

Policy Statement

Students must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance, including so-called “legal highs”, while on College premises. Students must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, any controlled substance or “legal high” whilst undertaking a College activity away from college premises. Students must not bring alcohol or any controlled substance (including legal high) onto College premises or to any college activity away from college premises.

1 Definition

A controlled substance is an illegal or unauthorised medicine, inhalant, drug or narcotic including but not limited to: Marijuana, Heroin, Cocaine, LSD and Barbiturates.

Substance misuse includes the non-medical use of any substance, e.g. illegal drugs, legal highs, prescribed drugs, solvents and alcohol, to effect changes in mood, perception or physical performance.

The college premises includes any building and/or grounds that is owned or rented by Shrewsbury Colleges Group for the use of delivering education.

College activities held away from college premises includes any outing and/or residential activity that is managed by Shrewsbury College staff, or managed by a third party on behalf of Shrewsbury Colleges Group.

2 Purpose

Shrewsbury Colleges Group is committed to:

- Providing an appropriate and safe learning environment;
- Helping and supporting, as far as is practical, those students who either have a personal substance problem or whose lives are affected by the substance misuse of a partner or relative, by linking with the appropriate external agencies;
- Encouraging any student with a substance related problem to seek help at the earliest opportunity;
- Providing substance misuse related education and information programmes for students via the Tutorial programme;
- Recognising its legal obligations as identified in relevant legislation, including the Misuse of Drugs Act 1968 (Revised 1971, 1993, 2004 and 2005).

3 Scope

This policy applies to all students. It applies to substance misuse within, or having an effect within, the grounds and premises of the Colleges Group. This includes all settings where College activity (including off site visits and residential) is taking place.

4 Organisation and responsibility

The college will:

- Treat any breach of this policy as gross misconduct within the terms of the Student Conduct Procedure ie. there is a zero tolerance approach to the possession of illegal substances on College premises;
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with College policies, and support referrals as appropriate;
- Establish links with suitable sources of professional advice and treatment;
- Make students aware of the existence of this policy through the start of year Principal's Welcome and the Tutorial Programme;
- Make provision for appropriate training, both for those involved in specifically implementing the policy and for College staff as a whole.

All College staff will:

- Follow the Student Conduct Procedure when dealing with incidents involving substance misuse in college;
- Encourage any student who has a substance problem to get advice and help from the Safeguarding Team within the college or from appropriate outside agencies.

The Safeguarding Team, under the direction of Senior Leadership Team, will:

- Support students who disclose vulnerabilities related to substance misuse
- Liaise with relevant college personnel as appropriate;
- Liaise with relevant external agencies;
- Log reports of any further steps taken on the college safeguarding system

5 Procedures

General

In responding to incidents of suspected substance misuse the primary concern is to protect individuals from harming either themselves or others. At all times, the College must meet its legal obligations to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults (see Safeguarding Policy).

5.1 Students making disclosures about their own substance misuse

Individuals should be made aware of the confidential support that is available within college. This may include referrals to external agencies such as alcohol services and drugs services in Shropshire by the Safeguarding Team.

5.2 Students who are experiencing difficulties as a result of others' substance misuse

The Safeguarding Team will offer guidance and support to any student making such a disclosure.

5.3 Students found under the influence of a controlled substance where an individual's ability to study or carry out their normal duties is impaired

In cases where behaviour observed is not deemed to be a risk to others or to themselves, the student who is, or is suspected as being under the influence of a controlled substance will be dealt with by the Curriculum Support Team Leader (for students following academic study programmes) or Curriculum Leader (for students following vocational study programmes) who will in the first instance a) send the student home and b) follow the relevant Student Conduct Procedure.

Being under the influence of a controlled substance is classed as gross misconduct within the Student Conduct Policy, and therefore, in most cases, it is likely that the student concerned will be suspended pending a further investigation. Where a student is only suspected of being under the influence of a controlled substance, college staff can only deal with the resulting behaviour and discuss their concerns with the student. In these circumstances, it is important to keep a record of concerns, in order to support the student.

In cases where the behaviour observed is deemed to pose a risk to themselves (but not to others), the student who is, or is suspected to be under the influence of a controlled substance will be dealt in accordance with the Safeguarding policy, and as such professional judgement will need to be made about whether the individual needs a) immediate medical help or whether they need b) to be observed, in a safe area (such as a First Aid room), before they are sent home.

In cases where the behaviour observed is deemed to pose a significant risk to others, the following may need to happen: a) appropriate physical intervention is utilised (see the Safe Working Practices Policy); b) immediate assistance from the Police is sought.

5.4. Using, supplying, cultivating bringing drugs, legal highs or alcohol on College premises

a) Staff

If a member of staff discovers that a student has brought in and/ or consumed alcohol or has been using, supplying, bringing onto or cultivating drugs on college premises they should contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

NB. Individual members of staff will not normally be expected to contact the police direct, but should contact a member of the Safeguarding or Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible.

b) Students

Students should immediately report any incidents of substance misuse, or the supplying of illegal substances to a staff member who will then take actions as identified above.

5.5. Finding illegal drugs, legal highs or substance paraphernalia/equipment or Legal Highs on College premises

a) Staff

If an individual staff member finds an illegal drug or substance paraphernalia/equipment on the College premises they should:

- Contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Staff should not attempt to remove or dispose of illegal substances from students or if found within the building or its grounds. Instead they should immediately inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will decide on the appropriate action.
- If illegal substances are found on the college grounds or within the building, arrangements should be immediately made to isolate the area, so that action can be taken by the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team.

b) Students

Students should report immediately any such incident to a staff member, who will then take action as identified above.

5.6. Use of alcohol for entertainment purposes

There will be occasions when alcohol will be available on the college campuses. This will usually be as part of an entertainment event, such as a private view or within the college restaurant. On planning these occasions, appropriate licensing procedures will be followed.