



## Substance Misuse SOP

**SOP Number:**

227-12-2016

**Academic Year:**

2023/24 Onwards

**Date Of This Issue:**

August 2023

**Responsible Owner:**

Campus Manager Ards – Learner Welfare and Equality

**Summary of Contents**

To ensure the provision of education on the detrimental effects of drug and substance abuse and to provide guidance to staff and students on procedures within the College designed to deal with incidents arising from drug and substance abuse.

**RO Review Information:**

Reviewed: August 2023

**Next Review Due:** January 2025

**Requires CMT Approval (yes/no):**

No

**Previous Reference (for control purposes):**

Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy 026-2014

Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy 227-12-2016

**First Created:** 30 September 2016

**Last CMT Approval Date:** November 2016

**Date of Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations Screening (Section 75):**

November 2016

**Date of Last Accessibility Screening:**

February 2024



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## 1.0 Change History

Changes to this SOP are documented in Appendix 1 of this document. When reading electronic copies of this document, [you can click here to view the change history](#).

## 2.0 Background

2.1 The South Eastern Regional College (SERC) recognises the importance of both protecting and supporting all its students and staff in the current climate of drug and substance abuse in our society. The aim of this SOP is to ensure the provision of education on the detrimental effects of drugs and substance abuse and to provide guidance to staff and students on procedures within the college designed to deal with incidents arising from drugs and substance abuse. The SOP is set in the context of South Eastern Regional College legal obligations in the prevention of drugs and substance abuse as outlined in the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971), Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (Amendment) Order 2014, Misuse of Drugs (Designation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2001, the Misuse of Drugs Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002 (as amended in 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015 and 2021), and the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

## 3.0 Scope

3.1 Within the context of ensuring that all learners within the College are educated and informed of the negative impact of misusing drugs or other intoxicifying substances, the College will:

- Through the curriculum and Student Support Services Provision, ensure that every opportunity will be taken to inform the staff and students of the college about the harmful effects of drugs and substance misuse.
- Provide staff development to guide and inform staff of the procedures and support available in relation to drugs and substance misuse.
- Collaborate with other agencies, including the PSNI, to ensure a full and comprehensive approach to drugs education and the implementation of the Substance Misuse SOP.
- Provide confidential counselling for any learner who may have been affected by Drugs or Substance misuse.
- Provide First Aid training to staff and Duty Managers to deal with any incidents which may occur.
- Proactively discourage the use of and experimentation with drugs or other substances through teaching, posters, YHAC initiatives, visiting speakers, student seminars and any other relevant means.
- Provide information to all learners on the procedures for dealing with any drugs or substance misuse incident.

3.2 It should be noted that in relation to any incidents where there is a suspicion that a learner may be under the influence of drugs or another intoxicifying substance that staff:

- Should not search the learner, only the PSNI have the power to stop and search an individual.
- Should not accuse an individual of being under the influence of alcohol or another intoxicifying substance, but follow the process detailed below.
- Should not inform parents/carers that a learner is under the influence of illegal drugs, only a blood test undertaken by the PSNI or NIAS can determine this.

- 3.3 Staff and students should be aware of the changes to legislation that relates to substances that were formally known as “Legal Highs”. These are now referred to as “Psychoactive Substances” and these are also classified as “Temporary Class Drugs” which the Government can ban for one year under a ‘temporary banning order’ while they decide how the drugs are to be classified. Appendix 2 details the classification of drugs and the maximum penalties for possession, supply and production.

## **4.0 Procedure**

- 4.1 The South Eastern Regional College (SERC) places critical importance on maintaining a safe and healthy working and learning environment therefore any suspicious incident, which is suspected to involve substance use, or is abuse related, must be reported immediately.
- 4.2 Table 1 below sets out that the steps that should be taken when dealing with various drug or substance misuse, or suspected misuse, scenarios.
- 4.3 In implementing this SOP, staff and students should have due regard for their own personal safety and approach with caution, ensuring that any intervention is calm and sensitive.



Scenario	Steps to be taken
<p><b>1. Emergency – individual is suspected to be under the influence of drugs and is in danger. i.e., unconscious.</b></p> <p>Should a member of staff or student discover an individual who is suspected to be incapacitated by drugs, alcohol or solvent abuse and requires medical treatment, then the emergency services must be informed immediately.</p> <p>Students should limit their involvement to reporting the incident to a member of staff in all instances.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Call an ambulance.</li> <li>2. Duty Manager to inform Campus Manager.</li> <li>3. The Campus Manager or their nominee will inform the Police.</li> <li>4. Inform the parents/carers.</li> <li>5. Ensure an incident report is completed and a Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Referral sent through to the Pastoral Care Team (as appropriate).</li> </ol>
<p><b>2. Individual is suspected to be under the influence of drugs but not in danger.</b></p> <p>If an individual shows signs of suspected drug or solvent abuse, then a First Aider should be summoned to assess the physical wellbeing of the individual to ensure their immediate safety. Once the individual is found not to be in danger then the PSNI should be informed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administer first aid (if required).</li> <li>2. The Campus Manager or their nominee will inform the Police .</li> <li>3. Inform the parents of the situation and ask to come and collect the student from the college. If parents not available, ring 999 and ask for assistance from either the PSNI or NIAS (Northern Ireland Ambulance Service).</li> <li>4. Inform CMT.</li> <li>5. Ensure an incident report is completed and a Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Referral sent through to the Pastoral Care Team (as appropriate).</li> </ol>

<b>Scenario</b>	<b>Steps to be taken</b>
<p><b>3. Individual is suspected to be in possession of drugs or other illegal substances.</b></p> <p>If a staff member suspects that an individual may in possession of drugs or other illegal substances, then the police must be informed immediately.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Campus Manager or their nominee will inform the Police.</li> <li>2. Inform CMT.</li> <li>3. Ensure an incident report is completed and a Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Referral sent through to the Pastoral Care Team (as appropriate).</li> </ol>
<p><b>4. Teacher/ student discovers drugs or illegal substances.</b></p> <p>If drugs or drug paraphernalia is discovered, then the PSNI and CMT are informed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Campus Manager or their nominee will inform the Police.</li> <li>2. Inform CMT.</li> <li>3. Ensure that an incident report is completed.</li> </ol>
<p><b>5. Individual seeks or is identified as needing advice and support for the misuse of drugs or other substances.</b></p> <p>If an individual approaches a member of staff for support regarding drugs misuse or a member of staff is concerned about a student, then advice and guidance should be sought from Pastoral Care.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Safeguarding and Pastoral Support Referral sent through to the Pastoral Care Team.</li> <li>2. External Counselling and Support are offered to the individual.</li> <li>3. Continual follow-ups of individual from Pastoral Care Team and Course Team.</li> </ol>

Scenario	Steps to be taken
<p><b>6. Alcohol abuse.</b></p> <p>With the exception of the training restaurants, College premises are alcohol free zones. Students or staff in breach of this directive will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary procedures.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Senior Manager on duty in respective sites will be informed of breaches by either staff or students.</li> <li>2. Visitors will be reminded of the policy and may be asked to leave the premises.</li> </ol>

**\* Failure to follow procedures 1 – 4 will be treated as a breach of the College Disciplinary Procedures {Staff and Students}**



## **5.0 Communication Plan**

This Procedure will be uploaded to the College intranet and referred to in staff induction and training.

## **6.0 Review**

This procedure will be reviewed biennially, or when the need for change has been identified.



## Appendix 1: Document Change History

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Change Detail</b>
1.0	February 2024	Transferred to new Accessibility Template