Accommodation Services

Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy in University Managed Accommodation

Purpose statement
Accommodation Services encourages you to live a safe and healthy lifestyle. Our policy aims to inform, educate and support you should drugs and alcohol affect you whilst living in University Managed Accommodation. In association with Newcastle University Students’ Union (NUSU) and Student Wellbeing Service we will provide relevant information, advice, support and counselling for students about the risks that may result from the use of drugs and alcohol and where possible, how to minimize harm.

Applicability and scope
This policy applies to all students in University Managed Accommodation and your guests. The Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy deals with the consequences of incidents that happen when illegal/psychoactive substances, alcohol and smoking are involved. This includes possession, use and sharing drugs with your friends and guests within the accommodation and grounds or being present in a room with someone who has or is using drugs. The supply or manufacture of drugs is treated very seriously by the University and includes giving or sharing illegal substances. The manufacture and supply of psychoactive substances (legal highs) is also illegal and is included in this policy. Medication prescribed by a doctor is exempt from the policy. Although alcohol is not illegal we define alcohol misuse as any drinking which makes you act in an inappropriate manner, interferes with the health and/or social conduct within accommodation or has a detrimental or harmful effect on the wider community.

Definition

**Drugs/Illegal Substances**: Illegal drugs which have limitations on their ownership or use meaning you are not allowed to have them. A drug is any chemical that affects the human body or mind when it is swallowed, inhaled, or consumed in another way. This includes, but is not limited to cannabis, mephedrone (MCAT), heroin, crack cocaine, MDMA, amphetamines (speed), ketamine and ecstasy.

**Psychoactive substances**: also known as legal highs, are substances with stimulant or mood-altering properties which affect your mental functioning or emotional state. This includes, but is not limited to nitrous oxide.

**Alcohol**: obtained from the fermentation of sugars and starches and also made artificially. It is the intoxicating ingredient of wine, beer, spirits, and other drinks.

**Tobacco**: a substance smoked in cigarettes and pipes that is prepared from the dried leaves of the tobacco plant.

**E-cigarette**: An electronic cigarette or e-cigarette is a handheld electronic device that creates an aerosol by heating a liquid. The user then inhales the aerosol. Using e-cigarettes is sometimes called vaping. The liquid in the e-cigarette, called e-liquid, is usually made of nicotine, propylene glycol, glycerine, and flavorings. Not all e-liquids contain nicotine.
Our responsibilities

- Any student found having used or suspected of having used illegal drugs will be provided with the necessary care and attention in relation to their physical condition. However, the University has a legal obligation to prevent the use of illegal substances on our premises and take appropriate Student Disciplinary and Police action will be taken when substances are found.
- Not to condone the excessive or harmful use of alcohol within our accommodation
- To treat disclosure of problematic substance use as a confidential matter and with sensitivity.
- To inform and educate you of the consequences of possessing or taking illegal or psychoactive substances within University Managed Accommodation. This includes:
  - the health risks and how to reduce harm
  - the legal position and Police involvement
  - the academic consequences
  - possible expulsion from accommodation and the University
- To support, advise and refer you to Student Wellbeing Service, if you are affected by an illegal or psychoactive substance.
- To protect you from anti-social behaviour caused by illegal substances, psychoactive substances and alcohol misuse.
- To protect you from the effects of illegal or psychoactive substances use.
- To educate you about responsible drinking and if available offer alcohol free accommodation.
- To encourage a healthy lifestyle.
- To promote a smoke free environment as part of the University Smoke Free Campus.

Your responsibilities

- Not to take illegal or psychoactive substances within University Managed Accommodation.
- Not to give or share illegal or psychoactive substances with friends or guests, as this is classed as dealing even if no money changes hands.
- Not to expose your flat mates to the effects of illegal or psychoactive substances within University Managed Accommodation.
- Not to bring the University, its reputation and legal position into question by using illegal or psychoactive substances.
- To drink responsibly and not behave in an antisocial manner.
- To smoke in external designated areas only and not within our accommodation. This includes the use of E-cigarettes.

Disciplinary process and outcomes

Illegal Substances and Psychoactive Substances
If illegal or psychoactive substances are found on you, in your room or flat, or you are present at an incident involving illegal or psychoactive substances, you will be required to attend a disciplinary investigatory meeting with an authorised person. Estate Security staff may provide body worn video to assist with the investigation where available.
Alleged involvement in the supply or manufacture of illegal or psychoactive substances will be treated very seriously. Your case will be dealt with initially by Student Progress Service and probably passed to a Student Disciplinary Committee.

If you are found guilty it is likely that you will face eviction from accommodation and, quite possibly, expulsion from the University.

Alleged possession or use of illegal or psychoactive substances (or even presence at an incident involving these substances) will also be treated seriously and may be dealt with by Student Progress Service in some circumstances.

If you receive notice to attend a disciplinary investigatory meeting or disciplinary meeting you should make this a priority. If you fail to engage with the disciplinary process, then a higher sanction may be imposed. An authorised person or disciplinary committee will hear the evidence and, if you are found guilty, a sanction will be applied according to the Student Disciplinary Procedures.

Policy implementation date: June 2015
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Policy holder: Senior Management Team, Accommodation Services