

Drugs and Alcohol Policy

About this policy

1. Backstage Academy is committed to maintaining a safe and professional working and learning environment and does not approve of the excessive or inappropriate use of alcohol or the misuse of drugs, whether illegal, prescribed or over the counter. Possessing and supplying illegal drugs is a criminal offence and will not be condoned.
2. The 'Misuse of Drugs Act 1971' makes it an offence to possess, use or supply to other persons, any controlled drug. The Act also makes it an offence for the occupier of the premises or a person concerned in management of premises to knowingly permit or suffer any of several activities to take place on those premises. The activities specified in the Act include smoking cannabis or cannabis resin, and supplying or attempting to supply a controlled drug to another person. The University, as the landlord, is obliged to comply with the Act and notify the police if a student is found to be in possession of drugs or to be supplying or producing illegal substances.
3. Backstage Academy will offer help to those who voluntarily admit to having an alcohol or drug misuse problem.
4. Backstage Academy supports the diverse educational, personal and social needs of its students and recognises that drugs should not be seen as an isolated issue but rather recognised as one that needs to be integrated into Backstage Academy's holistic approach to student welfare. Thus this document focuses on what are the boundaries for acceptable behaviour and education for personal and social development.
5. Backstage Academy is committed to creating a student support environment that encourages any substance misuser to acknowledge that they have a problem and to seek treatment through Backstage Academy's counselling services, thus taking responsibility for their own health. Individuals who fail to take the opportunity of voluntarily disclosing any substance misuse before being 'found out' by other means such as poor work performance, class absence or interfering with the rights of other students, may forfeit the right for the problem to be treated in a supportive manner.

Scope and applicability

6. This policy aims to encourage students with problems relating to the misuse of alcohol, drugs or other controlled substances to seek out help and advice voluntarily before their studies are affected. It also outlines the disciplinary steps Backstage Academy will take against any student who wilfully disregards Backstage Academy's policy while engaged with their studies.
7. The policy applies to all Backstage Academy premises and all other venues where student attendance is required by Backstage Academy and Backstage Academy students living in the student accommodation at Waterside Park.

Definitions

8. The terms "drugs" and "substances", unless otherwise stated are used to refer to:
 - all drugs defined as illegal under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, including but not limited to Cannabis, Heroin, Ecstasy, Cocaine, Amphetamine, and LSD;
 - legal drugs including alcohol, tobacco, and volatile substances;
 - all over the counter and prescription medicines

General principles

9. Backstage Academy will immediately exclude any student who is found to be selling illegal substances on or off Backstage Academy premises or encouraging others to use illegal substances and the incident may be reported to the Police;
10. Possession of Class A, B and C substances on College grounds will lead to exclusion unless evidence of a recovery programme is available;
11. Any student found to be using illegal substances may be disciplined under the student disciplinary procedure. If a student is discovered using an illegal substance on Backstage Academy premises, then the matter should be reported, in confidence, to the Vice Principal
12. Any student who is, or appears, to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during classes, workshops or productions, will be removed immediately and recorded as absent.
13. All actions taken in response to these general principles will adhere to the rights and statements set out in the **Student Complaints** and **Student Non-academic Disciplinary** policies and procedures.

Provision of support

14. The aim of this policy is, wherever possible, to provide support with a view to achieving full recovery and return to health for students with a drug, substance or alcohol related problem. However, Backstage Academy reserves the right to exclude a student who in any way threatens or risks harm to other people or who has been the subject of police investigation or court proceedings. Backstage Academy is also committed to undertake work towards safeguarding its student population from the potential harm that drug and alcohol abuse can cause to other students.
15. Support will be offered via the Student Support and the student's own GP to appropriate counselling services or agencies; Backstage Academy will recognise periods of treatment as periods of sickness; Within reasonable limits courses will make modification to workloads during periods of recovery.
16. Confidentiality will be maintained as long as a student is positively seeking help towards health and there is no concern for his/her welfare, or that of a dependent. The student will be asked to provide evidence that they are seeking help, for example, letter of confirmation from GP or consultant or other healthcare professional.

Emergencies

17. If a situation arises within which a student is unconscious, claims to have taken a dangerous substance or is in a seriously impaired state as a result of drug, substance or alcohol use then the following procedures should be adhered to:
 - Call an ambulance if a student is found unconscious or loses consciousness. If possible, a qualified first-aider should be identified and should stay with the student whilst waiting for the ambulance;
 - The incident should be recorded by reception staff;
 - The incident should be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team;
 - At an appropriate time, decide in conjunction with the student how this incident will be followed up (e.g. provision of internal/external support, treatment, etc.).

Prescribed medication

18. Responsible use and storage of medication should be discussed between the individual student who needs this facility and the Director of Operations and Student Services

Individuals' responsibility

19. Individuals who are found to have a substance problem are asked to take personal responsibility as follows:
 - Agree to follow an appropriate course of medical treatment recommended by medical advisers;
 - Co-operate with Backstage Academy by informing us of sick leave periods;
 - Give permission for regular reports to be sent from the individual's GP or medical advisers

Staff and student (peer) responsibilities

20. Under section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 it is an offence for the Management of Backstage Academy to knowingly permit the supply and production of any illegal drug on its premises. It is also an offence to knowingly allow the premises to be used for the smoking of cannabis or opium
21. If members of staff or other students have good reason to suspect a student may be suffering from or misusing drugs, alcohol or other controlled substances or dealing and supplying them, they should try to persuade the student to seek specialist advice and assistance from the Student Support team
If the student does not voluntarily seek help, then the matter should be discussed in confidence with a member of the Student Support Team.
22. Unproven suspicions must not be logged in any way on the student record.

Sources of Support

1. External support agencies include:

Drinkline

www.patient.co.uk/support/drinkline

Helpline: 0800 917 8282

Alcoholics Anonymous

Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Helpline: 020 7833 0022

www.drugscope.org.uk

FRANK – Free confidential information/advice 24 hours a day includes the National Drugs Helpline:

Website: www.talktofrank.com

Helpline 0800 77 6600