



ALCOHOL & DRUGS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Newbattle Abbey College is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy and productive working environment for all its employees, contractors and visitors who are involved in its operation. In support of this, and in recognition of the continued and growing problem of substance abuse in society, Newbattle Abbey College will act to prevent and eliminate, in so far as it is reasonably possible, any such abuse which will increase the potential for ill health, accidents, absence, poor performance, or which will otherwise adversely affect Newbattle Abbey College, its employees or its customers.

While it is the intention of this policy to assist those staff with substance abuse problems it does not constitute a waiver of management's responsibility to maintain discipline and a safe working environment or to respond to poor work performance, misconduct or unsatisfactory levels of absence. Therefore, support programmes for employees with drug or alcohol problems can run concurrently with the College Disciplinary Procedure.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all people working on Newbattle Abbey College premises including temporary staff and external contract personnel.

3. AIMS

- To state clearly the college position on alcohol and drugs.
- To seek to ensure safe and capable working practice in relation to alcohol and drugs and in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- To ensure that the law in relation to drugs is observed by employees during working hours.
- To seek to ensure an education programme which covers every level of the organisation.
- To encourage employees who are experiencing alcohol and drug related problems to seek appropriate assistance at the earliest opportunity and to ensure the availability of appropriate professional advice.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

- Newbattle Abbey College requires all employees to arrive at work free from the effects of alcohol or drugs.
- The consumption of alcohol is forbidden during working hours including lunch and break times.
- The consumption of alcohol on college premises is prohibited with the exception of staff social functions, where approval has been granted in advance by the Principal. In such circumstances, there should be an equal availability of non-alcoholic drinks.
- When externally entertaining, employees consuming alcohol must not return to duty while under the influence of alcohol. Permission must be granted for alcohol consumption by the Principal.

- No employee shall be in possession of illegal drugs while at work or misuse drugs while on duty. However, Newbattle Abbey College recognises the controlled use and possession of medicines for personal use as legitimate.
- Where there is suspicion that the law has been broken by an employee, management will normally inform the police.
- Although illegal use of drugs will not be condoned, in most cases an employee with a drug misuse problem will be encouraged to seek help, advice and treatment.
- Newbattle Abbey College will provide confidential and voluntary counselling through an external agency for anyone with an alcohol or drug related problem. The Administration Manager is responsible for referring to Counsellor work place specialist agents as required.
- Referral to counselling will not affect job promotion prospects.
- Employees may attend approved counselling during working hours.
- Newbattle Abbey College recognises the possibility of relapse. If this occurs, the same procedures of support will be offered to the employee at management discretion depending on the circumstances.
- Infringements of this policy will be dealt with under the College's disciplinary procedures.
- It is the responsibility of managers and supervisors to enforce this policy. To assist with this, they will receive specific guidelines and training outlining procedures for early recognition, discipline and grievance and referral.

5. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Alcohol Misuse: An alcohol-related problem is defined as any drinking, either intermittent or continual, which interferes with a person's health and social functioning and/or work capability or conduct.

Drug: Refers to any psychoactive drug whether illegal, over the counter from pharmacies and other retail outlets, or legal substances such as solvents. In the case of prescribed drugs, their possession and proper use is acknowledged as legitimate.

Drug Misuse: Use of illegal drugs and the misuse whether deliberate or unintentional of prescribed medicines or solvents.

6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

Health & Safety at Work Act 1979

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