

Procedure

1. Title

Misuse of Drug, Alcohol and Substances.

2. Purpose of procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to provide general guidelines for staff regarding action to be taken when dealing with an alcohol, drug or substance misuse related incident.

3. Dealing with alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents

It is recognised that there is a broad range of possible alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents, which vary according to, among other things, the nature of the evidence of use/misuse and according to the nature of the substance used/abused. North Highland College UHI's aim is to deal with all such incidents in a way that balances its legal, health and safety, welfare, educational and confidentiality responsibilities.

4. Different types of alcohol, drug and substance misuse related incidents

There are four broad types of drug and alcohol-related incidents, as follows:

- Emergency Intoxication/Influence: where intoxication/influence involves a perceived threat to the health, well-being and/or safety of the individual(s) involved and others.
- Non-Emergency Intoxication/Influence: where no immediate danger is apparent but referral for support is advised.
- Discovery: where an individual finds a student in possession of, or using what is thought to be, an illegal drug or drug-related paraphernalia (e.g. syringe).
- Disclosure, Suspicion or Rumour: where an allegation is made by a third party that a student is misusing drugs and/or alcohol, where this allegation may be substantiated by evidence

5. Key Stages for dealing with a drug/alcohol/substance related incident

5.1 **Stage 1:** Initial Assessment of the Incident and Immediate Action by any member of staff (First Responder) who becomes aware of an alcohol/drugs/substance misuse related incident will need to make an initial assessment of the situation and take any necessary immediate action. This action may involve, where appropriate:

- Assessing the incident
- Escalating the incident to the Student Support Team and person responsible for the curriculum area
- Responding to the incident
- Recording the incident as outlined below and reporting the incident to the police where advised to do so.

5.1.1 **Assessing** - The First Responder should assess the incident with the aim of deciding what steps to take next.

The First Responders should ask themselves 'What sort of incident is occurring'?

- **Emergency** Intoxication/Influence: where intoxication/influence involves a perceived threat to the health, well-being and/or safety of the individual(s) involved and others.
- **Non-Emergency** Intoxication/Influence: where no immediate danger is apparent but referral for support is advised.
- **Discovery:** where an individual finds a student in possession of, or using what is thought to be, an illegal drug or drug-related paraphernalia (e.g., syringe).
- **Disclosure, Suspicion or Rumour:** where a third party alleges that a student is misusing drugs and/or alcohol, where this allegation may be substantiated by evidence.

5.1.2 **Escalating** - Escalate the incident immediately to the Student Support Team and person responsible for the area.

If in doubt contact Reception who hold a list of Student Support Team information and First Aiders (if required).

5.1.3 **Responding** - To an Emergency or Non-Emergency intoxication/influence Incident

Where a student appears intoxicated or is believed to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances the following should be carried out, where appropriate:

- Remove student from the initial area of risk.
- Together with Student Support and person responsible for the area interview the student to investigate the situation further.
- Advise the student of the potential consequences of their behaviour.
- Confiscate drugs/suspicious substances, wherever possible/appropriate, without escalation or conflict.
- Request statements from any witnesses.
- The Student Support Team will signpost the student to information and support.

5.1.4 **Reporting & Recording** –

- Promptly report and record the incident using the College's SHE reporting system.
- If, in assessing the incident, either the First Responder, Student Support Team or the person responsible for the curriculum area believes that the student is at college under the influence of alcohol, drugs or substances, and therefore contravening the College Positive Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure the student will be requested to leave North Highland College UHI premises.
- Where the student is known to be in possession of a vehicle, they should be advised that removing the vehicle from college premises whilst presumed to be under the influence would result in the College making a report to Police Scotland.
- Make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the student can leave safely to an appropriate place such as their home or accommodation.
- In cases where staff are concerned about the student's ability to reach an appropriate place of safety, the First Responder, Student Support or person responsible for the curriculum area should endeavor to ascertain from the student an appropriate place for them to go and may contact a taxi company to provide transportation. In such cases, North Highland College UHI will retrospectively charge the student for costs incurred.
- Where student support staff deem it necessary, they will refer the student to their doctor or emergency services.
- Where the student is under 18 years of age, parents/carers/guardians should be informed by a designated person identified by Person Responsible for the curriculum or physical area, or First Responder only where consent have been given by the student.

Discovery - Where the First Responder, Student Support Team or person responsible for the curriculum area becomes aware of, or discovers a suspicious item or substance with reasonable cause to believe that it may be an illicit or illegal substance, or discovers an item (or items) which lead to suspicions that illegal substances maybe in use and on the premises, they should take the following steps:

- Remove student(s) from the initial area of risk.
- Together with a member of student support staff and the person responsible for the area interview the student(s) to investigate the situation further.
- Request statements from any witnesses.
- Remove any drugs/suspicious substances that have been discovered - without a confrontation.
- Advise Police Scotland of the drugs/suspicious substances that have been found
- Advise the student of the potential consequences of their behaviour in relation to: - the Positive Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure
- The Student Support Team will signpost the student to information and support from local services - and facilitate referral to specialist external support services where required
- Promptly report and record the incident.

Disclosure, Suspicion or Rumour - Where there is a report (allegation or complaint) about a student(s) who is/are suspected of being in personal possession of drugs or is allegedly engaged in substance misuse the following should be carried out, where appropriate:

- Together with the Student Support Team and the person responsible for the curriculum area interview the student(s) to investigate the situation further and gather as much information and/or evidence relating to the disclosure.
- The person responsible for the curriculum area to arrange to meet with student(s) concerned to discuss the allegation.
- Confiscate drugs/suspicious substances, wherever possible, without escalation or conflict. Please note we do not have the right to search a student's belongings.
- The Student Support Team will signpost the student to information and support.
- Promptly report and record the incident

5.1.5 Reporting and Recording Incidents

All incidents should be reported in accordance with the North Highland College UHI Policy and an Incident Reporting form should be completed.

If a suspicious item/substance has been found, the person responsible for the curriculum area should:

- Record details of the following: - the date the suspicious substance/item was found or is suspected to be; - the exact location found; - who was present at the time the substance/item was found;
- Lock the sealed and labelled item(s) in a secure place to prevent unauthorised access.
- All seizures of suspected illegal substances should be reported to Police Scotland within 24 hours via their non-emergency number 101.
- A clear record of any actions, and the decisions behind those actions, shall be kept by the person responsible for responding to the incident.
- The completed record should be passed to the Quality team who will hold the record centrally

5.2 **Stage 2:** Decision on next appropriate step

- **Disciplinary** - The student support team and curriculum member of staff shall consider and determine whether the student(s) should be subject to Disciplinary Action under the Student Positive Behaviour Procedure and may be dependant on the outcome of a police investigation where appropriate.
- **Referral for support** - Where illicit substances (or legal substances to excess) are confirmed, the student will be provided with information regarding controlled substances or alcohol abuse as appropriate and will be referred for support to the Student Support Team
- **No action** - Should the responsible staff member be reasonably satisfied that the substance is not an illicit/illegal substance, no further action shall be taken and this outcome shall be notified to the student or students in writing and, should any items have been confiscated, they will either be destroyed with the student's consent or returned.
- **Contact the Police** - If reasonably satisfied that the substance is an illicit/illegal substance, the person responsible for the curriculum area will normally report the matter to the Police, if this has not already been done.

5.2.1 Stage 2a: Referral for Support

Students with drug or alcohol problems may present their misuse in a number of ways:

- Following an incident and investigation as described in Stage 1.
- To a member of staff as a result of performance or attendance problems.
- Through self-referral.

Following initial presentation and discussion of the problem, a student should be referred to the Student Support Team, where it is deemed appropriate

Information shared with the Student Support Team will be treated as confidential

Staff who have concerns about a student's misuse of alcohol, drugs or other substances should raise this with the Student Support Team and the person responsible for the curriculum or physical area who will apply Stage 1: an Initial Assessment.

5.2.2 Stage 2b: Disciplinary Procedures

Where appropriate, disciplinary procedures will be followed as detailed in the Positive Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure

Appeals - Students have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action applied to them. The appeals procedure is described in the Positive Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure

5.3 Stage 3: Monitoring

After the issue has been resolved, general information about the case, will be held by Learner Support Manager. Information will be reviewed quarterly (without any information that might identify the student involved) and will be used to determine the level and trends of drug or alcohol misuse in the College, and to inform policy concerning student and staff information and training needs.

6. Where to get help?

6.1 Self-Referral

As a student, a good place to start is to visit your GP. You can discuss your concerns with your GP, and they will be able to assess the nature of your problems and help you choose the most appropriate treatment.

6.2 Student Support Services can also signpost you to a wide range of external support