

Drugs Policy

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March 2015	Andy Grimshaw, Director of Operations	New policy

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1. Purpose and Scope

This policy relates to the use of illegal drugs and misuse of alcohol or other harmful substances on Liverpool Guild of Students premises.

Its purpose is to:

- a) Comply with the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 by ensuring that the Liverpool Guild of Students does not knowingly permit or suffer controlled drugs on its premises.
- b) Provide a safe working environment for staff and customers.
- c) Minimise drug use at events.
- d) Prevent drug dealing on Union premises
- e) Safeguard customers who have used drugs or misused other substances
- f) Support students seeking help regarding their own or others' drug use.

2. Policy Statement

Liverpool Guild of Students:

- Will not condone the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs, nor the misuse of alcohol, "legal highs" or other substances, on its premises.
- Will promote supportive and caring harm minimisation strategies which reduce the risks associated with drug use/misuse.
- Will provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment for staff, students and visitors.
- Will promote knowledge, awareness and understanding to enable students to make informed choices.

3. Policy in relation to staff

All permanent and casual staff working at Liverpool Guild of Students events will receive training on this policy as part of their induction process. Written procedures will be available to assist in implementing the policy. Awareness will be maintained by refresher training at least every 18 months or when changes are introduced following new legislation.

4. Policy in relation to student customers

Liverpool Guild of Students responsibilities are to: -

- Provide a safe environment for students
- Provide information, to develop awareness and to support projects relating to drug prevention and harm minimisation
- Liaise as appropriate with other organisations

5. Preventing drug use at venues

In order to prevent drugs being brought onto the premises, it will be a condition of entry to Liverpool Guild of Students events that customers acknowledge Liverpool Guild of Students right to conduct searches prior to entry. Searches will be undertaken in a polite and respectful manner by trained full-time members of staff of the same sex as the customer. Where this is refused, the customer will not be allowed entry to the venue.

6. Preventing drug dealing on union premises

All staff working at events will be vigilant in monitoring activity. Stewards will regularly monitor key areas within the premises for suspicious activity.

Where Liverpool Guild of Students staff suspect dealing may be taking place, customers will be asked to undergo a search. This will be conducted in the presence of another member of staff in a private area following the procedures outlined above. Anyone refusing to be searched will be asked to leave the premises.

7. Finding drugs

The responsibility for decisions will rest with the duty manager. All suspected drugs incidents will be documented using a drugs log to include the names and addresses of all those involved.

Given that incidents may vary from finding drugs on the premises, finding customers in possession of a small amount of illegal drugs or finding customers in possession of a large amount of drugs when dealing is suspected the procedure to be followed will vary as follows:

- If a customer is in possession of what is thought to be a class A drug – see Appendix 2, regardless of the amount involved, the police will be called using the 999 system and the person found in possession of the drugs should be detained wherever possible having due regard to the safety of staff and customers.
- If a customer is found in possession of a small amount of suspected illegal drugs not covered in the list above and those drugs are deemed to be for personal use, this will be confiscated, placed in sealed bag and left in a drugs safe. The incident will be recorded on an incident report and the drugs log including the name of the member of staff finding the suspected drugs. Any suspected illegal drugs found, together with details of the incident recorded in the incident report, will be passed at an appropriate time to the police who will determine what further action will be taken. Where a customer refuses to hand over the suspected drugs, the police will be called immediately.
- If students, staff or visitors find suspected illegal drugs on the premises, the drugs will be removed to the drugs safe. Any drugs found, together with details of the incident recorded in the incident report, will at an appropriate time be passed to the police.
- If a large amount of suspected illegal drugs is discovered or staff have grounds for suspecting dealing may be taking place on Liverpool Guild of Students premises, the police will be called immediately.

8. “Legal Highs”

The Guild does not condone the use of “legal highs” and may confiscate any such substance and/or refuse entry to the premises to anyone in possession of “legal highs”.

At any given time a substance can be legal and yet still very dangerous. There have been a number of tragic and avoidable student deaths in the UK in recent years involving the use of “legal high” drugs (especially in combination with other intoxicants). The legality of substances is also something that can change suddenly: the government is moving to radically speed up the process of substances being deemed illegal. The fact that a

substance may have become illegal since it was acquired will not be accepted as an excuse by the law or the Guild.

9. Sanctions

Anybody found to be in possession of illegal drugs will be subject to a ban from Liverpool Guild of Students licensed premises. The length of the ban will be in proportion to the incident but will be for a minimum of 12 months. Decisions to ban customers will be taken by the Designated Premises Supervisor or by a Personal Licence Holder after considering all the information available.

10. Keeping customers safe

Liverpool Guild of Students will have the following activities in place to keep customers safe and minimise harm related to drug use:

- Staff will be vigilant in identifying anyone who is suffering from the effects of consuming an excessive amount of alcohol or from suspected drug use. In these circumstances, Liverpool Guild of Students staff will reserve the right to refuse further alcohol. Where staff believe a customer's well-being is at risk, that customer will be monitored and if necessary arrangements made either for their safe return home or for appropriate medical treatment.
- Ensure that sufficient trained staff will be present at all events. In an emergency staff will call an ambulance and notify the University's security staff as appropriate. In all such circumstances an incident report form will be completed.
- At large events Liverpool Guild of Students will have trained medics on site and sufficient numbers of contracted external event security on site.

11. Record keeping/notification

Liverpool Guild of Students will maintain a drugs log to record drug-related incidents or suspected drug dealing on premises. Details of the incidents will be made available to the police.

Where information is requested by the University, Liverpool Guild of Students will provide statistics concerning the number and nature of incidents relating to drug use by customers but will not notify details of individual cases.

12. Complaints

Any complaints regarding the policy or its implementation will be pursued through Liverpool Guild of Students complaints procedures.

13. Disclosure and access to information/advice

Liverpool Guild of Students will provide a supportive role to students needing help and advice. Students seeking help will have access to staff trained to offer advice in a non-judgemental way who will respect their confidentiality. The boundaries of confidentiality will be explained to students in these circumstances.

14. Monitoring and review

This policy will be a dynamic document which is reviewed annually and in the light of new developments in drug use and Health and Safety legislation.

Appendix 1 – Drugs Procedures

1. Searching Customers

Searching will take place either routinely at large event's prior to entry or where a customer is suspected of using drugs or dealing on the premises.

Staff should keep themselves safe when attempting to undertake searches. Customers should be asked to voluntarily empty pockets/bags but staff should under no circumstances make a forced or intimate search even where possession is suspected. All customers should be treated in a polite and respectful manner. Customers should be informed that a search is to be carried out and reference made to the advertised policy. Searches should be conducted by a member of staff of the same sex as the customer and in the presence of another member of staff.

Customers refusing to agree to a search should be informed that they will not be allowed to enter the premises.

Where customers are already within the venue the police should be contacted. Union staff are advised not to attempt to detain a customer in these circumstances and should be aware that only the police have powers to search without consent. If a search is to be made inside the premises this should be conducted in a private area.

Separate training will be given as to the nature of searches to be undertaken but will generally relate to frisking upper body and legs and asking customers to turn out pockets.

2. Discovery of suspected controlled drugs*

If staff discover suspected controlled drugs, this and any related paraphernalia should be handled with extreme caution. Customers should be invited to a private area along with another full-time member of staff to act as a witness.

Personal amounts of no more than two tablets, wraps or small pieces of cannabis may be confiscated. If the customer refuses to hand over the suspected drugs the duty manager should be notified who will then call the police.

Where any suspected drugs are claimed to be legitimate medication staff should take reasonable steps to verify this; where a drug is a Prescription Only medicine under the Medicines Act 1968 it should be in a container dispensed by a pharmacy displaying the possessor's name or a prescription can be shown.

Any substances confiscated must be placed into tamper-proof bags and sealed immediately. A description should be entered in the drug log and the bag should be signed with date and time by the duty manager and counter-signed by a further member of Union staff.

Drug paraphernalia [e.g. syringes] should be placed carefully in a 'sharps' box which should then be placed in the safe.

If the substance has been found in the possession of a customer their name and address should be requested. The name of the member of staff finding the drugs will be recorded. The drugs and details of the incident will be passed to the police at an appropriate time.

The duty manager should complete a full record of the incident, duly witnessed, in the drugs log.

Following such an incident all staff involved should thoroughly wash their hands.

Customers should be informed that attempting to enter Liverpool Guild of Students licensed premises whilst in possession of drugs is not acceptable and reference should be made to help that is available if appropriate. The customer should be refused entry/asked to leave

If a large amount of suspected illegal drugs is discovered or staff have grounds for suspecting dealing may be taking place (suspicion may be aroused by frequent visits to the toilets and/or discovery of an excessive amount of cash) the Duty Manager should be informed and the police should be called straight away.

*Legislation relating to controlled drugs (i.e. controlled by legislation) is contained primarily within the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. This currently categorises controlled drugs into three classes¹:

- **Class A:** includes morphine, opium, heroin, cocaine, crack cocaine, some amphetamines (i.e. methamphetamine "crystal meth" and injectable amphetamines), magic mushrooms, methadone, LSD and ecstasy (MDMA).
- **Class B:** includes amphetamines, barbiturates, codeine, cannabis, cannabis resin, synthetic cannabinoids, synthetic cathinones (e.g. methedrone & methoxetamine), ketamine and Ritalin (methylphenidate).
- **Class C:** includes anabolic steroids, benzodiazepines (diazepam), gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), gamma-butyrolactone (GBL), piperazines (BZP) and khat.

This is not an exhaustive list; Schedule 2 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended) provides a full list and is appended to this policy.

3. Storage and Disposal of controlled substances

Once a substance suspected of being an illegal drug has been confiscated or discovered, it should be stored on a temporary basis in the safe, the key to which is available only to the Licensee or designated member of staff.

The duty manager should contact the police within 24 hours to arrange longer-term storage and/or disposal. When the police attend to collect the contents of the safe each entry in the drugs log must be checked against the relevant bags. The Police Officer should sign the log thereby certifying receipt of the materials.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/penalties-drug-possession-dealing>

Details of the individual involved in the incident should not be revealed to the police officer.

4. Complaints

If a customer has a complaint about the manner in which a search was conducted or any other aspect of policy this should be referred to the duty manager in the first instance. If the customer is still not satisfied they should be invited to pursue the matter through the formal Liverpool Guild of Students complaints procedures.