

Health and Safety Code of Practice

WCP2 Alcohol

Responsibility for Policy:	Deputy Chief Executive, Organisational Enhancement
Relevant to:	University staff, students, users of and visitors to the University
Approved by:	University Health and Safety Committee
Responsibility for Document Review:	Head of Safety, Health and Environment
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RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- A Guide for Employers on Alcohol at Work (2005) ISBN 0 7176 1291 0
- Guidance on Alcohol and Drug Misuse in the Workplace, Faculty of Occupational Medicine, 2006
- LJMU Absence Policy
- LJMU Student Handbook
- LJMU Academic Framework

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

- Liverpool John Moores University Health and Safety Policy Statement
- MCP1 Organisation for the Implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- MCP2 Arrangements for the Implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- SCP10 Contractors

**THIS CODE OF PRACTICE FORMS PART OF THE UNIVERSITY'S HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
AND REPLACES ALL PREVIOUS ISSUES**

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is generally accepted in our society that drinking alcohol is a pleasant activity. For many people it is a part of their normal way of life. At the same time, there is a wealth of medical evidence regarding the associated health risks for individuals who regularly consume more than the Government's recommended limits.

Alcohol misuse is a growing problem which has many implications for society and, therefore, the workplace. Alcohol can affect work performance in three main ways:

- A raised blood alcohol level whilst at work will jeopardise both efficiency and safety, e.g. by increasing the likelihood of mistakes, errors of judgement, accidents etc. Skills may be impaired with a significant amount of alcohol in the body
- The after-effects of drinking can impair both work attendance and performance e.g. through a lack concentration, inability to work at normal pace, absenteeism etc.
- Persistent heavy drinking can lead to a range of social, psychological and medical problems and is associated with impaired work performance and attendance

The University has an obligation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its staff, students and others affected by its activities. As such, it takes the use of alcohol and its effects seriously. Dependant on the nature of the problem, there are a variety of internal support services and disciplinary procedures that may apply.

This Code of Practice applies to all staff, students, users of and visitors to the University without exception.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Code or Practice are:

- To reduce to a minimum the possible effects of alcohol misuse on the user and others who may be adversely affected by the use of alcohol
- To outline the action the University will take in the event of a member of staff or student being adversely affected by alcohol consumption
- To provide information and guidance on the supply and consumption of alcohol on University premises.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

All students and staff who believe a colleague is adversely affected from alcohol misuse have a duty to inform their line manager or tutor. In all cases involving staff, People and Organisational Development should be informed, in order to ensure appropriate action is taken to support the individual, in the first instance. In cases involving students, support is available through Student Advice and Wellbeing. If, however, as a result of a complaint or invocation of the student disciplinary procedures, Student Governance would advise on the necessary action.

Staff and students must not attend work, or their studies, under the influence of alcohol and must never drive, operate machinery, handle hazardous substances or transportable gases if affected by alcohol (this is covered in the activities to avoid listed in Section 6). Those whose work involves any such activities should not be presenting themselves for work, or study, after consuming alcohol. Even moderate consumption slows down reaction and impairs judgement.

The attention of all members of the University is drawn to their own responsibilities towards themselves, colleagues and others under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. This makes it the legal duty of every employee to take reasonable care for health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

The Occupational Health Unit will provide advice about fitness for work regarding employees referred by People and Organisational Development, fitness to study and fitness to practise. The Occupational Health Unit cannot investigate or treat medical conditions.

4. MISUSE OF ALCOHOL

The University will undertake to ensure that any member of the University with a problem related to alcohol dependency or misuse will get advice, help and, if necessary, treatment. Members of the University who think they may be adversely affected will be encouraged to seek help voluntarily, at the earliest possible moment.

Where the University becomes aware that individuals have such a problem, they will be invited to discuss their situation with their line manager and People and Organisational Development or Student Advice and Wellbeing and offered the opportunity of professional advice and help.

Subject to the provisions below, time off will be allowed for any necessary treatment, and job security will be protected in exactly the same way as for staff with other health related conditions.

Should a member of the University refuse help, or drop out of a treatment programme, this will not be automatic grounds for dismissal or removal from a course, but any unacceptable behaviour or level of performance thereafter will be subject to normal disciplinary procedures.

If a member of the University relapses, during or after treatment, the case will be considered sympathetically in the light of professional advice. Each case will be considered on its merits, but normally the University will agree to a further period of treatment following only a first lapse.

Where relevant, all members of the University will have the right to be represented at any stage by their recognised Trade Union, staff or student representative or friend. In the event of a dispute over whether this Code of Practice is applicable in any particular case, it will be dealt with by the normal complaints or disciplinary procedures.

The treatment record of any member of the University is confidential and the University will endeavour to maintain confidentiality about individual problems, subject to the provisions of the law. However, the University reserves the right to record and disclose, where proper, the numbers and occupation of those who have received such treatment while in their employ or responsibility, for the purposes of furthering research, without disclosing names or personal details.

In cases involving students, counselling and any subsequent treatment that may be recommended if expected to be prolonged, may result in a recommendation to suspend studies. The University Academic Framework includes reference to Extenuating Circumstances that may be appropriate for short breaks from study (including examinations) but prolonged rehabilitation may require a suspension of studies.

5. SUPPLY AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL

Alcohol may only be served in licensed University premises. The exception to this is the serving of alcohol at functions on University premises and grounds to invited guests, where the public have no access. Whilst the University may make alcohol available, it is the responsibility of those consuming alcohol to do so responsibly and particular consideration should be given to whether it is appropriate to consume alcohol if returning to work (particularly if the work involves any of the examples listed in Section 6 below) or driving thereafter.

It is the responsibility of licensees and those in charge of University events and functions to ensure that persons under the legal age are not served with, or consume, alcohol on University premises or grounds.

Alcohol may not be consumed on University premises or grounds, with the exception of licensed areas and designated areas such as function rooms, except with the express written permission of the relevant Strategic Management Team (SMT) member or Director hosting the event.

Security Services may be requested to attend when a member of the University is behaving in a manner that causes concern. Dependent on the outcome of this intervention, Security Services may record the incident, which may be utilised in the event of any subsequent investigation by the University

6. PROHIBITION ON THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL

All members of the University are prohibited from consuming **any** alcohol during the working day, including meal or rest breaks, if they work in an area or supervise the work of others in an area where the after-effects of alcohol consumption would mean that the individual or others would be exposed to a significantly increased risk of accident, injury, harm etc. as a direct result. This prohibition would also extend to any contractors and their staff engaged by the University. Please see SCP10 Contractors:

<https://policies.ljmu.ac.uk/UserHome/Policies/ViewPolicyStart.aspx?id=53&l=1>

Examples would include:

- (a) Workshops with fixed or moving machinery
- (b) Workshops for electrical or electronic work
- (c) Laboratories, workshops or studios where toxic, harmful or irritant substances, ionising radiation or any pathogen are present
- (d) Use of high risk equipment such as pressure systems, lasers and similar
- (e) Security operations
- (f) Driving or operating moving machinery
- (g) Manual handling
- (h) Use of hand tools
- (i) Working at height
- (j) Operation of lifting equipment
- (k) Hot work
- (l) Field trips and team building events where activities (or their locations) could be potentially hazardous

The above list is not exhaustive.

7. INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

The Occupational Health Unit will provide information for staff on alcohol misuse; Student Advice and Wellbeing will provide information for students. Where possible, health promotion activities may be undertaken which may include alcohol awareness.

Additional support is available from:

- NHS General Practitioners
- Student Advice and Wellbeing Department
- Occupational Health Unit
- Liverpool Students' Union Welfare Advice Centre 0151 231 4942
- Alcoholics Anonymous 01904 644026 <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>