

HARM REDUCTION POLICY



Hartpury University, Hartpury College and Hartpury Students' Union does not condone or condemn the use of drugs including alcohol; we are focused on providing students with the knowledge and education to be safe and feel supported. We are committed to providing students with the awareness to make positive lifestyle choices and to provide a safe and healthy learning and living community. We operate a policy of harm reduction that prioritises the welfare and wellbeing of our students and wider community.

We believe that a harm reduction approach is in the best interests of our student community as well as our institution as it aims to reduce the negative health, social and legal impacts associated with drug and alcohol use and minimise barriers to accessing support.

Hartpury recognises that many students will not be affected by illegal drug or alcohol use. It is however important to state, we do not condone the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs in, or on, any premises under our control.

Introduction

What is meant by harm reduction?

Hartpury is committed to providing safe and healthy learning, living and working environments for all students, staff and visitors across its campus. We expect staff, visitors and contractors to abide by the principles of this policy. We recognise that students may choose to engage in the use of drugs including alcohol and therefore we have an obligation to provide best practice interventions and approaches that are fundamentally about managing risk and supporting wellbeing. This remains aligned with UUK recommendations.

A harm reduction approach is a combination of policy, strategy and practical support alongside appropriate referring to pathways for clinical interventions aimed at supporting individuals and the wider community, in reducing the risk-taking behaviours associated with drug use including alcohol. The primary focus of harm reduction is the safety and wellbeing of the person and those around them rather than on their use of drugs including alcohol.

We recognise that the use and purchase of illicit substances are illegal and may have a negative impact on student studies, wellbeing and future careers, especially on professional courses. Therefore, harm reduction in relation to our student population will include collaborative work with local agencies such as the Police and could trigger other internal policies and procedures (Non-academic behaviour management and disciplinary) aimed at supporting students to be healthy, and responsible citizens.

If a student or member of the community is concerned about a Hartpury students problematic substance misuse including alcohol, they can contact safeguarding@hartpury.ac.uk

Our approach and commitments

We have a duty of care to all students and want to ensure that education and support is available to all. This commitment demonstrates our approach to act responsibly to ensure the safety of all our students and our adoption of the principles of harm reduction.

The wellbeing of our student community is at the heart of this approach which can only be achieved by working in collaboration with the Students' Union, students and the wider community. Therefore, we are committed to providing students with inclusive and non-judgemental evidence-based support/ advice around their substance use. In return we expect a commitment from students to be aware of and understand the harm reduction approach, engaging with information and education about their drug and alcohol use.

Hartpury's Principles Of Harm Reduction

Educate, knowledge and understanding: Our first principle aims to empower students to be curious and make informed decisions using evidence- based information. We support the development of self- confidence and autonomy by providing education and non-judgemental advice around the use and impact drugs including alcohol can have. This support is provided by the Safeguarding, Wellbeing & Health Team and the Students Union.

Support: We are committed to offering support to all students including those who choose not to engage in drugs and alcohol behaviours. We recognise that harmful substance use can impact on various aspects of student lives including mental health, sexual violence or harassment, studies, finances and the lives of others. Therefore, this policy recognises the importance of harm reduction offering not only substance-specific support. The principles of harm reduction are not punitive or mandatory and support is available for those who wish to engage. Communicating local and current risks is a method of harm reduction that could benefit students and will be shared as appropriate.

Partnership: We are fully committed to partnership working with key stakeholders and Hartpury and the Students' Union are working towards the [SOS-UK Drug and Alcohol Impact Accreditation](#). Collaboration with SOS-UK will support us in creating better student outcomes and raising awareness of harm reduction initiatives. We have created links with the Gloucestershire Drug and Alcohol Service to provide local support to our students. We are committed to working with the students' Union to highlight support pathways.

Responsibility and Respect: We recognise that for many people the use of drugs including alcohol is not a social or cultural norm and can be perceived as intimidating, alienating and disruptive. Additionally, people who have previously struggled with problematic use may wish to avoid exposure to drugs including alcohol for their own safety. We are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment that fosters respect for difference and consideration of others. We encourage those in our community to consider the impact of peer pressure on others. Hartpury is a place of education – antisocial behaviour negatively impacting on others wellbeing and ability to learn will not be tolerated.

The wellbeing of our community is the key driver for our approach and to enable shared responsibility we have the following expectations.

STUDENTS	HARTPURY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand Hartpury's approach through supporting documents (e.g. accommodation licence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure support services help to maintain a proactive approach to supporting students with alcohol or drug related issues in a non-judgemental way which is

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with information and education about alcohol and drugs to support healthy choices • Seek help voluntarily if you are concerned about your alcohol or drug misuse • Be a responsible citizen encourage other students to seek help if they have a problem whilst being respectful to their feelings • Be an active bystander alert a member of staff to any problems you see developing particularly where legal or health and safety concerns are an issue. 	<p>respectful to students and their choices and act as a self-referral facility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with appropriate external stakeholders to ensure effective sign posting • Ensure that the Hartpury community is proactive regarding policy setting alongside support and referral procedures for dealing with substance misuse • Ensure students comply with relevant discipline/behaviour management policies and behave respectfully and responsibly towards the Hartpury community and neighbours • Ensure students do not behave in a way that might damage Hartpury's reputation
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Drugs including alcohol on the Hartpury campus

Possession and individual use

If Hartpury becomes aware of personal use and possession on Hartpury premises, it will follow harm reduction principles and offer advice and support. Where controlled substances are found, they will be confiscated and safely disposed of in line with protocol agreed with Gloucestershire Police.

We take antisocial behaviour seriously and if we become aware that a student's behaviour under the use of drugs including alcohol is impacting negatively on others, this may be managed via University Disciplinary Policy or the Non-academic Behaviour Management Policy as appropriate.

Students may be asked to leave, lectures or practical sessions or may not be given access to certain facilities if they are under the influence of substances including alcohol. This is particularly important when students may be required to operate machinery as part of a practical teaching session.

If a student is known to be on professional placement and regular alcohol or other drug use is occurring, this will result a discussion with a student's tutor and could potentially result in the placement being put on hold in accordance with other Hartpury policies.

The same approach applies to students in Hartpury on campus accommodation where we have a duty of care to support residents who are facing issues relating to drugs including alcohol and will work with those who are willing to engage with appropriate support. In each case, our aim is to reduce harm caused by such activity by providing support through education and referral or signposting to relevant internal and external support services. However, the possession, use or dealing of illegal drugs and psychoactive substances is a breach of our Accommodation Licence and therefore subject to appropriate disciplinary/non-academic behaviour management action.

On a case-by-case basis, including consideration of type and amount of substance, history of similar incidence, impact on others and any presenting risks, Hartpury may take further action via the most appropriate policy which could include any or all of the below:

- Provision of or signposting to support services
- Provision of or signposting to educational courses
- Disciplinary/behaviour management sanctions
- Removal from Hartpury on site accommodation in line with notice periods
- Suspension or exclusion from academic programmes.

Supply and intent to supply

The dealing of drugs will be seen as harmful to the individual, others and to the reputation of Hartpury. Where there is reason to believe that a student has been dealing drugs or has invited others on Hartpury premises with the intention for them to deal to others, we will ordinarily immediately suspend the student pending internal investigation and/or criminal proceedings.

Regardless of any criminal proceedings and related outcome, we will, in accordance with the appropriate policies, determine on the balance of probabilities whether the student has been involved in the supply or production of drugs. If it is concluded that the student has been dealing drugs or inviting others on Hartpury premises with the intention of dealing, Hartpury will ordinarily permanently exclude the student. Any illegal drugs that have been confiscated during this process may be provided to the Police as evidence.

Drug and alcohol concerns off campus

If we become aware that a student has been arrested or charged off campus due to criminal offences related to the use or supply of drugs including alcohol, depending on the nature of the offence this may be managed via Hartpury policies as appropriate. Where charges related to drug dealing have been brought but criminal proceedings do not result in conviction, Hartpury processes will continue and if it is decided on the balance of probability that a student has been involved in the supply or production of drugs, then the maximum penalty outcome under conduct cases, could be exclusion from Hartpury.

Response to drugs including alcohol on programmes leading to professional registration and or a licence to practice

Students who are undertaking a programme leading to professional registration need to understand that problematic substance misuse including alcohol may have a serious impact on their studies and professional registration.

For students on programmes leading to professional registration, concerns in relation to drug use including alcohol must be reported to the relevant Programme Team. The Head of Department (or nominee) will decide on the appropriate action to take on consideration of the case.

Emerging low-level concerns

Where drug use is of concern but does not present an immediate risk to self or others, such as occasional/social use of cannabis, a member of staff should log this on MyConcern and a meeting will be arranged with the student. The meeting should be supportive with a focus on learning, development and support. An Action Plan should be agreed and monitored. If the Action Plan is not effective and the concerns continue or escalate, the student may then be required to attend a further meeting under the Fitness to Study & Reside Policy.

Safeguarding responsibilities

Hartpury is committed to protecting children and adults at risk from abuse and neglect and ensuring that all staff and students are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, are alert to safeguarding concerns and know how to respond to concerns.

Please report any Safeguarding concerns to safeguarding@hartpury.ac.uk or in an emergency call 07788 148358.

Performance Enhancing Drugs and the Clean Sport Commitment Statement

Hartpury supports the mission of the UK Anti-Doping and World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) that cheating, including doping, in sport is fundamentally contrary to the spirit of sport, undermining the otherwise positive impact of sport on society. It is the responsibility of everyone at Hartpury to follow the Clean Sport Commitment.

The Law

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty of care on employers to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of staff, students and other users of its premises.

The Road Traffic Act 1988 states that a person is guilty of an offence if driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle in a public place while unfit through drink or drugs.

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 states that the misuse of drugs applies to the 'nonmedical use of drugs that are only intended for use in medical treatment and the use of drugs that have no medical purposes' such drugs are controlled under this legislation Hartpury works within this framework and is therefore clear that the possession and/or use of illegal drugs on its premises is unacceptable and breaches may be subject to disciplinary or legal action.

The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 creates the following criminal offences covering the supply of a psychoactive substance:

- producing a psychoactive substance (section 4 of the Act)
- supplying, or offering to supply, a psychoactive substance (section 5)
- possession of a psychoactive substance with intent to supply it (section 7)
- importing or exporting a psychoactive substance (section 8)
- possessing a psychoactive substance in a custodial institution (section 9).

The Drug Driving (Specified Limits) (England and Wales) Regulations 2014 states that it is illegal to drive if either: a person is unfit to do so because of legal or illegal drugs; or if there are certain levels of certain drugs in their blood.

APPROVAL & REVIEW CYCLE		
Reviewed By	Deputy Principal Resources	March 2025
Approved By	Exec	April 2025
Interim-Review	No	-
Next Review Date		March 2026

