

The guidance aims to facilitate the early identification and help with regard to drug, alcohol and substance misuse problems and to encourage students to seek advice and assistance. The College will provide advice and support on drug and alcohol related issues. The College will put in place appropriate preventative strategies and take action when these issues arise within the Positive Behaviour Policy, and will report incidents to the police where appropriate.

Who does this guidance apply to?

This guidance applies to all college students whether on college premises, College transport, work experience, residential trips or other college related activities. It applies to apprentices in the work place in conjunction with their employer's drugs and alcohol policy.

This guidance supports college staff in dealing with drugs and alcohol related incidents in an appropriate manner.

Statement

The college believes that the misuse of drugs and alcohol is detrimental to the health and well-being of individuals and adversely affects the safe and efficient working of the college, its students and staff.

The possession onsite at the college of drugs or any substance with intention to misuse and/or supply is strictly forbidden. Possession of paraphernalia related to drugs abuse is also forbidden.

All staff and students have responsibility for taking action if they observe and/or are told about drug and alcohol misuse/intoxication.

Roles and responsibilities

1. The College recognises that it has a key role in identifying students at risk of drug misuse and the need to distinguish between students who require general information and education, and those who could benefit from targeted prevention and support.
2. Drugs can be a symptom of other problems and the College will strive to provide high quality support and advice on drug related safeguarding issues, and as appropriate put in place necessary safeguarding measures.
3. If a student informs a member of staff of personal substance misuse dependency, or of a friend's or relative's problem, the Student Wellbeing Team will provide specialist support and make appropriate referrals to external agencies.
4. The **College's** first priority in managing drugs related incidents is the health and safety of the College community and meeting the pastoral and welfare needs of its students.

5. The use of non-prescribed drugs on College premises, transport, work experience, residential trips or other College activities, or at any time during the College day is strictly forbidden. Any student found to be in possession of, using or showing the effects of drugs will be suspended with immediate effect and required to leave the College premises (where safe to do so), pending investigation under the Positive Behaviour Policy. Any action taken in relation to unauthorised possession of drugs does not exclude other separate action in respect of unacceptable behaviour or conduct, even if it occurs at the same time.
6. Any student found supplying drugs will be suspended with immediate effect and required to leave the College premises, pending investigation under the Student Positive Behaviour Policy. The College will inform the Police and fully co-operate with any criminal investigation or proceedings.
7. Every allegation that is made under this policy will result in a pre-discussion between the department Director of Learning and the Vice Principal or Director of Student Experience to agree the suitable stage with the Positive Student Behaviour policy that the allegation will be initially investigated under.
8. Any student under the age of 18 found in possession of alcoholic drink on the College premises can expect the alcohol to be confiscated and destroyed and the Positive Student Behaviour Policy to be invoked. Any student over the age of 18 found to be consuming alcohol outside the licensed areas or a College authorised event can also expect the alcohol to be confiscated and destroyed and the Positive Student Behaviour Policy to be invoked. Any action taken in relation to unauthorised possession or consumption of alcohol does not exclude other separate action in respect of unacceptable behaviour or conduct, even if this occurs at the same time.

Drug and Alcohol Awareness Education

The College provides for a drugs and alcohol curriculum via activities such as:

- **Personal Development Tutorial – GROW Sessions**
These structured sessions are embedded into the tutorial programme and cover key topics such as the risks associated with drug and alcohol use, decision-making, peer pressure, and harm reduction strategies. They are designed to encourage open discussion and reflection in a safe and supportive environment.
- **Focus Days**
The College hosts themed awareness days throughout the academic year, often aligned with national campaigns. These events provide opportunities for students to engage with interactive resources, speak with professionals, and access information in a more informal and accessible format.
- **External Speakers**
Guest speakers from local health services, recovery organisations, and youth outreach programmes are invited to share real-life experiences and expert advice. These sessions help to contextualise the impact of substance misuse and promote informed choices.
- **Access to Student Support**
Students can access confidential support through the College's Student Support and

Wellbeing Teams. These teams offer one-to-one guidance, emotional support, and referrals to specialist services where appropriate.

- **Access to Information and Advice**

The College provides up-to-date, evidence-based information on drug and alcohol use through digital platforms, printed materials, and displays across campus. This ensures students can access reliable advice whenever they need it.

- **Confidential Help and Support**

Information about how to access confidential help—both within the College and through external agencies—is clearly signposted. Students are encouraged to seek support early and without fear of judgment.

This multi-layered approach ensures that students are not only educated about the risks of substance misuse but are also empowered to make informed, healthy decisions and access help when needed

Links to College values and other College policies

- Drug misuse by College staff is addressed via the Staff disciplinary policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Student Positive Behaviour Policy

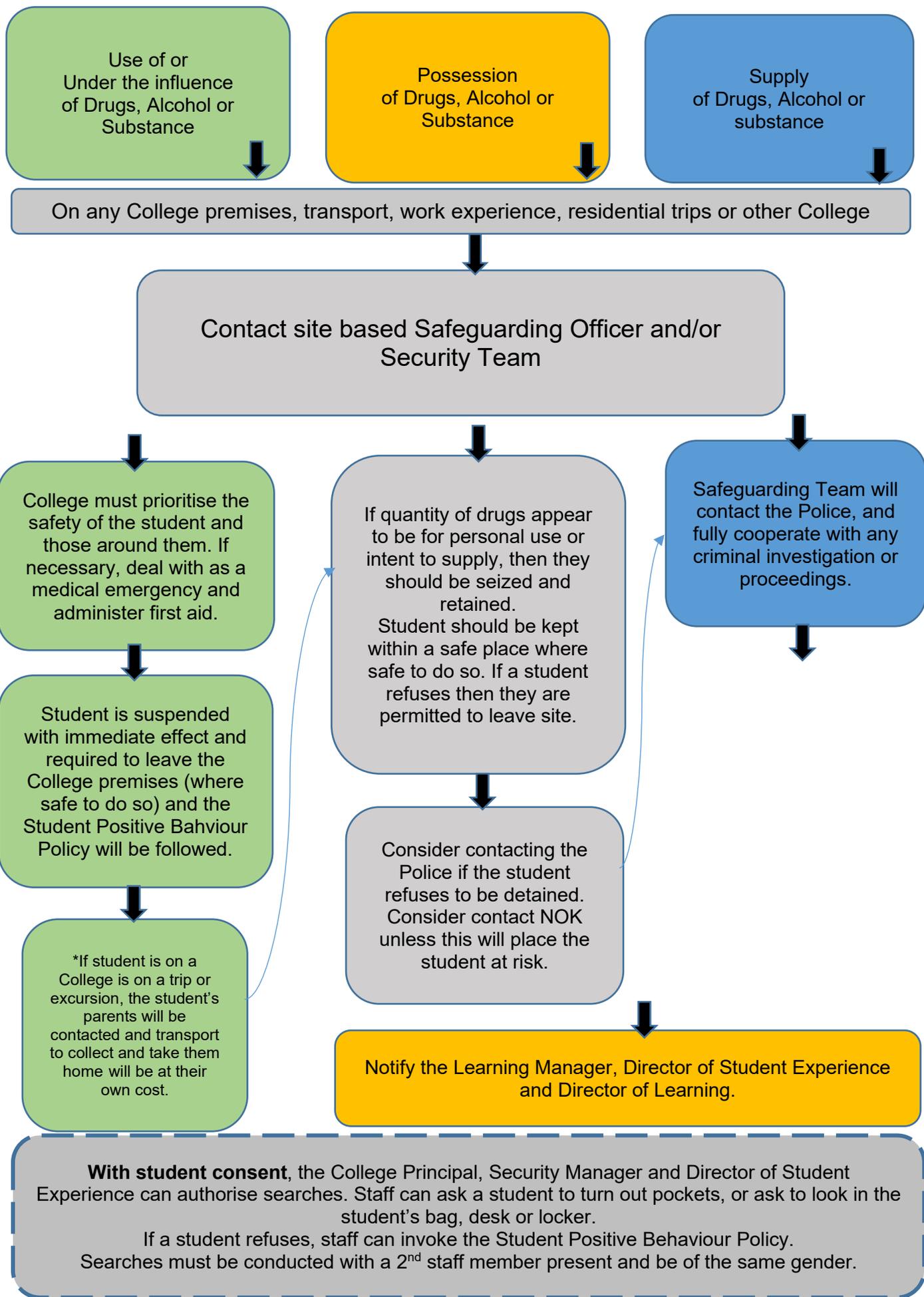
Who needs to understand this guidance and how will they know about it?

The following training and awareness will be put in place:

Who?	How?
Students	Through induction and support interventions given
College managers	Team Hub and Student Experience Sharepoint
All teaching staff	Team Hub and Student Experience Sharepoint Visits to team meetings if requested.
Professional Services staff who interact with students	Team Hub and Student Experience Sharepoint Visits to team meetings if requested.

Review Date: July 2026

Student Drugs, Alcohol and Substance Misuse Guidance Flowchart



For the purpose of this guidance the term ‘**drugs**’ refers to:

- **All illegal drugs** as classified under the *Misuse of Drugs Act 1971* (as amended)
- **All psychoactive substances** as defined in the *Psychoactive Substances Act 2016*
- **All legal substances** that can be misused, including:
 - Alcohol
 - Volatile substances (e.g. solvents, aerosols, gases)
 - Alkyl nitrites (“poppers”)
- **Prescription and over-the-counter medicines** used or offered for supply in a way not intended by the prescribing professional or manufacturer

This definition ensures that the College can respond appropriately to a wide range of drug-related issues, including the misuse of legal substances and medications.

The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016

The *Psychoactive Substances Act 2016*, which came into force on 26 May 2016, makes it an offence to:

- Produce
- Supply or offer to supply
- Possess with intent to supply
- Possess in a custodial institution (e.g. prison)
- Import or export psychoactive substances

The Act prohibits any substance intended for human consumption that has a psychoactive effect, with exceptions for substances such as alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, and licensed medicines. Breaches of this legislation can result in criminal prosecution, with penalties including imprisonment of up to **7 years**.

There are also additional offences for companies or individuals marketing or supplying psychoactive substances online or through retail outlets (e.g. “head shops”).

Cannabis-Based Products for Medicinal Use

Cannabis-based products may be legally prescribed for certain medical conditions. However, such prescriptions must be declared to the College via the appropriate channels. Unauthorised possession or use of cannabis or any cannabis-derived substance without a valid prescription remains a breach of this policy.

Vaping and E-Cigarettes

While not classified as drugs under UK law, the use of vaping products on College premises may be restricted or prohibited under separate health, safety, or behavioural policies. Where vapes are found to contain illegal substances (e.g., THC), they will be treated as drug-related incidents under this policy.

Drug Possession and Supply

- **Being in possession of drugs** refers to carrying, holding, or storing drugs, including doing so on behalf of someone else.
- **Supplying drugs** includes passing drugs to another person, even where no money or exchange takes place.
- These behaviours are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action and/or referral to external agencies including the Police.

Definition of a Drug-Related Incident

A drug-related incident may include, but is not limited to:

- A student is found using, in possession of, or supplying drugs (including alcohol or psychoactive substances)
- A student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs while on College premises or during a College activity
- A member of staff receives credible information suggesting that drug-related activity is taking place
- The Police notify the College of an incident involving drugs and a student
- Drugs or related paraphernalia are found on College premises