



Drugs and Alcohol

- Introduction
- Definitions
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Procedure
- References

Introduction

This procedure outlines the management of drugs and alcohol in the workplace. It is University policy that persons working in or for the University, arrive at work unaffected by drugs or alcohol and remain that way while they are on duty. Illicit drugs are not permitted on University premises under any circumstances.

Definitions

For the purpose of this procedure:

- Affected by drug use or alcohol consumption (including drugs prescribed by a Doctor), means that:
- a person's ability to work competently and safely is reduced, or
- there is increased risk of being involved in an accident and the safety of other people or property are in reasonable doubt, or
- if clinical tests are performed, biologically active concentrations of substances are measured in the body.

Unaffected by drug use or alcohol consumption (including drugs prescribed by a Doctor) means that:

- a person is fully aware of potential hazards to themselves and others around them, and
- if clinical tests are performed, results will be negative or biologically inactive concentrations of substances are measured in the body.

Illicit Drugs, means those drugs that are prohibited by the Controlled Substances Act, 1984. Examples include alkoxyamphetamines, cannabis, heroin, isomethadone and LSD

Roles and Responsibilities

Line Managers/Supervisors are responsible for:

- implementing this procedure in their area of responsibility and have the authority to act immediately should they have the need to do so
- managing the work performance of employees and/or monitoring the performance of persons working in their area of responsibility
- maintaining confidentiality when a person, for whom they have responsibility under this procedure, advises that they have been prescribed medication by a medical practitioner if that medication can have an effect on their work performance or if it increases the risk to their own safety or the safety of others. (Employees shall not be disadvantaged or discriminated against when notifying a potential risk)
- providing opportunities and information for support and assistance for employees with alcohol or drug related problems, which affects their work performance through the University's Employee Assistance Program.

Employees, Students, Visitors, Contractors and Volunteers are responsible for:

- ensuring that they are not, by the consumption of alcohol or a drug, in a state, which may affect job performance or endanger their own safety or the safety of any other person
- ensuring that they are not adversely affected by drug or alcohol use during working hours, this includes employees engaged in after hours work, casual or contract work
- ensuring they are fit for duty and to meet established standards for job performance, conduct and safety
- consulting with their Line Manager in relation to concerns about the use of drugs or alcohol at University worksites
- advising their immediate supervisor that they have been prescribed medication by a medical practitioner if that medication can have an effect on their work performance or if it



increases the risk to their own safety or the safety of others. (The Line Manager or supervisor shall maintain confidentiality. Employees will not be disadvantaged or discriminated against by notifying a potential risk)

- immediately consulting with their manager, supervisor or representative if they have concerns about working with another worker because of possible increased risk to health or safety from the use of non-prescription drugs or alcohol consumption.

Health and Safety Representatives are responsible for:

- being present during the initial discussion with an affected employee from the work group they represent
- consulting with Line Managers and employees in relation to issues associated with alcohol or drugs.

Procedure

This procedure applies to persons working in or for the University including employees, students, visitors, contractors and volunteers.

The use of drugs including alcohol can reduce a person's ability to work safely and be fully aware of potential safety risks to themselves and others around them. Employees, students, visitors, contractors and volunteers should be aware of the reasons why they should not try to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol and understand the potential risks to themselves and others.

Assessing the risk

There is no uniform method available to assess the risk of drug or alcohol consumption in the workplace. The severity of drug effects is different for each person and the potential risk caused by drug impairment varies according to the task being performed. Managers or employees should assess each case individually by taking into account the person involved, the type of work being performed and the risk created by the individual being affected by drugs or alcohol.

Commonsense should prevail.

A systematic approach shall be used to manage the issue of drug and alcohol consumption and its effect in the workplace by planning, educating, counselling or carrying out disciplinary action where appropriate.

Persons affected by alcohol or another drug

If a manager, supervisor or employee observes a person behaving as if they are affected by drugs or alcohol while working, then action must be taken to preserve the safety of that person, others and University property. Inappropriate behaviour of this type should be reported to the Line Manager or supervisor as soon as possible.

First occurrence of a person affected

It is recommended that the manager or supervisor provide the affected employee with the opportunity to invite a colleague of their choice, such as a health and safety or union representative to be present during the initial discussion:

- the employee shall be offered an opportunity to explain their behaviour and modify it
- the employee shall be informed of the potential risk to their own safety and the safety of others due to their behaviour or impaired work performance
- where possible, the employee shall be redirected to alternative work areas or duties until assessed safe to return to previous duties
- where the above is not possible, the manager or supervisor shall ensure that the affected employee leaves the workplace for the day or shift and appropriate arrangements shall be made to ensure safe transport of the employee; the absence will be covered by sick leave
- the incident shall be documented and the employee counselled by the manager or supervisor at the commencement of the next scheduled shift or work period. The counselling interview, which also shall be documented, shall include the process to be implemented if the occurrence is repeated. This should be done in the presence of a representative of the employee or health and safety representative
- the manager or supervisor shall ensure that rehabilitation and assistance is offered to any employee who is identified as having an alcohol or drug related problem, which affects their work performance.



Repeat occurrence of a person affected

If alcohol or drug related problems continue then disciplinary procedures in line with the provisions of the University Act, Statutes and By-Laws shall be followed.

Students affected by alcohol or another drug

If it is considered that a student is affected by alcohol or another drug and it is possible that their actions will result in a compromise of safety, staff should call Security immediately. Security will attend and take the necessary action to ensure the safety of personnel and the student.

Social functions

Alcohol may only be provided at a management-endorsed social function on University premises when employees who consume alcohol will not be expected to return to work. Where alcohol is provided, "good service practice" will apply, i.e. food must be provided, low alcohol, and non-alcohol alternatives must be available. A nominee will be selected by local management to oversee the function.

Employee Assistance Program

It is suggested that action for an employee may include counselling and referral to relevant rehabilitation providers, including the University's Employee Assistance Program. Access to such services is through employee self referral to the University Employee Assistance Program provider Davidson Trahaire. This service is funded by the University and is available by contacting Davidson Trahaire on (08) 8361 9188 or 1300 360 364 for confidential assistance.

Illicit Drugs

The carrying, storing or use of Illicit drugs on University premises shall result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal, and/or referral to the Police.

Sale, transfer or manufacture of illicit substances in the workplace will result in dismissal. This includes the distribution of prescription drugs except where a licence is held.

References

- [University OHSW&IM Policy](#)
- [University OHSW Strategic Plan 2009 - 2011 \(PDF 158kb\)](#)
- [University Injury Management Strategic Plan 2009 - 2011 \(PDF 85kb\)](#)
- [OHSW & Injury Management System \(PDF 128kb\)](#)
- [Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Act, 1986](#)
- [Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Regulations, 2010](#)
- [University Act, Statutes and By-Laws](#)
- [Controlled Substances Act, 1984](#)