



Policy on Alcohol Consumption and/or Substance Abuse at Work

The University is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff members. The University will take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of injuries or incidents as the result of alcohol consumption or substance abuse, not only for an individual staff member but also for colleagues, students and others with whom the staff member may come into contact while undertaking their duties and responsibilities including involvement in professional and social activities undertaken during the course of University business.

The drinking of alcohol by staff members at any time while undertaking their duties and responsibilities prohibited other than at an approved social function with the prior agreement of the line manager. In such circumstances the person responsible for arranging the function must ensure that the provision of alcohol is moderate and non-alcoholic alternatives are available. Following risk assessment, staff members undertaking certain activities will not be permitted to drink at all. These are likely to include:

- Activities involving hazardous chemicals.
- The operation of machinery.
- Driving of vehicles.
- Working at heights or in confined spaces.

Drinking to an 'unreasonable level' is considered to be any of the following:

- In the opinion of management, a staff member's performance is impaired
- In the opinion of management, the staff member's behaviour may cause embarrassment, distress or offence to others.
- The staff member continues to drink when instructed to stop by a manager.

As a guideline, the University recommends that all staff members follow the legal requirements relating to drinking and driving as an indicator of what would be considered acceptable consumption of alcohol.

No staff member or other person working under the University control shall, in connection with any work-related activity:

- Report, or endeavour to report, for duty having consumed alcohol, illegal drugs or prescribed medication likely to render them unfit and/or unsafe for work.

- Consume or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while on duty [unless, in the case of alcohol, with the agreement of line management for the purposes of an approved social function or official entertaining].
- Store alcohol (other than in licensed premises or designated areas) or illegal drugs in the workplace.
- Attempt to sell alcohol or illegal drugs.

Staff members must inform their line manager if they are taking any prescribed medication that may have an effect on their ability to carry out their work safely, and must follow any instructions subsequently given.

Any staff member suffering from illegal drug or alcohol dependency should declare this to their line manager, and the University will subsequently provide reasonable assistance, in the first instance encouraging the staff member to seek the advice and guidance of their GP and recording absences for treatment and/or rehabilitation as any other sickness absence. In some instances the University may refer the staff member to an Occupational Health Physician.

Being unfit for work or while undertaking professional or social activities during the course of the University business as a result of the consumption of alcohol or drugs will be regarded as gross misconduct and will result in dismissal.

Document title	Policy on Alcohol Consumption and / or Substance Abuse at Work
Version	1
Person responsible	Rachel Libby-Chiaa
Author	Rachel Libby-Chiaa
Document date	September 2008
Last amended	April 2009
Effective from	February 2009
Review date	February 2012
Impact Assessment date	13 November 2009
History (where discussed / who circulated to / committees considered)	PRC H&S Finance & Staffing Board of Governors