ACCOMMODATION & HOSPITALITY SERVICES
UNIVERSITY-OWNED AND MANAGED ACCOMMODATION
ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES (ZERO TOLERANCE) POLICY

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Accommodation Services is committed to the active promotion of healthy lifestyles for students. This includes encouraging a culture of self-restraint from illegal substance use and legal substance misuse and as such there is a ‘zero tolerance’ of misuse illegal substances within our residences.

The University does acknowledge that alcohol and drugs may be present in the lives of some students and will endeavour to offer support and guidance to those who encounter difficulties as a result of substance misuse.

This policy seeks to reinforce the University’s position of not condoning substance use/misuse by adopting a zero tolerance stance but at the same time providing guidance and support to all residents.

APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all residents who have a contract or booking for University owned and managed accommodation and their invited guests.

Although legal substances are not included within this policy, the harm from legal substances is real and the misuse of them may result in disciplinary action.

DEFINITION

The Illegal Substances (Zero Tolerance) policy extends to possession, use, supply or production of controlled substances in University owned and managed accommodation regardless of location. Please note that in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of your Accommodation Contract, as a resident you are responsible for the action/behaviour of any guests invited onto our property.

POLICY AIM

a) All residents and prospective residents of University accommodation to be made aware by specific and sufficient notice of their responsibilities and the consequences of their actions in relation to illegal substances and anti-social behaviour

b) All residents to be able to live in a safe, secure and healthy accommodation environment and protected from illegal substance use

c) To deter residents from illegal substance use

d) All residents to be treated in a fair and consistent manner
RESPONSIBILITIES

Accommodation Services is part of Newcastle University and has both a pastoral role and a legal duty of care to all residents, as well as a responsibility for preventing unlawful actions taking place in residences under its control.

The University will

- Ensure that all staff with direct responsibility for residents are fully aware of their duties in this area
- Provide training for staff to inform, support and manage drug related issues
- Arrange for information to be made available to residents which clarifies the zero tolerance policy in addition to making available educational materials outlining the harms associated with substance use/misuse

It is the responsibility of residents

- not to engage in illegal substance use, not to expose other residents of shared University student accommodation to such use and not to expose the University to reputational and legal risks concerning such illegal drugs use

Under Student Disciplinary Procedures for Residences an ‘Authorised Person’ will fully investigate any allegation of substance misuse and/or use where appropriate Police will be involved. The term illegal substances misuse is to be interpreted broadly, including (but not restricted to) a residents or residents having illegal substances on their person or in their accommodation, using illegal substances or being found to be supplying illegal substances and using the accommodation for this purpose. If illegal substance misuse is established on the available evidence, the ‘Illegal Substances (Zero Tolerance) Policy’ will apply and will result in the following action being taken:

1. Where a first instance of possession or use of illegal substances is admitted or proven the resident will be interviewed by the appropriate person and will result in the termination of the accommodation contract, but the termination will be suspended on the condition that the resident agrees to refrain from any further substance misuse in accommodation. In addition there may also be recommendation made eg that the resident attends counselling session with relevant academician.

2. Where there is a second instance of possession or use of illegal substances of any resident of University owned and managed accommodation this will normally result in the termination of the accommodation contract.* The resident will be required to leave the accommodation immediately.

3. Where a resident is found to be supplying illegal substances then this will normally result in the termination of the accommodation contract of any resident of University owned and managed accommodation.

4. In addition to the Residences Procedure, the University may take further disciplinary action following a report to the Student Progress Service and the matter will be reported to the Police.
5. In cases where the emergency services have been contacted because of a medical emergency related to drug and/or alcohol use the actions of the resident in seeking help in a timely manner will be taken into account in relation to the proposed disciplinary action.

*In practical terms the resident will be requested to leave their University-owned and managed accommodation and be served with a legal notice to quit. Whilst the resident may have been asked to leave they will remain liable for all accommodation fees due under the original contract. Accommodation Services will provide advice on finding alternative accommodation.

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