

Newnham Drugs Policy

All students are reminded that it can be dangerous to take any drugs unless under medical direction.

The legal position

The possession and supply of controlled drugs (Drug Classes A, B and C) are criminal offences under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Examples of drugs in the three classes include:

- Class A: cocaine (including crack), heroin, amphetamines when injected, crystal meth, ecstasy, LSD, magic mushrooms
- Class B: amphetamines, ketamine, cannabis, Ritalin, pholcodine (opioid cough suppressant), mephedrone
- Class C: Valium (and other benzodiazepines), GHB, Tramadol.

It is a criminal offence:

- to supply or offer to supply a controlled drug to another;
- to be in possession of a controlled drug, or to possess with intent to supply to another such a drug;
- for the occupier of any premises, or someone who is concerned with the management of any premises, knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the smoking of cannabis or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply, of any controlled drug.

The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 now covers all drugs previously referred to as “legal highs”. It is a criminal offence to produce, supply, offer to supply, possess with intent to supply, import or export “psychoactive substances”: that is, any substance intended for human consumption that is capable of producing a psychoactive effect.

The College

The College is required to inform the police in cases of possession of Class A drugs or cases of dealing involving any controlled drugs.

The consequences can be very severe and long lasting if a student is charged and convicted of a drugs offence, since they will have a criminal record. The College will also invoke its own disciplinary procedures in the case dealing, or possession of any controlled drugs, or dealing, or repeated possession of psychoactive substances, with potential consequences for future residence or even study in the College and University.

In short, there is great personal and legal risk to any student who is using or dealing in controlled drugs.

Health and harms

The College takes its duty of care to students very seriously. We will seek to provide medical and counselling support for any student involved with or concerned about drugs or drug taking, whether the drugs are illegal or legal.

The College Nurse, Tutors and Chaplain are always ready to give confidential help or advice to any student and support can also be sought from the GP or University Counselling Service.

It is most important that students also understand that the persistent use and abuse of illegal or legal drugs are associated with significant harm. The legal classification of drugs is poorly related to the potential damage to health that they can cause.

Never purchase drugs over the internet. It is impossible to know whether the drug is pure or whether it has been adulterated with some other substance. Neither is it possible to know what harm such drugs will cause following repeated dosing.

Addiction

None of us know whether we will become addicted to the drugs that we use, whether legal or illegal.

A key sign, which may not be as easy to recognise as you think, is the gradual increase in and progressive loss of control over their use. This loss of control is most easily recognised in smokers, who persist in smoking despite the certain risk of respiratory and cardiovascular disease and the social isolation it now brings.

It is much more difficult to recognise and acknowledge loss of control over alcohol (again, refer to the *Alcohol Policy* document). If you feel that you are drinking more than you intended or using any drug in a way that is difficult to control, it is very important that you seek help within or outside the College at the earliest opportunity.

It is possible to help someone with an alcohol or drug problem at an early stage, but that help is much less effective when drug use, including drinking, is out of control.

Further advice and support

- Drug, Alcohol and Action Team (DAAT), website <http://www.cambsdaat.org>
Postal address Box No CC1207, 2nd Floor, B Wing, Castle Court, Castle Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AP, phone 01223 699680 or email DAAT daat@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
DAAT is a multi-agency partnership that works to implement the National Drug Strategy in Cambridgeshire. It provides information and treatment and tackles the problems that substance misuse leads to in communities.
- Frank, website <http://www.talktofrank.com>. Phone 0300 123 66 00 (the helpline) or email frank@talktofrank.com - national confidential drugs advice.

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