



Staff Drug and Alcohol Policy

ELT manager	Principal & Chief Executive
Responsible officer	Head of HR & Organisational Development
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Equality impact assessment	
Further information (where relevant)	

Reviewer	Date	Review Action/Impact	BoM
V Ferguson	October 2020	Responsible Officer changed to Head of HR & Organisational Development 7.0 changed to Responsibilities, added Curriculum Area Leads and changed Team Leader to Course Leader Changed HR Manager to Head of HR & Organisational Development 8.0 – changed to Related Policies Added Health & Safety Policy, Staff Discipline Policy, Driving at Work Policy, Sickness and Absence Policy	

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1 Purpose

The College is required so far as is reasonably practicable under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure the health, safety of its staff, students and others affected by its activities. The purpose of this policy document is to provide a framework within which issues relating to the inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol will be managed, and specifically to:

- promote awareness of, and prevent difficulties associated with, the inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol; and
- safeguard staff, students, and visitors from the potential hazards of the inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol.

2 Scope

This document outlines the policy which will be followed in respect of the inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol relating to all staff whilst on College premises and/or where College activities are taking place. The key elements of this policy are set out below. Further detailed advice and information can be found in the appendices or may be accessed by contacting the HR Department.

This policy applies to all staff of West Highland College UHI, contractors, casuals, volunteers and agency workers.

3 Definitions

The inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol is defined as the use of alcohol, drugs (both prescribed and illegal) and/or any other substances likely to affect performance or behaviour adversely.

A drug or alcohol problem is defined as any drug taking or drinking, either intermittent or continual, which definitely and repeatedly interferes with a person's health and social functioning and/or work capability or conduct. Any member of staff who suspects, or knows, that they have a drug or alcohol related problem, is encouraged to seek help and treatment at an early stage, either through the enclosed procedures, or through resources of their own choosing.

4 Policy

West Highland College UHI has an obligation to all its customers, be they students, businesses or suppliers, to provide the best and most efficient service it can. It is recognised that the inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol may have a serious detrimental effect on a member of staff's ability to carry out their job and therefore affect the quality of service provided.

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The College recognises that drug and alcohol related problems may lead to increased risks to a person's health, safety and welfare. Consequently, it recognises that drug and alcohol use are primarily health issues requiring positive support.

All staff and students should reasonably expect to work or learn in an environment that is free from the potential hazards and effects of people whose performance may be impaired through the inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol.

Drug and alcohol issues within West Highland College UHI will normally be dealt with through the provision of positive support and practical assistance. It should, however, be recognised that the nature of the College business is such that incidents relating to inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol whilst within College will normally be treated as a disciplinary issue, and potentially as gross misconduct.

The undernoted guidelines provide a policy framework within which drug and alcohol issues will be managed. Additional information in respect of drug and alcohol issues is detailed within the Staff Drug and Alcohol Procedure, and the appendices which accompany this policy document.

4.1 Alcohol consumption during working hours

All staff have a responsibility to maintain a professional standard of service, whilst also ensuring that the College provides a safe and satisfactory learning environment. As such, the following policy has been agreed in respect of the consumption of alcohol during normal working hours.

Staff are required to refrain from alcohol during working hours, including meal breaks. Furthermore, the use of illegal drugs is not permitted at any time.

Alcohol during Work-Related Social Events

Work-related functions and events where attendance is on behalf of the college are seen as an extension of the workplace and therefore must be sanctioned by the college Executive Leadership Team. The College recognises that alcohol may be consumed at such events but nevertheless expects staff to behave responsibly. Employees should consume alcohol only in moderation at work-related social events and must be fit for work when conducting duties and are always expected to maintain and be responsible for their own standards of behaviour.

4.2 Guidance relating to the use of prescribed or over the counter medicine

Many common problems stemming from the inappropriate use of drugs relate to prescribed or over the counter medicines and specifically to the side effects of many common medical drugs.

Where side effects of this type are known, anticipated or experienced, appropriate guidance should be sought from a doctor or pharmacist, and availability of any alternatives considered. If alternative remedies are not available, it may be appropriate to undertake work of a non-hazardous nature, or to be absent from work, until treatment is completed.

Prescribed or over-the-counter medication may lead to problems of inappropriate use, including dependency. Problems of this type will be dealt with in line with the procedure outlined below.

4.3 Guidance for Staff with a Drug or Alcohol Problem

Information and advice on the recognition and identification of potential drug or alcohol problems is included in the enclosed appendices. Information and advice on drug and alcohol support is also available on a confidential basis by contacting the Human Resources Manager/Officer.

Where a member of staff feels that they may have a drug or alcohol problem, including but not exclusively dependency, they are encouraged to seek appropriate professional assistance at the earliest possible instance.

5. Unreported Drug or Alcohol Issues

If an unreported drug or alcohol problem affects an individual's ability to perform their duties or poses a risk to health and safety, the College will deem this to be a serious disciplinary situation.

Where a member of staff is found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst within the College, the matter will be regarded as an issue of gross misconduct warranting action through the staff disciplinary procedures.

6. Conclusion

This policy statement, and the related procedure and appendix information, are designed to ensure that the arrangements for dealing with drug and alcohol related problems are carried out in a realistic, responsible, caring and supportive way, relative to the full range of responsibilities faced by the College as a supportive employer and service provider. It should be recognised that there is a difficult balance to be struck between the various health and social responsibility issues involved, and performance, discipline and health and safety considerations.

West Highland College UHI has a demonstrable commitment to the care and support of all staff and will ensure that all staff with Line Management responsibilities receive training and guidance in order to provide effective support to their staff. The College will ensure that funds are available to promote awareness of drug and alcohol issues and to set up and maintain appropriate support plans for individuals as necessary. This policy document, together with the accompanying procedures and appendices, will be reviewed as necessary over time, to meet developing College needs.

7. Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team - is responsible for ensuring that this policy is fully implemented throughout the College.

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The College Management Team, all Managers and Curriculum Area Leads and Course Leaders - have a duty to ensure that the College's policies including this policy are implemented within their sphere of activities and responsibility.

Head of HR & Organisational Development – It is the responsibility of Head of HR & Organisational Development to review and update this policy.

All Staff - are responsible for adhering to this policy.

8. Related Policies

- Staff Drug and Alcohol Procedure and Appendices.
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Discipline Policy
- Driving at Work Policy
- Sickness and Absence Policy

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or when circumstances change any part of it.