



UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

University of Limerick

**STUDENT SUBSTANCE USE
AND MISUSE POLICY**

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy addresses the use and misuse of legal drugs (for example alcohol, prescription medication, performance enhancing drugs), and/or illegal drugs by students in the University of Limerick.

As part of the Healthy UL Campus Initiative, the University of Limerick seeks to develop a comprehensive addiction prevention programme for students. Through the programme, the University of Limerick will demonstrate its commitment to safeguarding health, safety and welfare of the college community.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 *To whom does this Policy apply?*

This Policy applies to all University of Limerick students.

1.2.2 *In what situations does the policy apply?*

The University of Limerick is concerned for students' wellbeing and the impact substances may have on their health, academic/work and personal life. Any student experiencing substance related issues should seek help and support. Guidance and further information about supports is provided in appendix 1.

This policy applies to all registered students throughout their programme of study at the University of Limerick.

This policy will align with existing University policy and in particular Fitness to Study Policy, Fitness to Practice Policy and the Student Code of Conduct.

It is not anticipated that this policy shall be invoked in cases already being considered under UL's Student Code of Conduct. However, following the investigation of a complaint against a student under the Student Code of Conduct and where there is a concern that substance use or misuse are adversely affecting the behaviour of the student, the University Advocate may recommend that the student be referred to this policy as an alternative to disciplinary procedures.

1.2.3 *Who is responsible for ensuring that the policy (and any associated procedure) is implemented and monitored?*

Healthy UL recommends a partnership approach to the implementation and monitoring of the policy on student use and misuse of substances. Student Life and the Student Affairs Division will agree a plan of oversight, which will include an annual review of the policy.

1.3 Definitions

Substances in this policy are defined as drugs and alcohol.

Drugs, include any substance for which it is illegal to sell, possess or consume and which produces physical, mental, emotional or behavioural change in the person. This includes prescription drugs where these have not been prescribed to the person possessing or using them, or when such drugs are not taken with a physician's direction.

For the purpose of this policy, substance misuse refers to excessive alcohol consumption, taking drugs or a controlled substance, either intermittently or continuously, which interferes with an individual's health, study/work capabilities or conduct, or which affects the performance and/or safety of the individual or others.

'Student', unless specifically qualified otherwise, is defined as any person pursuing a module or programme of study at all award levels offered by UL, that is, including research programmes, whether or not they are currently in attendance, studying by distance/online, suspended, on leave of absence or on placement.

2. Context

2.1 Legal and Regulatory Context

The University is cognisant of the legal framework within which this policy will operate. The possession and supply of drugs is illegal and covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1977) and the Criminal Justice (Psychoactive Substances) Act (2010). The University recognises that it is a criminal offence to take, possess, manufacture or sell illegal drugs.

This policy aligns with current national government policy and strategy including;

- Public Health (Alcohol) Act, 2018
- National Drugs Strategy Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery, 2017 – 2025
- Framework for Response to the Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education (2020).

The Framework for Response to the Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education (DES, 2020) requires each HEI to develop its own drug and alcohol policy. The framework recommends a senior officer be identified to oversee the policy and develop and implement an action plan related to it. Further all HEIs should engage in the collection of data on drug use.

3. Policy Statements

3.1 Policy Statement Principles

Duty of Care

The University of Limerick has a duty of care to all its students and will seek to offer help and support to individuals experiencing difficulties related to their substance misuse (including referral to suitable external services/agencies).

A student can be referred to this policy whether or not the student was found to have breached the Student Code of Conduct or whether or not a penalty was applied.

4. Related Procedures

4.1 Response to Drug and Alcohol Use and Misuse

The University will:

- Provide information about the potential impacts of substance misuse on health, relationships, finances, work, study and on wider society. Information can be provided through educational events, awareness campaigns and other activities in partnership with other stakeholders.
- Provide advice and guidance to those who seek support on a voluntary basis in relation to their substance misuse.
- Provide advice and guidance to those who seek support in relation to their substance misuse if they have been asked to do so, including as part of a disciplinary sanction.
- Establish and promote mechanisms for the University community to raise issues of concern in relation to student substance misuse.
- Adhere to confidentiality guidelines and data protection legislation when a student presents for support.
- Provide an outline of referral procedures and support services available
- Monitor and report trends of substance use behaviour (for example, the Healthy UL Survey, the DUHEI study, Race day survey and other sources).
- Support continuing membership of the Mid-West Third Level Drug & Alcohol Network.
- The University will continue to promote the option of living in alcohol free residences on campus.

Where an individual's behaviour, while under the influence of alcohol or drugs has the effect of:

- a) Disrupting formal academic or non-academic activities and/or
- b) Threatening or risking the well-being of themselves or other members of the college community.

Such behaviours will be dealt with outside the scope of this policy. In such instances, policies and procedures intended for response to alleged breaches of the UL Student Code of Conduct will apply.

4.2 Sale and Promotion of Alcohol

- Alcohol may not be consumed on campus except in licenced clubs and restaurants and other designated areas.
- Open containers of alcoholic drinks found in other areas may be confiscated as per local council bylaws and through the issuing of on-the-spot fines by An Garda Síochána if applicable.
- Alternatives to alcoholic drinks, including tea, coffee, snacks, should be available at a reasonable price in the licensed clubs during trading hours.
- Clubs, societies and other groups organising events on or off-campus may not advertise free or cheap alcohol beverages as the main attraction of the event. Posters or other promotional material contravening this regulation may be removed.
- Marketing, promotional activities and sponsored advertising of alcohol provision and sales by third party commercial and non-commercial parties may not take place on campus or during off-campus activities or events managed by the University of Limerick. This applies to posters, email, concessions, newsletters or other publications (online or otherwise) attempting to utilise the campus and/or ICT services controlled by the University of Limerick.

5. Related Documents

Framework for Response to the Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education (2020).

Student Fitness to Study Policy (2021)

Student Fitness to Practice Policy (2021)

Student Code of Conduct as outlined in the Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures

Smoke and Vape Free Campus Policy (2018)

Policy and Procedures for Student Dignity and Respect (2013)

Data Protection Policy (2018)

6. Document Control

Document Version	Version 1.1
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Approved by	Access, Equality & Student Affairs Committee
Date	27 May 2021
Approved by	Governing Authority
Date	8 July 2021
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Scheduled Review Date	Annually from approval date unless otherwise required

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Supports

Internal Supports

i. Counselling Services

Student

Any student experiencing a difficulty may contact the counselling Éist and arrange an appointment. The counsellors will, if necessary, advise the individual on access to further advise and/or treatment by external services.

<https://ulsites.ul.ie/studentaffairs/contact-student-counselling>

ii. Student Health Centre

The Student Health Centre is available to provide advice and diagnosis in relation to the physical, mental and emotional effects of excessive alcohol and other drug consumption. Referral to relevant support/treatment by external services can be made if required.

The Student Health Centre is located in Block C, level M (room CM061) in the main building. Opening hours are 09:00 – 16:30 Monday to Friday. Appointments can be made by either telephoning **061 202 534** or by calling into the Student Health Centre reception.

iii. Student Life

The UL students' Union acts as a confidential self-referral facility for students. It provides service to students who are seeking support or have concerns for either themselves or others. The Union adheres to confidentiality guidelines and Data Protection Policy when a student presents for support.

<https://ulsu.ie/ulwolves>

iv. Chaplaincy Service

The University of Limerick offers a Chaplaincy Service on campus. It is possible to discuss issues of concern in complete confidence with any member of the Chaplaincy team. The Chaplaincy operates from its office CM071 in the main building (where a waiting room is shared with Counselling).

External Services

National Drug and Alcohol Helpline ☎ 1 800 459 459

Ask About Alcohol – <http://www.askaboutalcohol.ie/> is a HSE educational website aimed at raising awareness about the effects of alcohol and outlines what resources are available.

Drugs information – <http://www.drugs.ie/> is an independent website managed by the Ana Liffey Drug Project, which helps individuals, families, and communities prevent and/or address problems arising from drug and alcohol use as well as find a list of services in your area.

Drug and Alcohol Services and Supports available in the Mid-West Region:

Community Substance Misuse Team	Early Intervention Service for Young People and their Families	Limerick City ☎ 086 414 1854 and County ☎ 086 810 6297 Clare ☎ 086 416 3508 North Tipperary ☎ 086 416 3509 Office ☎ 061 318 904
Clare Youth Service – Drug Education & Prevention Project	DEPP works with Young People availing of supports in CYS, Carmody Street Ennis	☎ 065 684 5350
HSE Mid-West Drug and Alcohol Service	Services and Supports for Young People aged 14 years and upwards affected by alcohol or drug use. (Counselling, outreach support, opiate substitution programme, needle exchange)	Limerick ☎ 061 318 633 Clare ☎ 065 686 5852 North Tipperary ☎ 067 46512
‘Let’s Learn About Alcohol and Drugs Together’	A substance use education programme for 2 nd Year pupils and their parents, supporting the work of Junior Cycle SPHE	☎ 087 1927 127 Website: www.lladat.ie
Youth Focussed Counselling	Based in Limerick Youth Service for Young People aged 14 - 25	☎ 086 389 5031
Alcoholics Anonymous	AA Is a fellowship of men and women, helping them recover from alcoholism.	www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
Al Anon	Fellowship support group helping families/friends of problem drinkers	www.al-anon-ireland.org
Bushypark Treatment Centre	Residential Treatment Centre – Outreach Poly Drugs Programme Family Support Groups facilitated by an addiction counsellor	Clare ☎ 065 684 0944 Limerick ☎ 065 626 8049
Narcotics Anonymous	Non-profit fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem	www.na-ireland.org
Nar Anon	Fellowship support group helping families/friends of problem drug users	www.nar-anon.org
Northstar (Limerick City)	Non -judgemental confidential support for family members and friends affected by drug and alcohol misuse	☎ 061 459 260
Novas Community Detox	Safer outpatient detox from benzo’s and methadone	☎ 061 370 325 ☎ 083 123 2378
Novas Respite House	Respite House supports individuals and families affected by the substance misuse of a loved one in a peaceful	☎ 061 624 878 ☎ 083 3854 846 ☎ 083 3983 806

	and rural setting	
Saoirse	Non-Residential Drug and Alcohol Addiction Counselling Family Support Programme	☎ 085 8184 590
Ana Liffey Drug Project Midwest	Low threshold outreach service for adults in the Midwest	☎ 1 800 786828 ☎ 085 1559 158
Cocaine Anonymous	CA is a fellowship of men and women, helping them recover from cocaine and mind altering substances	www.caireland.ie
Cuan Mhuire Bruree Treatment Centre	Residential Treatment Centre	☎ 063 90555
Merchants Quay Ireland	Limerick Prison based counselling service	☎ 061 204 700 ext. 4182
Co. Limerick Drug and Alcohol Drop In Service	Hospital Family Resource Centre and Croom Family Resource Centre	☎ 086 6076 573 ☎ 086 3840 526
HSE Drop-In Service No appointment needed	Limerick – Corporate House, Mungret Street Ennis – HSE Office, Francis Street Nenagh – HSE Office, Kenyon Street	Monday 2pm – 4pm Tuesday 10am – 12 noon Monday 10am – 12 noon
Drug Related Intimidation Reporting Programme	A national initiative between the Gardai and the Family Support Network to address drug related intimidation	Ask for the Inspector nominated to this programme in the following stations: Limerick (Henry St) ☎ 061 212 400 Clare (Ennis) ☎ 065 684 8100 Nth Tipp (Thurles) ☎ 050 425 100
Drug Related Litter	Contact Local Authority Limerick City and County Council Clare County Council Anti-Litter Hotline	☎ 061 556 000 Out of hours ☎ 061 417 833 ☎ 1 800 606 6706