



# Misuse of Substances Statement

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## Introduction

1. Northeastern University London (the University) has a responsibility to uphold the law. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires the University to do what is reasonable to protect the health and safety of staff, students and visitors. All students have a legal responsibility to take care of their own safety and that of others.
2. The University aims to balance respect for the privacy and freedom of individual students with the imperatives of compliance with the law and maintenance of a safe, productive and legal environment in the best interests of its students.
3. Misuse of substances:<sup>1</sup>
  - 3.1. Is used here to describe the possession, supply, use, trade, distribution or selling, of substances such as alcohol, controlled drugs, and psychoactive substances. The use of study drugs and/or other prescription drugs that have not been legally obtained or are used in a manner or for a purpose other than as prescribed.
  - 3.2. The selling of alcohol outside of the conditions of the University's licence in relation to the Students' Union Bar.
  - 3.3. Applies to students on University premises or elsewhere when on University business or study activities.
4. The University:
  - 4.1. In no way condones the misuse of substances and will balance disciplinary action with appropriate support for students who misuse them.
  - 4.2. Aims to facilitate the early identification of misuse and to encourage students to seek advice, help and assistance voluntarily before their studies are adversely affected.
  - 4.3. Is committed to supporting students through educational, counselling<sup>2</sup> and disciplinary<sup>3</sup> approaches.

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<sup>1</sup> Use of the term 'misuse' does not imply that substances have a correct use.

<sup>2</sup> [Support to Study Policy](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Disciplinary Procedure for Students](#)

## Alcohol

5. The University recognises that the majority of students come to the University as adults and are therefore legally entitled to consume alcohol.<sup>4</sup>
6. Alcohol use is permitted on University premises with prior permission from a member of the Operations Team and subject to the Licensing Act 2003.
7. The University does not condone the excessive use of alcohol on its premises and students are expected to behave in a respectful and safe manner at all times. Students who are found to be behaving inappropriately under the influence of alcohol may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure for Students.
8. Information on units of alcohol and how to calculate the number of units in an alcoholic drink can be found here.
9. Students should be aware of the dangers of 'drink spiking' and 'date rape drugs' and should not leave drinks unattended. Any student who becomes concerned about possible drink spiking at a University event should immediately find a member of staff for assistance. More information about drink spiking can be found here.

## Controlled Drugs

10. It is an offence under the [Misuse of Drugs Act 1971](#) for the occupier of premises or persons concerned in the management of premises to allow the supply, use or production of drugs to take place on those premises.
11. The term 'controlled drugs' covers a wide range of substances, but the best known are cannabis, cocaine, and heroin, together with the many derivatives or hybrids of these drugs.<sup>5</sup>
12. The University does not condone the misuse of any controlled drug ([Misuse of Drugs Act 1971](#)) on its premises.
13. Any person found on University premises who is not a student and who is found or suspected to be involved with illegal drugs will be subject to an immediate lifetime ban from the University.
14. Any student who is found with controlled drugs while on the University premises or outside the premises on a study related activity may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure for Students.

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<sup>4</sup> See Students Under 18 Policy

<sup>5</sup> Controlled Drugs List

15. Any student who invites someone from outside the University on to the University premises who is found with controlled drugs may also be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure for Students.

## Psychoactive Substances

16. The [Psychoactive Substances Act 2016](#) made substances formerly known as 'legal highs', which mimic the effects of traditional drugs that are controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, illegal. Information on psychoactive substances can be found [here](#).
17. The University does not condone the use of any psychoactive substances on its premises including laughing gas (NOS).
18. Any student found in possession of psychoactive substances while on University premises or outside the premises on a study related activity may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure for Students.

## Study Drugs

19. The University does not condone the use of study drugs. A study drug in this context refers to the use of substances or non-prescribed prescription medications that are used for cognitive enhancement and endurance. These may take the form of stimulants used to treat conditions such as narcolepsy or Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).
20. It is illegal to possess and use prescribed medications without a doctor's prescription. In addition, taking such medications without medical oversight can pose a significant health risk.

## Actions if Drug Possession is Suspected

21. The University implements a zero-tolerance approach to the possession, supply and production of illegal drugs. Any student(s) believed to be in breach of this regulation will be subject to the University's disciplinary procedures as outlined in the [Disciplinary Procedure for Students](#).
22. Where there is physical evidence of illegal substances having been brought onto or used on University premises, the student(s) in question will be ejected from Campus and disciplinary procedures will begin. Depending on the severity of the breach the University may decide to inform the Police.

## Duty of Care

23. The University's duty of care to students is paramount. Where a student believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs poses an immediate risk of harm to themselves and/or others they may require immediate assistance. In such cases, the [Support to Study Policy](#) should be followed.
24. Where a student is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, but they are not considered to be at immediate risk, SSD will be advised and a member of SSD will support the student to return home, or to an alternative suitable location, safely.
25. If a student or member of staff is concerned about another student's welfare, they should encourage them to seek advice from Student Support and Development (SSD). If this proves difficult, the person with that concerning information should seek advice themselves, from SSD. If the University feels it is necessary to intercede and involve either other members of staff or external professionals, the individual providing the information will remain anonymous, in so far as this is possible in the circumstances.
26. All concerns or disclosures should be raised as soon as possible with SSD, in a confidential and professional manner. Those raising a concern or disclosure should provide evidence to illustrate their concern or disclosure. The evidence may include reports about situations which have arisen, or which show a decline in the student's health and wellbeing, or there is a belief that the student is at risk of harm to themselves or others. For further information on confidentiality, please refer to the [Student Confidentiality Statement](#).
27. Students who contravene legislation may be subject to disciplinary action under the Disciplinary Procedure for Students. The University may report incidents to the Police, which may result in criminal proceedings. Disciplinary action may also have implications for a student's future at the University, on future employment, and professional registration where applicable.

## Information, Advice and Guidance

28. The University will endeavour to increase awareness and understanding of substance misuse by:
  - 28.1. Providing publicity material to raise student awareness, e.g., posters and leaflets.

28.2. Providing training to relevant staff.

28.3. Inviting the Metropolitan Police and a representative from a local organisation (e.g., Turning Point) to give talks at events during Freshers' Week and other appropriate forums throughout the year.

28.4. Working with the Student Union Welfare Officer.

29. Students may wish to seek advice from SSD and refer to the [Student Confidentiality Statement](#).
30. The University regards an individual's misuse of substances as a wellbeing problem and encourages students to seek help. It is the student's choice whether to disclose their dependency to the University.
31. For students who wish to disclose their substance misuse, advice is available from SSD. Students can also [talk to Frank](#), or seek support from their GP or local support networks such as [Turning Point](#).

## Reporting, Monitoring and Reviewing

32. The Academic Registrar shall report to Academic Board statistical information relating to student misuse of substance cases on an annual basis. It shall be the responsibility of Academic Board to monitor the data and make recommendations as appropriate.
33. NCH at Northeastern Limited Board receives data relating to the frequency and outcomes of this policy.

## Version History

<b>Title: Misuse of Substances Statement</b>				
<b>Approved by: Academic Board</b>				
<b>Location: Academic Handbook/ Policies and Procedures/ General</b>				
<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Date Published</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Proposed Next Review Date</b>
4.0	July 2022	August 2022	Registrar	June 2024
3.0	November 2021	November 2021	Registrar	November 2022
2.0	June 2020	June 2020	Registrar	June 2021
1.0 (formally the Drugs and Alcohol Policy)	January 2017	January 2017	Registrar	September 2018
<b>Referenced documents</b>				
	Disciplinary Procedure for Students; Support to Study Policy; Student Confidentiality Statement			
<b>External Reference Point(s)</b>				
	UK Quality Code Theme: Learning and Teaching; Enabling Student Achievement; Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; Misuse of Drugs Act 1971; Turning Point; Frank; Searching, screening and confiscation; Psychoactive Substances Act 2016; Controlled Drugs List; Licensing Act 2003; NHS Alcohol Support; NHS Drink Spiking and Date Rape Drugs			