Alcohol Wellbeing: Guidelines for University Staff, Managers and Students

1. Overview

1.1 The University wants to do all it can to support Staff and Students to adhere to the Alcohol Wellbeing Policy. This document has been provided to assist you. Further support is available from your Line Manager, your Local Human Resources Team and your Personal Tutor, as appropriate.

2. Guidelines for University Staff

2.1 The University, as an employer, has a responsibility under the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) to provide a safe and healthy environment for its staff and students.

2.2 Each member of staff has a responsibility for their own behaviour and safety, and that of other staff and students in the workplace that might be affected by their actions or omissions.

2.3 Whilst recognising that alcohol is readily available and customary in some situations, the University expects:

2.3.1 Abstinence from alcohol during normal working hours for all staff. If you do choose to consume alcohol, you should be aware that senior University staff reserve the right to ask you to leave University premises.

2.3.2 For staff in certain roles, including but not limited to, drivers, staff with dual NHS/University employment, those dealing with research subjects, staff in contact with machinery or chemicals, the consumption of any alcohol prior to or during the working day is not permitted.

2.3.3 Where a specific special event is organised which will include the serving of alcohol, this should be scheduled for late afternoon, so that attendees are not encouraged to return to work after the consumption of alcohol. In such cases, alcohol should be served after 16.30, unless an exception is granted at the discretion of the Head of School, Unit or Service.

2.3.4 All staff serving alcohol on the University premises should adhere to the Licensing Act 2003 and its requirements.

2.3.5 Alcohol can only be claimed against expenses when taken with a meal. The cost must not be excessive and should be appropriate to the occasion.
2.3.6 In certain locations or groups, the consumption of alcohol may offend or exclude individual staff, students or others, with this in mind, cultural and social sensitivity should be exercised.

2.4. Staff should ensure that any prescription or over the counter medication combined with voluntary alcohol intake is compatible with the full execution of their job role e.g. they should NOT operate machinery. Advice should be sought from a GP, pharmacist or Occupational Health.

2.5. If you have concerns about your colleague’s alcohol use, you should speak to your own line manager, who will make a decision about whether to contact the appropriate local HR Team.

2.6. For further help and information please see Alcohol Resources.
3. **Guidelines for Managers**

3.1. If you are concerned about your staff’s alcohol consumption, or are approached by a colleague with regard to a member of staff, you should ensure that you deal with the issue promptly and appropriately.

3.2. The University advocates a supportive approach initially wherever possible. The course of action will depend upon the circumstances.

3.3. Frequently asked questions:

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<th>Q. I have been approached by the individual concerned or a concerned colleague regarding alcohol related problems.</th>
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<td><strong>How do I deal with this appropriately?</strong></td>
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<td><strong>A.</strong> Contact your <a href="#">local HR team</a> for further advice. Arrange to meet with the member of staff at the earliest opportunity. Aim to make the meeting as private and comfortable as possible to encourage trust and engagement. Stress that you have concerns and that anything that they tell you will only be shared with those who need to know to provide assistance. Provide contact details for relevant help and support from the <a href="#">Alcohol Resources</a> page and arrange a follow up meeting to discuss ongoing support. You should take notes of any meetings.</td>
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<td>It is common to find engaging in such a conversation difficult. Managers are entitled to have the conversation with the employee, as they are their line manager, however it is helpful to be mindful of the emphasis on concern and support for the member of staff.</td>
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<th>Q. An individual appears to be drunk in work. What should I do?</th>
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<td><strong>A.</strong> Unless there is an issue of immediate danger, you should tell your line manager, who should establish, with a witness, if your concerns appear to be valid. Then accompanied by a colleague your manager should calmly approach the individual and request them to leave the University until they are no longer intoxicated, arranging transport if necessary and follow up with any appropriate and proportionate safeguarding action. In some cases, you may feel it necessary to contact <a href="#">University Security</a> to assist.</td>
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<td>If there is immediate risk you should invite the person to move to a place of safety, then take the above action.</td>
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<td>You should invoke the <a href="#">Disciplinary procedure</a> following such an incident, which contravenes University policy.</td>
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Q. Alcohol is seen to be consumed inappropriately within the workplace, what should I do?
A. If an individual appears to be consuming alcohol in the workplace, (other than at endorsed events), you should inform your line manager, who can establish with a witness, if your concerns appear to be valid. The Disciplinary procedure may apply.

Q. A member of staff has been taken ill at work as a result of alcohol. How do I deal with this?
A. If a member of staff appears ill as a result of intoxication, appropriate medical help should be sought. You should assess the situation to identify if anyone else is affected. Please contact your local HR team if necessary for further advice regarding management of the situation.

Q. An accident has occurred which may be linked to intoxication. What should I do?
A. In the case of an accident or incident occurring as a result of alcohol, the individual affected should be moved to a place of safety and appropriate medical help should be sought. Once safeguarding actions have been completed, the apparent intoxicated person should leave University premises and the incident recorded appropriately via health and safety reporting procedures. It is likely that in such circumstances the Disciplinary procedure will be invoked, including a full investigation of the facts.

3.4. For further help and information please see Alcohol Resources.
4. Guidelines for Students

4.1 Newcastle University supports its students in enjoying all aspects of student life in a healthy environment and supports an ethos of full participation in University life, whilst taking personal responsibility and being health aware.

4.2 For many students, your time at Newcastle University and your social life may involve alcohol.

4.3 Equally, many students choose not to drink alcohol, and cultural and social sensitivities should be respected.

4.4 Whilst drinking can help to make us feel relaxed and sociable, overindulgence can lead to disinhibition and reckless behaviour. Before you drink, make sure you know the facts.

4.5 Make sure you keep yourself safe and look out for others.

4.5.1 You should not attend lectures, tutorials or lab work whilst under the influence of alcohol. If you do, staff reserve the right to ask you to leave. Disruptive or dangerous behaviour will be dealt with in line with normal disciplinary procedures.

4.5.2 You have a responsibility for your own behaviour and safety, and that of other staff and students in the workplace that might be affected by your actions or omissions.

4.5.3 The University believes it is very unwise to drink alcohol during teaching hours. If you do choose to consume alcohol, you should ensure that your work performance will not be affected.

4.5.4 Outside of the Student Union bars, or other licenced premises or events, you should not drink alcohol on University premises (an exemption to this is a student’s private room in their on campus residence and other appropriate residential spaces).

4.5.5 You should ensure that any prescription or over the counter medication combined with voluntary alcohol intake is compatible. Advice should be sought from a GP or pharmacist.

4.6 For further help and information please see Alcohol Resources.

4.7 If you are concerned about your own drinking or that of someone else you should contact your Personal Tutor and or The Student Wellbeing Services, if there is immediate danger contact University Security.

- Tel: 0191 208 3333
- Email: student.wellbeing@newcastle.ac.uk
- University Security 6-666

4.8 Further information on the University’s view on alcohol awareness and the possible consequences of its misuse for students is available from Student Progress.
### Frequently Asked Questions for Students:

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**Q. My friend has drunk so much alcohol that they seem ill. How can I best help them?**

**A.** If your friend has signs of ill-health due to alcohol consumption (i.e. is unconscious, has irregular or slow breathing, seizures, vomiting or is unresponsive or unable to communicate) call an ambulance IMMEDIATELY by dialling **999**. If you are on campus, you should make **Security** aware by dialling **6-666**, as they are fully trained to help. While waiting for this help, keep them warm, and sitting upright if possible. If lying down, put them in the **recovery position**. Do not worry about ‘creating a drama’ or embarrassing your friend – alcohol can be fatal, and medical help must be sought. Do not leave the person to ‘sleep it off’.

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**Q. I am finding it difficult to make it in to morning lectures after nights out and worry that I am falling behind with my work. What should I do?**

**A.** If your social life, and alcohol, are affecting your university attendance or work, you should consider the long term effects this may have, and try to better prioritise your workload and attendance.

If you feel that your drinking or associated issues are seriously affecting your health, attendance or attainment, you should speak with your **GP**, **Personal Tutor** and or **Student Wellbeing** for support. Don’t wait until deadlines or exams to seek help!

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**Q. I sometimes drink alcohol at lunchtime, but not enough to make me drunk. Is it true that I shouldn’t attend lectures afterwards?**

**A.** We would strongly advise you not to and you **must not** attend any lab work, fieldwork, research, medical work etc. whilst you have any alcohol in your body. If you are found to do so you will be subject to the university’s **Disciplinary procedure**. Further information on **alcohol awareness and disciplinary action** is available.

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**Q. I am aware of a planned event where excessive alcohol consumption is going to be encouraged, what should I do?**

**A.** You should report this to the Student Wellbeing Services, who will identify an appropriate person to work with colleagues and students to safeguard those involved.

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4.8 For further help and information please see **Alcohol Resources**.