



Substance Misuse policy

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INTRODUCTION

Skylark is committed to meeting its safeguarding duties by providing safe and secure environments for all its users. The application of this policy is intended to ensure that there is consistency in the way that the misuse of substances or possession of prohibited items by students, is treated. Skylark wishes to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of all its students are not jeopardized through misuse of alcohol or substances or other prohibited items in any of the skylark provisions.

Skylark accepts its legal responsibility under the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) which states it is an offence for anyone who occupies, or is involved in the management of premises to knowingly allow the production or supply of controlled drugs or illegal substances on their premises. To that end Skylark expressly forbids any student on its premises to supply, possess or be under the influence of any substances as defined below and including, e.g. alcohol (except in circumstances authorised by the relevant Provision Leader), inappropriately used prescription drugs and those substances regulated by COSHH, (control of substances hazardous to health). This includes

psychoactive substances as described under the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

SCOPE AND AIMS

The policy applies to all student drug use within, or having an effect within, the grounds and premises of any Skylark provision. This includes all settings where the activity of the skylark provisions (including off site visits and residential visits) takes place.

POLICY

This policy is in place to safeguard the health and wellbeing of students;

- To ensure the students have an appropriate learning and, where relevant, living environment;
- To ensure that all students are able to take advantage of the curriculum and facilities offered without the hindrance of themselves or their peers being under the influence of either drugs or alcohol;
- To ensure students are made aware of any substance misuse issues and have access to the appropriate support;
- To ensure students are made aware of any issues relating to youth violence and have access to the appropriate support.

PROCEDURE

Substance misuse: drinking alcohol, taking drugs or a substance (either legal, illegal or 'recreational') either intermittently or continuously, such that it adversely interferes with an individual's health, work or study performance or conduct, or affects the work performance and/or safety of themselves or others.

Drugs

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'Drugs' refers to:

- All illegal drugs (those controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended))
- All psychoactive substances (incorrectly called "legal highs") as described in the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016
- All legal drugs, including alcohol, volatile substances which can be inhaled and alkyl nitrites ('poppers')
- All over the counter medicines and prescribed medicines used or offered for supply in a manner other than prescribed. This term includes prescription medicines where the prescription medicines have not been prescribed for the person possessing or using them and/or such prescription medicines which are not taken in accordance with the physician's guidelines
- Controlled Substances – Includes all chemical substances or drugs listed in any controlled substances acts or regulations applicable under law.

Possession

Being in possession of drugs refers to carrying or holding drugs and will include carrying, holding or storing drugs for someone else. This does not include possessing any alcohol in circumstances authorised by the relevant Provision Leader.

Supplying

Supplying drugs on College premises' refers to the passing of drugs to others, even where no money has changed hands. This does not include

supplying alcohol in circumstances authorised by the relevant Provision Leader.

Prohibited Items

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'prohibited item' refers to:

- Any substance whether legal or illegal that is deemed to impair a student's ability to study in a safe manner and /or may impact on the learning of other students.
- Any substance, such as a drug, etc, that is banned or forbidden by law or other authority.

Smoking

Smoking (including the smoking of 'e-cigarettes') is prohibited at all skylark provisions other than in designated, outdoor, smoking areas. All students at skylark provisions are to be reminded that it is against the law to smoke in a smoke-free environment.

Student Support

Students seeking advice and guidance in relation to substance misuse or youth violence will be offered support from the relevant staff members at their provision. They will be assisted to make use of one or more agencies, both internal and external, as appropriate, to work towards resolving those issues. This will include advice and guidance on:

- Reducing their personal use of substances
- Dealing with the effects of the illegal use of substances by others
- Dealing with the effects of substance misuse by their family or friends
- Dealing with becoming victims of drug and/or alcohol related issues

- Reducing their risk in relation to youth violence
- Dealing with the effects of the potential use of prohibited items by others
- Dealing with becoming victims of youth violence issues.

A student, who contravenes this policy, refuses support or whose performance and behaviour do not improve following support will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

Procedure for the implementation of the substance misuse policy with students

Skylark has a policy of zero tolerance to substance misuse but in the first instance the welfare of the student is the primary consideration. It recognises that a variety of responses will be necessary to deal with incidents initially. Skylark and the Provision Leader of the relevant provision will consider very carefully the implications of any action it may take. They will seek to balance the interest of the student involved, alongside those of other members of the skylark provision involved, and of the local community.

In responding to incidents of suspected drug use the primary concern is to protect individuals from harming either themselves or others.

In extreme situations, it may be necessary to call the police and/or an ambulance. Staff are urged to take this action as soon as it is deemed necessary and to seek support from the on-call duty manager.

Staff

All staff are required to respond appropriately when:

- They suspect that a student is under the influence of any substance which is interfering with their ability or the ability of others to take a full and active part in any skylark activity

- They suspect that a student under the influence of any substance could potentially cause harm to themselves or others around them
- They discover any substance they suspect to be illegal
- They observe any buying or selling activity of drugs

Dealing with students under the influence of alcohol or drugs

If it is suspected that a student is excessively intoxicated by drugs or alcohol then if possible staff should remove the student to a safe, secure environment. The on-call duty manager should be contacted to assess the situation.

Staff should not try to discuss drug taking or alcohol abuse with students whilst they are under the influence other than to establish what they have taken and in what quantity, in case medical intervention is required.

Contact will be made with relevant agencies and professionals, and, unless prohibited for legal reasons, the student's parents or carers.

Dealing with the discovery of suspected illegal substances within skylark premises

Staff are required to report the finding of any illegal or suspected illegal substances and drug paraphernalia to the relevant Provision Leader. Drug detritus is potentially hazardous and must be removed from the persons immediately. It must then be kept in a secure location until a member of the senior management team advises of disposal methods. The Provision Leader may seek advice from the Police in determining the nature of the substance.

Dealing with people suspected of carrying illegal substances/alcohol on Skylark premises

Staff are required to inform the Provision Leader as soon as they are suspicious that a person or persons are carrying illegal substances or alcohol.

Staff should follow the student's risk assessment if they attempt to run away unless this puts them or others at risk.

The on-call duty manager will contact the Police if they consider an offence has been or may be committed.

Actions taken and informing relevant agencies and parents/carers

The Skylark Provision Leader will ensure that any of the following actions that are relevant are carried out:

- the student's individual Risk Assessment is updated;
- any staff involved are debriefed and offered additional support / training;
- any relevant therapy is scheduled;
- a health and well-being session organised;
- the student's personal behaviour support plan (PBS) is updated;
- if relevant, the student's suicidal risk assessment updated;

The Skylark Provision Leader will also ensure that notifications are made and relevant information sharing takes place.