



# Harlow College

## DRUGS AND MISUSE OF SUBSTANCES POLICY (STUDENTS)

**Author: Executive Team Member with Responsibility for Student Services**

**Review date: July 2024**

## **RATIONALE**

- i) Statistics from NHS Digital England 2018 show that the use of both illegal and socially unacceptable drugs is increasing among young people, and is particularly prevalent in the 16-24 age group, the main client group of Further Education.
- ii) Whilst instances of illegal drug use on college premises are rare, we recognise that we have an important role to play in providing education, support and guidance on drug related issues.
- iii) The College believes that the misuse of drugs and other substances is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the individual and is detrimental to Academic Performance. The response of the College in such cases will be directed towards positive help and support for the student and the health safety and welfare of all concerned.

## **1 POLICY STATEMENT**

The policy of the College is to provide education, support and guidance to college staff and students on drug related issues and to safeguard people using the College premises, from the misuse of drugs and other substances.

This policy relates to drugs and substances taken for non-medical purposes and which cause physical, psychological, economic, legal or social harm to the user or to persons who may be affected by the user's behaviour. It includes alcohol and psychoactive substances ("Legal highs") but not cigarettes.

*NB This policy is not a disciplinary code for drug related offences committed on college premises. The possession, use or supply of illegal drugs and substances on college premises is a disciplinary matter, which will be dealt with in accordance with the college disciplinary procedure.*

## **2 POLICY AIMS**

The aims of this policy are as follows:

- i) To deter the supply and use of drugs and other harmful substances by College students and other persons who use College premises;
- ii) To educate and raise awareness of the consequence of drug and substance misuse;
- iii) To support students and staff members who have concerns about the use or supply of drugs or other harmful substances to college students;
- iv) To provide information, practical help, support and referral routes to students with drug related problems;
- v) To provide links to other agencies.

### **3 GUIDELINES FOR COLLEGE STAFF**

These guidelines are designed to help a member of staff to:

- give positive help and support to a student with a drug or substance misuse problem
- deal with a drug or substance related incident in an appropriate manner

#### **Help and support for students**

- i) The college is committed to giving support and advice for any drug related issue and all learners will be actively encouraged to approach any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable for help.
- ii) The appendix shows the various referral pathways for use when a student seeks help or where there is a suspicion of drug or substance misuse.
- iii) In order for help and support to be successful, a student must feel secure that the matter will be dealt with in confidence. Therefore, information will be treated by staff on a “need to know” basis; in most cases this will be the member of staff to whom the disclosure is made, the Learner Mentor and AAM, the learners’ parents/carer (if under 18 or a vulnerable learner)
- iv) College staff should remain non-judgemental when dealing with referrals.

#### **Dealing with drug and substance misuse incidents**

i) Where the individual is suspected to be under the influence:

- Call for the AAM or Head of Academy
- First Aider/Duty officer to support decision whether to send student home or to keep in college for own safety
- Parents/carers informed (if under 18 or vulnerable learner)
- Learner mentor or AAM to follow up and invoke appropriate referral process (if the learner is prepared to engage) creating a supportive action plan

ii) Where there is a suspected overdose:

- Contact reception for an first aider to be called who will co-ordinate emergency services if necessary
- Call for the AAM or Head of Academy
- Advise campus operations manager/Duty officer that an ambulance has been called if appropriate – including location and nature of concern
- Parents/carers informed
- Learner mentor or AAM to follow up and invoke appropriate referral process (if the learner is prepared to engage) creating a supportive action plan

## **Discovery of drugs or suspected harmful substances**

- i) Staff who find any drugs or substances which they suspect of being harmful or deserving investigation should record details on Pro-Monitor, notify the Safeguarding Team of:
  - the time and place where they were found;
  - the name of the person in possession
  - details of the items found
  
- ii) The drug or substance shall be removed, preferably in the presence of a witness, and taken immediately to the Deputy Principal who will:
  - Organise destruction (small amounts) or secure storage (large amounts-after first informing police and obtaining their advice) prior to police intervention
  - Consider whether disciplinary procedures should be invoked.
  
- iii) If staff suspect that drug or substance abuse has taken place, they should record details on Pro-Monitor of the time and place and name of person(s) involved and pass to the appropriate Head of Academy

## TRACKING and REFERENCE INFORMATION

**Date Approved: July 2021**

**Review Date: July 2024**

**Author/Responsibility: Executive Team Member with responsibility for Student Services**

**Equality Impact Assessment: TBA**

**List of related policies, procedures and other documents:**

Student Disciplinary Policy

Equality & Diversity Policy

Stop and Search Policy

Student Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

**Complaints:** If you wish to submit a complaint about the application of this policy or the procedure of it, please send your request in accordance with the provisions of the Grievance Procedure.

**Monitoring:** The application of this policy and associated procedure will be monitored by the Executive Team Member with responsibility for Student Services.

**Easy reading:** To receive this policy/procedure in a different format, please contact HR Services