

HS13 Drugs and Alcohol | Standard Operating Procedure

1. Background information

1.1. Introduction/Purpose

1.1.1. This specific aims of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) are:

- To ensure a safe working environment for all.
- To recognise that drug and alcohol misuse may be a health problem: an illness/sickness.
- To identify employees with a problem at an early stage.
- To provide assistance and support to employees with a drug and/or alcohol problem where appropriate.

1.2. Scope

1.2.1. This SOP does not make a moral judgement and is only concerned with a commercial judgement in the best interests of the school and its employees.

1.2.2. This policy applies to all employees (hourly paid, monthly paid, managers, consultants, agency workers etc.) It also applies to contractors visiting the site.

1.2.3. The policy applies to all employees, who are “at work”, on or off-site.

1.3. Definitions

- 1.3.1. Substance misuse – substance misuse/abuse refers to the use of substances, whether legal, illegal or prescribed which results in unacceptable or unsafe behaviour.
- 1.3.2. Alcohol Misuse – alcohol misuse is classed as being at work under the influence of alcohol or drinking alcohol on university premises.
- 1.3.3. Unacceptable/unsafe behaviour is defined as...
 - Verbal abuse
 - Unsafe working practices
 - Physical aggression
 - Irrational behaviour
 - Impaired co-ordination
 - Impaired co-ordination

1.4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.4.1. It is the responsibility of anyone who has staff reporting to them to enforce this school policy. (E.g. Directors, Managers, Supervisors, Cell Leaders, Team Leaders) (Directors, Managers, Supervisors, Cell Leaders, Team Leaders)
- 1.4.2. Specifically, their responsibilities are:
 - To be familiar with and to enforce this policy.
 - To refuse to allow anyone to work who reports for duty under the influence of substances or having consumed excess alcohol.
 - To intervene effectively when an employee's performance appears to be adversely affected by substances or alcohol.
 - To be aware of the legal implications of drugs in the workplace, including obligations to notify the police of incidents involving illegal drugs.
 - Not to make moral judgements when counselling or interviewing employees.
 - To respect the requirement for strict confidentiality.
 - To seek advice where problems have been identified and be able to guide the employee concerned to seek help.
 - To ensure contractors working in their area of responsibility comply with the policy.

- To be aware of, and monitor, changes in performance, attendance, sickness and accident patterns and take appropriate action.

2. Main Content

2.1. Confidentiality

2.1.1. All matters relating to substance use/abuse or alcohol use/abuse will be treated in confidence by the university.

- This includes all personnel in a supervisory or management role and any service provider who may also be involved with any individual.
 - For example, any counselling service provider, or occupational health service provider.

2.2. Help

2.2.1. The university will treat any employee who approaches with a problem with discretion and in complete confidence.

2.2.2. Where an employee acknowledges that they have a problem then SOAS will make every effort to help the individual concerned. The university will:

- Provide information
- Provide reasonable access to the following counselling services:
 - National drugs helpline 0800 776600
 - Alcoholics Anonymous 0845 7697555
- Treat the condition as an “illness” and may offer financial support towards treatment. Time off for this treatment would be paid upon providing evidence of such treatment.
- Provide support for the family.

2.2.3. If an employee denies that neither alcohol nor drugs are the cause of the problem (whether believed or not), the employee leaves the school with no option other than to deal with the matter as a disciplinary / capability issue.

2.2.4. At all stages of the disciplinary procedure, the school is open to discussing any underlying problem.

2.3. Disciplinary Action

2.3.1. Prohibited acts or omissions under this policy:

- Illegal substance consumption whilst at work is deemed to be gross misconduct. Findings of gross misconduct will lead to instant dismissal.
- Alcohol consumption during normal working hours is deemed to be gross misconduct. It is therefore not acceptable to drink alcohol or take drugs during a meal break.
- Possession or supply of illegal substances is deemed to be gross misconduct.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or substances whilst at work, which results in unacceptable or unsafe behaviour. This will be deemed to be gross misconduct.

2.3.2. Personnel suspected of substance or alcohol abuse/misuse will be interviewed at the time of the incident.

2.3.3. The interview will be conducted by their immediate superior and in the presence of a third person.

2.3.4. If it is felt that they are under the influence of a substance or alcohol then they will be immediately suspended and asked to attend a disciplinary interview at a later date.

2.3.5. All such interviews will be recorded.

Document History

Version	Published	Owner	Status	Review Date / Schedule	Notes / Changes
V1	Feb 23	Estates and Property Services	Approved by Health & Safety Committee – Feb 23	Annual review or when dictated by incident or legislation.	First Issue