Student Policy
on Drug Misuse
Purpose
Dublin City University (hereinafter the ‘University’) is committed to providing a safe environment conducive to the academic, social and personal development of all members of the University community. The University will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of our students and the reputation of the University and its students, are not jeopardised through drug misuse. Furthermore, the University is committed to raising awareness amongst our students of the dangers of drug misuse and offer support and guidance to students who may require this.

Scope
This policy applies to all registered students of the University when they are on the campuses and on all other occasions when they are representing the University or are identifiable as students of the University.

Policy Statement
Drug Misuse includes taking drugs, either intermittently or continuously, such that they adversely affect an individual’s health, performance or conduct, or affect the performance or safety of others. ‘Drugs’ include any substance that produces physical, mental, emotional or behavioural changes. It also includes controlled drugs and prescription medication where the prescription medicines have not been prescribed for the person in possession of them or using them, and/or prescription medication which is not taken in accordance with a physician’s direction.

This Policy clarifies the University’s view on:
- drug misuse and the legislative basis which informs this policy;
- how this Policy interacts with other University policies, e.g. the Student Code of Conduct, the DCU Student Charter;
- the responsibilities of students if they suspect that a peer may have a problem with drugs; &
- how students can seek support if they consider that they or a colleague may have a problem with drugs.

Drug Misuse
The University does not condone the use of drugs by DCU students on or off campus and strives to create an environment where students are educated about the potential harm of drugs and chose not to engage in harmful drug-related activity. Every student is responsible for their actions while on University premises and while representing the University at an
activity and when they are identifiable as DCU students. Students should ensure that drug misuse does not result in inappropriate behaviour and must take responsibility for any consequences of such behaviour.

No DCU student should:

a) attend, or endeavour to attend, study/placement, having consumed drugs likely to render the student unfit or unsafe for such activities;

b) use drugs on University premises or when representing the University off-campus at sporting or other events;

c) bring drugs onto University premises; or

d) attempt to sell or supply drugs to any other person on University premises.

The University has statutory obligations and a duty of care to students under various legal instruments, including the Misuse of Drugs Act (1977 and 1984) and The Criminal Justice (Psychoactive Substances) Act 2010. The University is also cognisant of its responsibility to the wider environment within which it operates, including, but not restricted to, the local community and school, clinical and work settings. It has an additional layer of responsibility to ensure that the misuse of drugs does not put potentially vulnerable patients or children at risk.

Student / Staff Responsibilities

Should a student or staff member suspect that a student is under the influence of drugs while undertaking a University activity, especially if the student is showing behaviour which could put the student or another member of the community in danger or have a negative impact on them, they should inform a member of the Student Health Centre or DCU Campus Security immediately.

Should a student or staff member suspect that a student may have a problem with drug dependency, the student can seek advice from the student services regarding the best approach to take to support the student. Staff in the Student Health Centre, the Counselling & Personal Development Service or the Student Advice Centre can be consulted in the first instance.

Support for Students

Although the University strongly discourages the use of drugs, it fully acknowledges that students who misuse drugs may find themselves isolated and afraid to seek help and also understands that dependency on drugs can be considered an illness. The Student Health Centre and Counselling & Personal Development can provide confidential help and guidance to students who require assistance with their drug misuse. They can also advise and refer students for assistance with their academic studies, should these have been negatively impacted as a result of the misuse of drugs. If required, they will work with the student to
ensure that the student is referred to external services which may specialise in drug misuse and provide appropriate follow-up support as required.

Where possible, the University will take a supportive approach and endeavour to ensure that a student’s future welfare and educational potential is not detrimentally affected as a result of drug misuse. There may be circumstances, however, where action must be taken under other University regulations such as the Fitness to Study Policy or the Student Code of Conduct. These circumstances may include instances where there is a perceived danger to or serious concern about a student or other members of the Community, where a student fails to comply with planned treatments or where a student continues to misuse drugs and does not engage with the support services. The misuse of drugs cannot be used as a mitigating circumstance if a student is in breach of any of the other University’s policies but the University may, at its discretion, chose to lessen any penalty, should the student agree to a planned course of action to correct the drug misuse.

Students have a responsibility to seek help through the University or external services, should they require professional help. Further information on sources of support and advice is available in the Appendix.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the University community should be aware of the policy. The following members of the Community hold special responsibility for its implementation:

**Student Health Centre:** Responsible for assisting and advising students on drug misuse and referring to external specialised services, if required. Also responsible for on-going support on campus, as appropriate.

**Counselling & Personal Development:** Responsible for assisting and advising students on drug misuse and referring to external specialised services, if required. Also responsible for on-going support on campus, as appropriate.

**Student Welfare Officer, Students’ Union:** Responsible for referring to professional internal services, such as the Student Health Centre, when possible.

**Chief Operating Officer:** Responsible for enforcing the University’s legislative responsibilities.

**SU & SS&D:** Responsible for educating students on the potential dangers of drug misuse.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the University Executive every five years.
**Version Control**

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<th>Student Policy on Drug Misuse</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1.0</td>
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**Appendices**

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<td>Student Welfare Officer, DCU</td>
<td><a href="mailto:welfare@dcusu.ie">welfare@dcusu.ie</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Drug and Alcohol Information and Support (HSE)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.drugs.ie/">http://www.drugs.ie/</a></td>
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<td>Free and Confidential Drug and Alcohol Support Line (external)</td>
<td>1800 459 459</td>
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<td>Drug Self-Assessment and Brief Intervention Resource</td>
<td><a href="http://drugs.ie/drugtest">http://drugs.ie/drugtest</a></td>
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<td>Information and Help with Addiction</td>
<td><a href="https://spunout.ie/health/category/drugs">https://spunout.ie/health/category/drugs</a></td>
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