



ALCOHOL AND DRUGS MISUSE POLICY AND PROCEDURE GUIDANCE FOR MANAGERS

Recognising Alcohol or Drug misuse

Alcohol and drug misuse impairs judgement, concentration and co-ordination (among other problems). The following indicators are signs of possible alcohol or drug misuse (it's important to note that these can also be caused by other factors, such as stress, physical illness, mental health problems or the effects of prescription drugs; each case should be considered on its merits):

- repeated patterns of depression, or fatigue from sleeplessness, which last two to three days
- erratic performance
- unusual irritability or aggression
- overconfidence
- inappropriate behaviour
- sudden mood changes from extreme happiness to severe depression
- reduced response times
- a tendency to become confused
- reduced productivity
- absenteeism
- poor time-keeping
- lack of discipline
- deterioration in relationships with colleagues, customers or management
- dishonesty and theft
- financial irregularities.

(taken from Managing drug and alcohol misuse at work, CIPD)

Meeting with the employee

The Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy and Procedure emphasise the commitment of our University to support and help employees who may be suffering from an alcohol, substance or drug dependency. Managers should adopt a constructive and sensitive approach to identification of the issue and offer help in a supportive and confidential environment. There may be a range of contributing factors to alcohol and drug misuse, including stress, mental health problems and disability.

It may be helpful to consider the following in preparing for meetings with employees with suspected alcohol or drug related problems. Further advice may be sought from the People Team.

- Concentrate on the instances of poor performance and/or conduct that have been identified, and give employees the opportunity to explain their behaviour.
- Inform employees of the seriousness of the misconduct/poor performance. It is important that employees are made aware that in cases of misconduct or continued poor performance it may be necessary to instigate the Disciplinary or Performance Management Procedure.

- Where appropriate, discuss a referral to Occupational Health. The leaflet outlining the role of Occupational Health may be given to employees. Referral to Occupational Health is to provide professional support and advice to managers. At the same time Occupational Health may advise employees with regard to their health and encourage them to access support through their GP.
- Agree future action and specify a timescale for review.
- Arrange regular meetings to monitor progress and discuss any further problems if they arise.
- Take notes during the meeting and confirm the outcome of the meeting in writing to the employee.