

# THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT

## University Policy Statement for Students concerning Drugs (Substance Misuse)

### 1. Purpose

- (i) The University is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of its students.
- (ii) The University accepts its responsibility to promote good health by raising awareness of the risks of drug misuse.
- (iii) The University respects the privacy of students but it must, however, be concerned where a student's behaviour impairs his/her conduct, safety or academic performance and/or adversely affects other students, staff, campus life or the wider community.

### 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all students.

### 3. Policy content

This Policy indicates how the University:

- seeks to provide a healthy and safe environment for students and others;
- provides support for students with a drug problem;
- deals with a drug-related problem or incident which affects the conduct, safety and academic performance of an individual student, other students, staff, campus life and/or the wider community.

### 4. Definition of drug misuse by students

- (i) Drugs include any substance which it is illegal to sell, possess or consume and which produces physical, mental, emotional or behavioural change in the user. This term includes prescription drugs where these have not been prescribed for the person possessing or using such drugs and/or such prescription drugs are not taken in accordance with a physician's direction.
- (ii) For the purpose of this Policy, substance misuse refers to taking drugs or a controlled substance, either intermittently or continuously, which interferes with an individual's health, work capabilities or conduct, or which affects the work performance and/or safety of the individual and/or others.

**Note:** Use of the term “misuse” does not imply that illegal substances have a correct use.

The possession, taking or selling of illegal drugs and drug dealing are criminal offences and will in no circumstances be tolerated by the University. Such activities constitute breach of the licence agreements for the University’s and Liberty Living’s residential accommodation for students and will lead to automatic termination of licence agreements.

## **5. Principles**

The University recognises:

- (i) that addiction to drugs may, in some cases, be considered a medical condition and in such cases it should be treated as such and in the strictest confidence;
- (ii) its responsibility to comply with the law in relation to any offences by students/others on its premises involving drugs;
- (iii) that it would be appropriate to consider action against students under the Regulations on Student Discipline in relation to non-academic matters in cases of breaches of the criminal law involving drugs and these Regulations. Normally any such proceedings would follow the completion of police enquiries and action by the police or the court except that the Vice-Chancellor (or delegate acting on his/her behalf) may exclude a student from University facilities and/or premises.

Students are expected not to undertake their academic commitments (e.g. lectures, seminars, practical and laboratory sessions or work placements) while under the influence of drugs.

## **6. Substance misuse: help for students**

- (i) The University provides facilities for students to find out about substance misuse and to obtain confidential advice and help about drug consumption. In Canterbury this is provided via the University Medical Centre (an NHS practice located on campus and available for student use) (with similar external provision at Medway). Other student services are provided on the Canterbury and Medway Campuses including the Counselling Service, welfare support provided by the College Masters and the Chaplaincy and the Students’ Unions (Kent Union and Greenwich & Kent Students’ Unions Together Advice Centres).
- (ii) The University encourages any student who suspects that he/she has a drug misuse problem to seek assistance voluntarily from the services referred to above or alternatives (such as a General Practitioner).
- (iii) The University supports health campaigns promoted by the Medical Centre, its Student Services, Kent Union and Greenwich & Kent Students’ Unions Together.

## **7. Substance misuse**

- (i) Students are strongly advised not to put their academic and other activities at risk by drug misuse. Students are also advised not to compromise their health by being with or reliant on someone who has taken illegal drugs (e.g. as a car passenger).
- (ii) The University will take action to prevent injury, damage or other serious risk where, as a result of substance misuse, a student acts in such a way as to endanger him/herself and/or others. A student believed to be under the influence of illegal drugs may, for example, be asked to leave a lecture, seminar, practical workshop or laboratory session. In appropriate circumstances the Support to Study Procedure may be invoked to help a student to receive professional help and advice in relation to his/her academic work.
- (iii) An ongoing substance misuse problem will not constitute an acceptable excuse for bad behaviour or performance or exempt the student(s) concerned from the normal consequences of inappropriate performance or misconduct.
- (iv) The Regulations on Student Discipline in relation to non-academic matters indicate how the University deals with offences against the law (such as assault, rape, theft and involving drugs and alcohol) and breaches of these Regulations (such as in the case of disorderly, insulting and anti-social conduct arising from the influence of illegal drugs) by students. The Regulations provide for penalties including warnings, fines, exclusion from University premises and termination of registration.

## **8. Documents**

The following documents, referred to above, may be found on the University's website:

Support to Study Procedure:

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/Regulations%20Booklet/support-to-study-procedure-dec2013.pdf>

Regulations on Student Discipline in relation to non-academic matters:

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/regulations/Regulations%20Booklet/generalregs.html>

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