

# Student Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy and Procedures

## Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) The purpose of the policy is to ensure, as far as practicable:

- a. that students undertake their activities unaffected by use of alcohol and other drugs;
- b. where legal substances are used, that this occurs with responsibility and moderation;
- c. environments free of inadvertent social pressure to use drugs or consume alcohol.

(2) The policy is not intended to discourage the legitimate use of prescription and 'over the counter' medication.

## Section 2 - Scope / Application

(3) This policy applies to all students of the University. The policy applies on all campuses of the University, University owned student residential facilities, facilities that are leased or owned by others and operated by others on behalf of the University, and environments where University activities are being conducted.

### Students

(4) Students shall not attend or participate in authorised University activities impaired by the effects of alcohol or other drugs, which may place others or themselves at risk.

(5) To facilitate staff to practice Duty of Care, students are strongly encouraged to advise their Course Chair/teacher of the regular or infrequent use of any medication for the management of short term or long term illness.

(6) Students who are taking prescription drugs, which may impair performance while driving University motor vehicles or operating machinery on University property, must not undertake such activities.

(7) Students should inform their Course Chair/teacher or Security of any illegal drug activities that they are aware of that may place any member of the University community at risk.

(8) Students attending or hosting university functions (including social functions) where alcohol is served, should act in accordance with this and other related policies to ensure their own safety, and the safety of others.

(9) Students hosting University functions where alcohol is served shall inform the relevant managers (e.g. Head of Department, Facilities, etc.).

(10) Students who think they may have an alcohol or other drug issue are encouraged to seek assistance through Student Services or a community drug and alcohol agency.

(11) Students who encounter a drug related incident or injury should contact Security personnel and/or a staff member to ensure an appropriate response.

## University Staff

(12) Consistent with Duty of Care, University staff members are to support, encourage and assist students to seek advice and treatment for drug related issues.

(13) Staff who have been advised by students of a drug related incident or injury are responsible for notifying appropriate University personnel including:

- a. Security and/or Facilities in the event of public drug use, discarded needles/syringes, criminal activity including drug trafficking, and inappropriate or threatening behaviours by drug affected individuals.
- b. First Aiders in the event of drug overdose, needle stick injuries or injury resulting from drug use.
- c. Occupational Risk Management Unit to report incidents via incident report forms.

(14) University staff and contract Security staff will also follow the principles and practices of confidentiality with regards knowledge of any student's alcohol or other drug use problems.

## Section 3 - Definitions

(15) Drug/Substance - Drugs include a range of substances including prescribed medications, alcohol, tobacco and illicit substances. Illicit drugs refer to drugs that the law deems illegal to use, possess, cultivate or traffic, such as heroin and cannabis.

For the purpose of this policy the word 'drug', unless otherwise stated, refers to all psychoactive (mind and/or mood altering) substances including:

- a. Illicit drugs (eg. heroin, cocaine, etc.)
- b. Legal drugs (eg. alcohol, tobacco, etc.)
- c. Prescription medication
- d. Over the counter medication

(16) Over the counter medication - Refers to any purchased medication that does not require a prescription.

(17) Harm Minimisation - Harm minimisation refers to policies and programmes aimed at reducing drug-related harm. Harm minimisation is an approach that seeks to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of misuse of alcohol and other drugs, for both the community and the individual consistent with the National Drugs Strategy (1998).

(18) Trafficking - Trafficking is a term generally used to describe illegal trade, sale and exchange of specified quantities of drugs.

(19) University - Refers to all campuses and locations where University related activities including teaching, learning, assessment and graduation activities of Victoria University take place. This includes University owned student residential facilities, facilities that are leased or owned by others and operated by others on behalf of the University, and to the extent possible, locations used by the University overseas.

(20) Authorised University activity - Refers to all on-site and off-site activities that students engage in within the University, including classes, workshops, field placements and recreation activities.

(21) Duty of Care - This is the University's obligation to take reasonable steps to avoid foreseeable harm to staff, students, contractors and visitors to the University.

# Section 4 - Policy Statement

## General

(22) It is the policy of the University that students shall not participate in authorised University activities impaired by the effects of alcohol and other drugs.

(23) The management of all drug use, drug related issues and associated activities are underpinned by the framework and philosophy of 'harm minimisation'.

(24) Regardless of the nature and type of drug use, the primary considerations in the management of drug use, drug related issues and associated activities are:

- a. the health and safety of students and any persons they come into contact with during University business and activities;
- b. compliance with legal and duty of care requirements;
- c. the following of correct and ethical procedure when using any licit or illicit drug as part of research.

(25) In order to create a safe and healthy learning environment for students and to reduce the harm associated with alcohol and other drug use, the University will:

- a. provide educational services and resources to students on drug related issues, which focus on harm minimisation strategies, understanding drug use issues, and the University's alcohol and other drugs policies;
- b. provide confidential advice and referral to community drug and alcohol agencies for students seeking assistance or treatment for themselves or significant others with drug use issues;
- c. install and maintain needle and syringe disposal bins in identified locations;
- d. maintain efforts to observe the law in relation to drug trafficking, drug possession and related crime on University campuses and sites;
- e. establish and maintain partnerships with relevant local councils, the Victoria Police and other community and service groups who are working with drug related issues;
- f. ensure that discretion is employed at all times regarding information about students' drug use and is not used to discriminate against those students;
- g. ensure that alcohol and other drugs issues are incorporated in relevant course curricula (eg. Occupational health and safety);
- h. maintain a Drug and Alcohol Sub-committee that will meet upon request to provide advice and strategic direction on drug and alcohol related issues.

## Illicit drugs

(26) Illicit drugs are not to be bought, sold or used in any part of the University, nor to be bought, sold or used by any student when engaged in any authorised University activity. The same requirements apply to the extent possible, within an agency that has entered into a partnership agreement for learning, teaching or assessment of students. The exception to this is the consumption of 'illicit' drugs as part of controlled studies.

(27) Consistent with harm minimization, all instances of inappropriate behaviour are to be treated with equal weight and dealt with according to existing University disciplinary procedures; the presence of illicit drugs as a possible causal factor should not complicate this. Informal processes for dealing with instances of inappropriate behaviour should be developed and implemented prior to the use of disciplinary procedures. Police will be contacted where the University becomes aware of illegal behaviour occurring on campus or during an authorised University activity.

## **Prescription/over the counter drugs**

(28) Prescription or over the counter drugs may be consumed on University premises in accordance with medical advice or as detailed with the drug packaging. Students using prescribed drugs which may affect their motor skill co-ordination (including use of equipment) should discuss this with their teaching/academic staff, to ensure that safety issues are addressed. This information will be treated in confidence.

## **Tobacco**

(29) University Regulation 10.2.1 provides that smoking is prohibited inside University premises (buildings and structures other than residential accommodation) or in University property (including motor vehicles, plant and equipment). Students should refer to this regulation for specific direction.

## **Alcohol**

(30) While alcohol may be consumed on University premises at certain functions, such consumption is to be in accordance with any relevant licensing and other legal requirements and in a manner that reflects responsible service and consumption. The University reserves the right to declare alcohol free areas such as laboratories, workshops and classrooms used primarily for academic and teaching purposes.

(31) Where alcohol is served at designated licensed University premises the provisions of the Liquor Control Reform Act (1988) and any other relevant legislation (local, state or commonwealth) must be observed. The University has adopted Responsible Serving Guidelines as recommended by the Liquor Licensing Victoria. These guidelines must be observed in all licensed areas of the University. These guidelines are listed in Section 6.

(32) Where alcohol is served in situations not covered by the Liquor Control Reform Act (1998) such as student events, including orientation activities, the Responsible Service Guidelines (Section 6) should be adopted as far as is practicable. The organisational unit conducting an event where alcohol is served are required to promote road safety and dissuade drink driving.

(33) Consistent with harm minimization, all instances of inappropriate behaviour are to be treated with equal weight and dealt with according to existing University disciplinary procedures.

(34) Students must ensure that any alcohol consumed does not affect their performance while engaged in an authorised University activity. Particular care needs to be exercised where students drive University vehicles or use other equipment. All students must comply with the provisions of the Road Safety Act 1986 in relation to alcohol and driving.

(35) The University will avoid promotional activities, including alcohol promotions conducted in co-operation with alcohol suppliers, that encourage excessive alcohol consumption or condone activities within the University that exert social pressure on students to consume alcohol. The provision of alcohol as a gift or expression of thanks can be culturally inappropriate, and potentially harmful for many people. The provision of gifts containing alcohol is discouraged.

(36) It is recognised that students may attend official functions at the University that may involve the serving of alcoholic beverages. No student should feel obligated to consume alcohol at these functions. It is up to each individual to ensure that the consumption of alcohol is kept to appropriate limits and that appropriate standards of behaviour are maintained.

## **Support and services available for students with alcohol or other drug related issues**

(37) While there may be study/class related issues (absenteeism, poor health, decreased performance, etc.), or difficulties in University residences, that are the result of alcohol or drug misuse, other personal or learning issues may

also cause them. Unless a student identifies himself/herself as having alcohol or other drug use problems, University staff should not assume the issue is alcohol or drug related. The focus should remain on clearly identified performance or behavioural issues.

(38) Students who think they may have an alcohol or other drug issue are encouraged to seek assistance through Victoria University's Student Services or drug and alcohol service providers in the community.

(39) For those students experiencing problems with alcohol or other drug use, (who may have identified themselves voluntarily) there are a number of different types of assistance that are available. These include:

- a. self-help resource materials regarding different types of drugs and their effects, strategies for minimising harm, and a range of drug and alcohol agencies (these resources may be obtained from Student Services offices directly, the Student Services website, or VUSU Resource Centres);
- b. referral to external advisory and counselling services (specified on the Student Services website);
- c. education in relation to drug or alcohol use;
- d. application for special consideration or show cause hearings, where alcohol or drug treatment or recovery may impact on their ability to fulfil study requirements, including attending class, completing exams or assessment tasks. This would require the provision of a certificate from the treating practitioner to support the student's application.

## **Adverse effects**

(40) A student who is suspected of being adversely affected by alcohol or any other drug should not be accused of being "drunk" or of "using drugs". The student should be informed of concerns in terms of their behaviour, and that an assessment of their ability to engage in the authorised University activity needs to be undertaken.

(41) Any student, whose behaviour is seen as disruptive or thought to be unsafe, is not permitted to attend or participate in an authorised University activity.

(42) When assessing a student's ability to effectively participate in an activity, the University staff member responsible for the activity will consider if the student's behaviour is disruptive or a danger to themselves or others. If the staff member concludes that a student's behaviour is disruptive, or a danger to themselves or others, they will exclude the student from the activity and follow disciplinary procedures. In the case of student residences, the student is to be excluded from that particular location within the residence, not the premises. Duty of Care also requires the relevant staff members to offer referral to support and treatment services as per above.

# **Section 5 - Procedures**

## **Dealing with drug related incidents**

(43) Students may observe or be confronted by incidents involving drugs. These include the following:

- a. persons using drugs;
- b. persons collapsed possibly due to drug or alcohol use;
- c. persons trafficking drugs;
- d. persons behaving under the influence of drugs or alcohol; and
- e. discarded drug related paraphernalia (syringes etc).

(44) Depending on the circumstances students may take appropriate action while ensuring that their own safety and the safety of others is preserved. Such action includes notifying Security personnel, notifying staff to contact relevant

emergency services, and/or seeking first aid from volunteer first aiders.

(45) Student Grievance Procedures and Procedures For Dealing With Discrimination and Harassment may need to be referred to in responding to in responding.

### **Handling injecting equipment and associated paraphernalia**

(46) Students should avoid touching any injecting equipment and other paraphernalia that may be associated with drug use. Students should report the location of injecting equipment and associated paraphernalia to Security or staff member to ensure safe collection and disposal by appropriately trained personnel.

## **Section 6 - Guidelines**

### **Guidelines for the Responsible Service and Consumption of Alcohol**

(47) These guidelines have been designed to promote a balanced approach to the consumption of alcohol. These guidelines apply to the serving of alcohol at Victoria University licensed facilities which are subject to the provisions of the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998. These guidelines should also be followed (as far as is practical) in other circumstances where alcohol is served at University functions (including social functions and student events). The key elements include promotion of adequate quantities of non-alcoholic beverages and food.

#### **Responsibility of the organiser**

(48) The person responsible for organising any function where alcoholic beverages are to be served is accountable for ensuring that alcohol is served in an appropriate manner.

(49) At all times the University must observe licensing and other legal requirements.

(50) Personnel serving alcohol shall have undertaken training in responsible serving of alcohol, to ensure they are aware of their legal rights and responsibilities.

(51) The use of alcohol is a personal choice. No one should feel pressured to drink or not to drink or be made to feel uneasy or embarrassed as a result of his or her choice.

(52) A function must not include any activity that encourages the excessive consumption of alcohol.

(53) No charge may be made for alcohol supplied outside licensed areas (including charge for the combined supply of alcohol and food).

#### **Promotion of functions where alcohol is served**

(54) Promotions should not overemphasise the availability of alcohol, or refer to the amount of alcohol available.

(55) Promotions should not encourage in any way the excessive consumption of alcohol eg advertising drinking contests or "as much as you can drink" functions.

(56) Promotions should give equal reference to the availability of non-alcoholic drinks.

#### **Availability of non-alcoholic and low alcohol beverages**

(57) Non-alcoholic beverages should always be visibly available in adequate variety and supply and should be presented in as appealing a manner as beverages containing alcohol.

(58) Low alcohol beverages should be available.

(59) Non-alcohol and low alcohol beverages should be offered at competitive prices.

## **Food**

(60) Adequate quantities of appropriate and healthy food should always accompany the serving of alcohol.

(61) Alcohol should not be served for longer than 30 minutes before substantial food is served.

(62) High salt content foods should be avoided as they promote thirst.

(63) Distribution of food should be in waves to encourage frequent return trips back to the table or have food served by walking around the room.

## **Serving of alcohol**

(64) Personnel serving alcohol shall have undertaken training in responsible alcohol service and must be aware of the University's alcohol and drug policies.

(65) Personnel serving alcohol must be at least 18 years of age, unless they were engaged in a hospitality training course or in training for employment or work experience.

(66) Personnel serving alcohol should receive instructions and training on the following issues:

- a. Alcohol and the law.
- b. Permit each person to accept or decline an alcoholic beverage.
- c. Where spirits are provided, service of double/triple measures is discouraged.
- d. Adherence to standard measures of alcohol is encouraged. Accuracy in measures of alcohol assists individuals to accurately monitor their alcohol consumption.
- e. Management of intoxicated persons.
- f. Regulations pertaining to under-age drinking.

(67) Alcohol must not be provided to anyone under the age of 18 years.

(68) People under 18 years of age are not allowed to be on licensed premises unless in the company of a parent, guardian or spouse (over 18 years of age), or partaking of a meal, or engaged in a hospitality training course or in training for employment or work experience.

(69) Alcohol must not be provided to anyone who is, or appears to be, intoxicated.

(70) Signs shall be displayed in designated licensed areas, informing patrons that:

- a. They must be over 18 years to obtain alcoholic drinks and that proof of age is required to purchase alcohol.
- b. Apprentices have contractual obligations that preclude the consumption of alcohol during working hours.
- c. People who appear to be intoxicated will not be served.

(71) On licensed premises, times when alcohol will be served must be specified. Service should adhere strictly to these times. In other circumstances where alcohol is served at University functions, the time period during which alcohol is served shall be limited.

(72) Where possible, service of alcoholic beverages should cease at least a half hour before the designated time for closure of the function. At this time, non-alcoholic beverages (eg coffee/tea, soft drinks) can be made available.

## **Drinking and Driving**

(73) Prior to any function where alcohol is to be served, the organiser of the function should provide information to those attending the function about the transport facilities available to travel to and especially from the function, eg designated driver arrangements, taxi services, public transport facilities, mini bus hire.

(74) Where people have to drive vehicles home following a function, the organiser should consider providing non-alcoholic drinks free of charge to the "designated drivers".



## Status and Details

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