

Effective from 01.08.2021

---

## 1. Purpose

1.1 Your University has a duty, [as set out in our Student Charter](#) to provide a safe environment for you and our whole University community and we take our responsibility for the health and wellbeing of all our students extremely seriously.

1.2 We know that some students use drugs while at University and we recognise that the most effective response to drug use is **Education** and **Support**; as such our primary aim is to reduce harm and do all we can to **Safeguard** you from the detrimental impact of drug use.

1.3 The University is concerned where the use of drugs impairs your personal and/or academic wellbeing, or has an adverse impact on other members of the University and wider community.

1.4 The purpose of this policy is to set out the harm reduction support available to you and ensure any Safeguarding concerns for you or others are dealt with using **Effective Procedures**.

1.5 In this policy, when we refer to “drugs”, we are referring to controlled substances that it is a criminal offence to possess or supply, prescription medicines that are not prescribed to the person or are not being used in accordance with medical instruction and any other substances (other than alcohol) that produce physical, mental, emotional, and/or behavioural changes in the user.

## 2. Policy

2.1 Newcastle University’s policy on drugs is to reduce the harmful effects of drug use via **Safeguarding, Support, Education**, and **Effective Procedures**.

2.2 We undertake all University activities in compliance with UK law and do not condone any illegal activity. We also have a responsibility to cooperate with police in operations designed to safeguard our student population. We remind you via our **Education** practice, that the possession, supply or dealing of drugs and some other substances is a criminal offence in many countries including the UK.

We are an international University and as such, you must also follow local law if you are studying and/or are on university business outside of the UK as the law, regulation and penalties relating to the use or possession of will differ in different countries and can be very severe.

2.3 This policy does not mean you are immune from the law or other University standards as set out in our [Student Charter](#). We prioritise our **Safeguarding** and **Supportive** Activities, however, there may be occasions where drug related misconduct needs to be addressed through [Effective Procedures](#), including our [student disciplinary processes](#), especially where the wellbeing of others is placed at unacceptable risk. Whilst not common, the possible outcome of any disciplinary action could include, suspension and/or expulsion from the University and criminal proceedings if the activity also constitutes a breach of applicable criminal laws.

2.4 Drug related misconduct may also impact any placement undertaken as part of your studies and could affect your degree and your future career. For example, if you are undertaking a degree that is subject to professional accreditation and regulation, then the matter may be subject to our Fitness to Practise Procedures, the outcome of which could include a decision that you are unfit to practise professionally.

2.5 This policy does not cover use of alcohol by students, which is covered in the [Alcohol Wellbeing Policy](#).

### 3. Who does the policy apply to?

This policy applies to all Newcastle University registered students, including those not studying on campus (including but not limited to apprenticeships, placement or year abroad; or any student attending residential summer schools, or the PARTNERS Summer School)

### 4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 As a student of Newcastle University you have the responsibility to be an effective and professional representative of the institution; you should not:

- use drugs
- give drugs to others
- sell drugs.

This is especially true

- i. if it risks anyone's safety and/or wellbeing
- ii. where it affects your fellow students or University colleagues
- iii. when engaged in any University activity or on University premises (including accommodation)
- iv. if it could impact on the trust people place in our University
- v. where it negatively affects the University's legitimate activities and interests

Criminal proceedings if action constitutes a breach of applicable criminal laws and/or University procedures are more likely to be triggered if your behaviour places other at risk.

4.2 Our responsibility is to **Safeguard** our community and to provide you with **Support**. We will take a proactive approach to support you and will always take student drug use seriously.

- If you are concerned about your own drug use or the impact of somebody else's on you, your [Student Health and Wellbeing Services](#) and [Student Union](#) can provide free support. We will also help you to access external specialist support when this is needed.
- If you are concerned about the impact a student's drug use is having on them, you can receive advice and guidance from [Student Health and Wellbeing Services](#), [Progress Service](#) and/or the [Student Union](#).

4.3 We have responsibility to respect your privacy and the [University Student Privacy Notice](#) applies in respect of the sharing of information relating to students under this Policy. This means anything you share with the Student Health and Wellbeing Services is confidential unless they think **Safeguarding** action is required. When this is the case, we will always endeavour to act in your best interests when initiating any safeguarding action and, where possible, work in collaboration with you. The same applies if you choose to get support from your Student Union; they will adhere to the [NUSU Privacy Policy](#).

4.5 We will provide **Education** via training and campaigns to ensure your decision making is more informed.

4.6 In collaboration with your Student Union, we review our processes regularly to ensure we maintain **Effective Procedures**.

## 5. Support seeking

5.1 Responses to a 2021 Newcastle University Student Union survey, highlighted that most Newcastle University students are likely to seek support from each other. While we recognise that peer support is important, we believe that accessing professional **Support** is preferable and beneficial for all. As such we invite you to increase your awareness of the **Safeguarding, Support, Education**, and the **Effective Procedures** available so that you can support each other to make use of the appropriate professional support available.

### Monitoring and reporting on compliance

What will be monitored?	Frequency	Method	Who by	Reported to

<b>Document control information</b>		
<b>Does this replace another policy?</b> Yes / No If yes please state.		
<b>Approval</b>		
<b>Approved by:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Effective from:</b>		
<b>Review due – every five years or shorter period:</b>		
<b>Responsibilities</b>		
<b>Executive sponsor:</b>		
<b>Policy owner:</b> (This maybe an officer or Committee)		
<b>Person(s) responsible for compliance:</b>		
<b>Consultation</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Body consulted</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Analysis:</b>		
<b>Does the policy have the potential to impact on people in a different way because of their protected characteristics? Yes/ No/ Unsure</b>		
If yes or unsure please consult the Diversity Team in HR for guidance		
<b>Initial assessment by:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Key changes made as a result of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Analysis</b>		
<b>Document location</b>		
<i>(e.g. www.ncl.ac.uk/ XXXXX etc.)</i>		

### Related Regulations, Statutes, Policies and Procedures

[Student Disciplinary](#)

[Accommodation Alcohol and Drugs policy – University Owned Accommodation](#)

[NUSU policy](#)

[INTO code of conduct](#)

[Misuse of Substances Policy in INTO-owned and Managed Accommodation](#)

[Fitness to Practise procedures](#)