to help maintain ongoing focus and development of student wellbeing with regard to alcohol and drugs.
- 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 substance misuse 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.

Specific staff commitments can be found in

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Annex A.

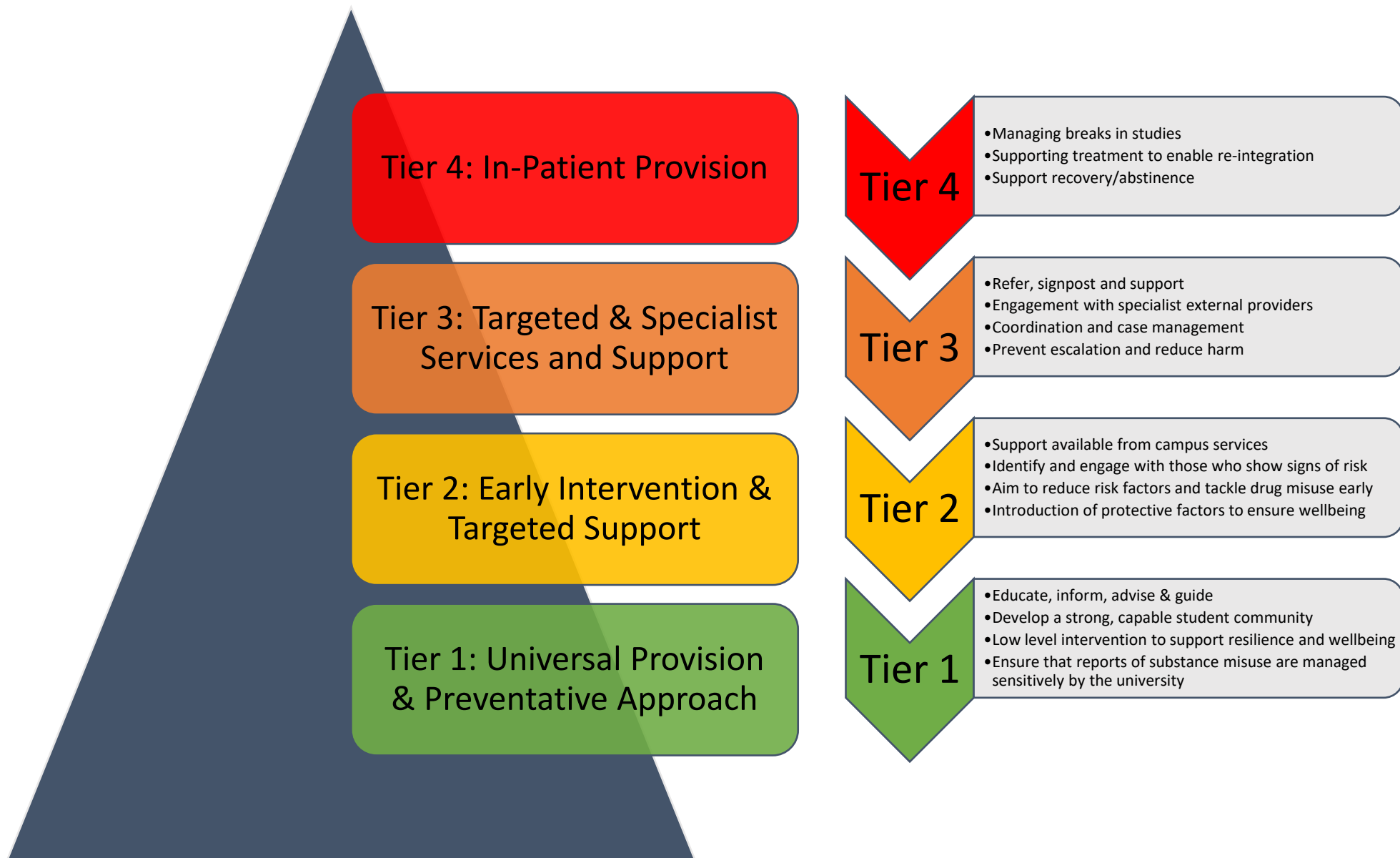
We aim to follow a tiered approach as per the Public Health Model, which is intended to provide the appropriate amount of support based on increasing level of need.

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.

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Preventative Approach

We will endeavour to increase awareness and understanding of alcohol or drug misuse 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](#), [Drugs & Me](#), and of local recovery agencies such as [Staffordshire Treatment and Recovery Service \(Stars\)](#);
- Ensuring students are aware of the adverse consequences of substance misuse including physical, mental, social and financial;
- Training relevant staff, such as Student Services staff including Residence Life, Student Experience and Support and Accommodation, 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 host stalls and deliver talks at key events and other appropriate forums;
- Engaging students in awareness raising campaigns such as Alcohol & Drug Awareness Week.

Early Intervention & Targeted Support

The University recognises that the majority of students will not be affected by alcohol or drug misuse but, where a student declares that they have a problem, they will be offered support from internal teams such as Student Services or from external specialist services such as Stars. The University primarily regards a student's dependency on alcohol or drugs as a health problem.

- Students who feel that their, or a friend's

use of substances 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 a member of staff in Student Services (Counselling and Mental Health, Student Experience and Support (SESO), Residence Life, 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
 - [Student Experience and Support](#)
 - [Residence Life](#)
 - [Counselling & Mental Health](#)
 - [Keele GP Practice](#)
 - [The Chaplaincy Team](#)
 - [Advice & Support at Keele \(ASK\)](#) within KeeleSU
 - [Health Assured](#)
 - [Staffordshire Treatment and Recovery Service \(Stars\)](#)
 - Additional help can be found on

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the following websites:

- [Drugs & Me](#)
- [Talk to Frank](#)

Targeted, Specialist Services and Support

The University has partnered with the local substance misuse support service to ensure a clear referral pathway for students who need more specialist support for their substance misuse.

[Stars \(Staffordshire Treatment and Recovery Service\)](#) is a confidential service aimed at helping people to make informed choices about their alcohol and drug use, and to raise awareness of all the risks involved. A team of qualified staff with specialist alcohol and drug knowledge will provide an initial comprehensive assessment of need, therapeutic interventions and motivational support, care planning and care coordination and access to specialist prescribing pathways.

In-Patient Provision

The University is committed to supporting students who need clinical intervention and will work closely with local NHS services to support the treatment of the student. This may include but is not restricted to:

- Supporting the student to take a leave of absence;
- Supporting the student to re-integrate back into their studies following a leave of absence.

Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Process

Minor offences such as possession for personal use or use of drugs that are prohibited by

the University (as listed in the [Discipline Procedure](#)) will be subject to a supportive and educational approach rather than immediately being progressed via a discipline route. This would typically involve an educational conversation with a Residence Life Manager, and signposts to support services. However, a second offence may trigger the University's discipline procedure for minor offences as per Regulation B1. If found 'proven' there are a range of options available to Authorised Officers, as published in the [Discipline Offences and Recommended Penalties document](#). This also applies where a student knowingly allows another person to use such drugs within their allocated University accommodation.

Although each case will be assessed individually, any resident which is, or suspected to be, dealing illegal substances at premises owned by Keele University or Students' Unions, will be subject to disciplinary action for a major offence as detailed in [Regulation B1](#). Options that are available to Discipline Committee's are included in the [Discipline Offences and Recommended Penalties document](#). This applies to students who 'share' or provide other students with substances, even if not sold (i.e., given for free). During any investigation process, the student will be allocated an independent support in these circumstances, the University may inform the police of an involving illegal drugs, which could result in criminal prosecution.

As cases of 'possession' are considered as a minor breach of regulations and therefore approached as an educational conversation, such cases would not ordinarily be shared with a student's Faculty for consideration. However, in cases where the student is subject to [Fitness to Practice](#) considerations, and where the seized substances are

reasonably believed to be identified as Class A or not solely for personal use, details of any discipline investigation and subsequent outcome will be shared with their faculty.

Furthermore, there are several student groups that in addition to the above have additional disciplinary implications associated with substance misuse. Students should be aware of the potential implications for professional suitability, professional registration etc., especially with regard to vocational qualifications. This is of particular note to those on professional courses whereby any substance misuse incident (whether major or minor) may result in a Fitness to Study assessment. In addition, there are also specific terms and conditions relating to substance use in the Accommodation Terms and Conditions for those who live on campus.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Cases will be dealt with in confidence and all personal information will be processed securely in accordance with data protection legislation. 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 however there may be situations when disclosure of personal data is deemed necessary for example, when the student or others are at risk of harm, or if there are fitness to practice concerns (e.g., for those on professional courses). Keele staff will clearly communicate this to the student from the outset. For further information on how the University processes personal data please visit the [Information Governance webpages](#).

Roles & Responsibilities

The Keele Drug & Alcohol Steering Group has strategic oversight of the Approach to Student Substance Misuse and will review and monitor this over time. The Head of Residence Life has strategic oversight of the policy. Any queries relating to this policy should be directed to Kara McEnaney, Residence Life Manager or Neil Whitehurst, Serious Incident Case Officer.

Related Policies and 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 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

Review, Approval & Publication

This document should be reviewed by the Drug and Alcohol Steering Group every two years. The Drug and Alcohol Steering Group will consult with the Healthy University Group to review any suggested amendments before seeking approval from the University Executive Committee.

Document Control Information

Document Name	A Joint Approach to Student Substance Misuse
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Related University Documents	
For office use – keywords for search function	

Annex

- Annex A: University Staff Commitments
- Annex B: The University Regulation
- Annex C: Definitions

Annex A:

Commitments

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

1.1 Keele SU and the KPA

- Education, information and campaign work relating to alcohol and 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 alcohol and 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 alcohol or 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 alcohol and drugs which are conducive to student well-being.

1.2 Student Services

- Provide information, advice, guidance and support to students presenting with

alcohol and drug related issues.

- Act as a self-referral facility for students.
- Have in place systems of referral to community-based substance misuse support agencies. Raise concerns to appropriate university personnel if a particular alcohol or drug related welfare issue is presenting repeatedly for the service.
- 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.
- Develop and publish information for students on the adverse consequences of substance misuse.
- Operate appropriate confidentiality and referral policies to ensure students receive the most appropriate support.
- Take all necessary steps to ensure that students with alcohol or 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 alcohol and drug interventions where appropriate.
- Adhere to confidentiality guidelines and the Data Protection Act when a student presents for support for a drug related issue.

1.3 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.

1.4 Physical Activity and Sports Stakeholders

Keele University adopts the UK Anti-Doping and World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) position that cheating, including doping, in sport is fundamentally contrary to the spirit of sport, undermining the otherwise positive impact of sport on society.

To this end Keele University commits to support Clean Sport in the UK in the following ways:

- Keele University supports the mission of UK Anti-Doping and WADA in achieving Clean Sport.
- All athletes are expected to play, train and compete in line with the spirit of sport, including the anti-doping rules.
- All coaches and athlete support personnel are expected to perform their role in line with the spirit of sport, including the anti-doping rules.
- Keele University is committed to supporting the prevention of doping behaviour in the UK in collaboration with other sporting bodies
- Employed and associated 'staff' will not condone, assist or in any way support the

use of prohibited substances and methods (unless permitted by a Therapeutic Use Exemption) in any aspects of their work.

- Breaches of this, or any rules/policies referred to in Keele University's own code of practice/conduct will be acted upon accordingly.
- All employed and associated staff will be expected to contact UK Anti-Doping should they become aware of an athlete or NGB member using or considering the usage of a prohibited substance or prohibited method. This contact should be done in confidence on the dedicated confidential Report Doping in Sport line.
- Keele University will uphold any sanctions placed upon an athlete by UK Anti-Doping or other associated body in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Code.

Annex B: The University Regulation

Keele University defines within its Regulations 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.

Annex C:

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.