

University of East Anglia Student Alcohol Policy¹

1. The UEA context

While many UEA students drink² and behave responsibly, evidence exists from a number of sources of student alcohol consumption in excess of recommended limits and of resultant negative consequences for individuals and for the campus and local communities. Sources of such evidence include:

- reports from Senior Residents and Security staff of incidents on campus and in UEA Residences in which inappropriate alcohol consumption has played a key or exacerbating role
- referrals to the Disciplinary Office for breaches of UEA Regulations by students who were reported as being intoxicated at the time of the offence
- internal accident reports
- statistics on ambulance callouts to the UEA campus
- complaints from members of the campus and local communities
- surveys of UEA student drinking behaviours.

Alcohol abuse amongst our students risks impacting negatively not only on their physical health and psychological wellbeing, but also on their academic performance and attainment, the residential, social and recreational experiences of fellow students and others, and damage to the institution's reputation. Additionally, a drinking culture amongst one group of students, particularly if this is a dominant group, can seriously undermine attempts to integrate students with different cultural and behavioural norms into the UEA community.

2. The UEA Student Alcohol Policy

The aims of the UEA Student Alcohol Policy are:

- to promote a healthy lifestyle and minimise alcohol-related harm to individuals and to the UEA and local communities, and
- to fulfil the UEA's relevant legal, welfare, health and safety and educational responsibilities.

¹ Approved by the UEA Health and Safety Executive, November 2011

² See paragraph 3

Its objective is to provide a framework for responding to student alcohol-related difficulties, concerns and nuisance by:

- raising awareness of the risks of alcohol abuse to UEA and its students
- promoting campus-wide measures to reduce alcohol-related harm and nuisance
- guiding students and staff in respect of their responsibilities
- ensuring that appropriate guidance/training is available for staff whose duties may bring them into contact with students who are intoxicated and/or whose behaviour suggests that they may be risking harm to self or others
- ensuring that students at risk of/with serious alcohol dependency are offered guidance and support, including referral to specialist agencies when appropriate
- ensuring that students are provided with opportunities to undertake treatment without undue negative impact on the achievement of their academic objectives through the appropriate use of concessions, intercalation and Fitness for Study procedures
- ensuring that UEA's disciplinary procedures are appropriate and effective in reducing the incidence and impact of alcohol abuse
- promoting good relations with the local community by responding effectively to concerns raised about student behaviour
- promoting the governing principles of licensing law in England and supporting the licensing objectives of Norwich City Council³
- developing a range of opportunities on campus that are accessible and welcoming to students who do not wish to consume alcoholic beverages.

The policy draws on an extensive literature on alcohol abuse, the experiences and approaches of other HEIs in the UK and the US, and the observed levels and impact of alcohol consumption at UEA. Our approach to combating alcohol abuse takes a mainly educative and environmental approach. However, in some circumstances, it may be appropriate and necessary to bring into force disciplinary procedures.

3. Definitions

In the context of this document, student alcohol-related difficulties, concerns and nuisance include:

- persistent, dependent or extreme/hazardous ('binge') drinking by individuals that impacts on student attendance at teaching events, their professional responsibilities, their academic performance and their health
- alcohol-induced or exacerbated violent or disruptive behaviour on campus (including in teaching buildings and Residences) and, where it leads to complaints to the University or reputational damage, in the local community
- general nuisance, litter and unpleasant behaviour on campus resulting from the consumption of alcohol in and around University buildings.

³ These are: the prevention of crime and disorder; public safety; the prevention of public nuisance; and the protection of children from harm.

Throughout this document 'alcohol' is used in the sense of 'beverage alcohol' and 'drinking' to imply the consumption of beverage alcohol.

4. UEA Student Alcohol Policy: roles and responsibilities

The University

The University has a responsibility⁴ to:

- provide training and guidance opportunities for relevant staff on recognising and responding to students whose behaviour and/or academic performance appears to be negatively influenced by their alcohol consumption
- through the Student Support Service:
 - provide a referral point for individual students who are concerned about their own drinking behaviours or those of fellow students
 - develop a range of information, support and guidance resources to promote and guide sensible drinking amongst the UEA student population
 - develop relationships with local alcohol harm reduction experts and service providers
 - develop health promotion and educational activities focused on reducing alcohol-related harm
 - monitor trends in student alcohol consumption and alcohol-related harm, working, as appropriate, in collaboration with the University Medical Service
- keep UEA disciplinary policy and procedures under review to ensure that they act as both a deterrent to breaches of UEA Regulations and provide incentives and support for students to modify harmful drinking behaviours
- in collaboration with the Police and local council officers, respond appropriately to concerns raised by the local community about alcohol-induced disruptive behaviour by students
- work with the Union of UEA Students in support of its aims to develop policies and undertake actions to promote sensible and responsible drinking⁵
- in collaboration with the University's Estates Division, identify and develop social spaces where activities that do not involve or revolve around the consumption of alcohol can be organised .

Students

UEA students have a responsibility to:

⁴ See Appendix 2

⁵ UUEAS 2005: *Corporate Social Responsibility. Promoting Responsible Drinking*. Union of UEA Students, internal document.

- be in a fit and sober state when attending teaching events, including lectures, seminars, laboratory sessions etc. and when using the Sportspark or other UEA facilities
- if studying on a professional course, ensure that their behaviour does not breach the standards defined by the relevant professional bodies
- understand that being intoxicated is not accepted as excuse or mitigation for breaches of UEA General Regulations or other regulations relating to student behaviour
- recognise their obligations in respect of fellow students and desist from acting in a drunken or disorderly manner in University Residences or other buildings and areas of the UEA campus
- be aware of the diversity of the UEA community and their differing cultural and religious attitudes to alcohol consumption, and behave in an appropriately respectful and tolerant manner towards those with different views and attitudes
- not put pressure on others to drink nor to drink over NHS recommended limits
- not participate in drinking games and club and society induction activities involving excessive alcohol consumption
- be aware of their obligations as representatives of UEA in the local community and not disturb their neighbours and local community by acting in a drunken or disorderly manner
- ensure that they do not breach the UEA, INTO or UUEAS Premises Licenses by, for example, continuing to consume alcohol while intoxicated, acting in a drunk or disorderly manner, or consuming alcohol while under 18 years of age
- when requested by their Adviser/Senior Adviser/Head of School/Senior Resident/Disciplinary Officer or member of Student Support Service, agree to referral to relevant internal support services, if appropriate, external agencies.

UEA Academic and Administrative Staff

UEA staff members have a responsibility to:

- be aware of the signs and symptoms of disruptive behaviour or impaired performance when alcohol consumption is a possible cause, attending relevant training sessions or consulting guidance materials as appropriate

- ensure that students who display symptoms of intoxication that disrupt teaching events or study and administrative environments are referred to the Student Support Service for action under the UEA non-academic disciplinary procedures⁶
- refer students whom they suspect to have an alcohol dependency problem or to abuse alcohol to relevant internal or external service(s) for further action, seeking guidance as appropriate from the Student Support Service.
- provide a role model for students in respect of their own alcohol use while engaged in their UEA duties.

Union of UEA Students

The Union of UEA Students (UUEAS) has a responsibility to:

- ensure that it adheres to the full terms of its alcohol licences (premises and off-license sales) at all times
- maintain adherence to the Drinks Policy, Staff Code of Practice, Duty of Care and Marketing Code statements within its published Corporate Social Responsibility document, providing the Dean of Students promptly with any new or updated version produced
- work to achieve a Best Bar None ⁷ Gold Award for the Union House and Waterfront bars
- take action to ensure that SU clubs and societies members adhere to the UUEAS policy prohibiting drinking games and student induction events involving harmful drinking behaviours
- give support to/participate in relevant campus alcohol education and harm reduction activities
- support the Student Support Service's monitoring of student alcohol consumption, by, for example, providing UUEAS alcohol sales summaries on request, and supporting surveys of students 'drinking behaviours.

5. Confidentiality

The confidentiality of students who self-refer or who are referred by others to staff in the Student Support Service in relation to their alcohol consumption and drinking behaviours will normally be protected by the Student Support Service *Confidentiality and Data*

⁶ See Appendix 3 for the Breach of Regulations Reporting Form

⁷ <http://www.bbnuuk.com/what-is-best-bar-none;>
<http://www.nus.org.uk/en/students-unions/Best-Bar-None-Awards/>

*Protection Policy*⁸ in respect of their individual interactions with Service staff. The actions of those who are referred to the Investigating and Disciplinary Officers for breaches of UEA regulations will be treated with appropriate discretion. However, all non-trivial breaches of UEA regulations will be reported to the students' Heads of School.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Student Support Service will provide an annual report to the UEA Health and Safety Executive on activities undertaken and progress made in implementing this policy.

⁸ Available from the 'Policies' link on the Student support Service web site (www.uea.ac.uk/student-support-service)

Appendix 1: Related UEA policies, regulations and procedures

General Regulations for Students:

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/calendar/General+Regulations+for+Students>

Disciplinary Policy and Procedures relating to Attendance, Engagement and Progress:

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/ltgo/studentexperience/Statement+of+Policy+-+Attendance,+Engagement+and+Progress>

Disciplinary Procedures:

<https://intranet.uea.ac.uk/calendar/Disciplinary+Procedures>

Procedures for dealing with allegations of professional misconduct and/or professional unsuitability:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/ltgo/studentexperience/discipline%26pmu/Procedurefordealingwithallegationsofprofessionalmisconductandunsuitability>

Fitness for Study:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/ltgo/studentexperience/Fitness+for+Study>

Appendix 2: UEA and the legal and professional context

The University has a number of general and more specific legal and professional responsibilities that have relevance in the context of alcohol consumption and alcohol harm reduction. This section does not attempt to define those responsibilities in detail, but offers an indication of their implications in key areas.

UK **Health and Safety** legislation⁹ has wide-reaching implications in respect of UEA's duty of care to its students, staff and visitors. Alcohol consumption, even in small quantities, affects judgement, self control and co-ordination and thus increases the likelihood of accidents and anti-social behaviour. This is specifically recognised in Health and Safety protocols in relevant UEA Schools of Study which prescribe the behaviours and precautions required when students are working, for example, in laboratories and/or with potentially dangerous substances.

Additionally, there are particular **standards of professional conduct** and behaviour required from students on courses that involve contact with the public (for example, courses in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and the Schools of Education, Pharmacy, and Social Work and Psychology).

The **sale and consumption of alcohol** is regulated at both national and a local level¹⁰. There are several parts of the UEA campus that are licensed for the sale and/or consumption of alcohol. These include UEA catering outlets, parts of the Union of UEA Students' and INTO buildings and the Union Shop. UEA is responsible for ensuring adherence to current licensing laws and the terms and conditions of the individual licenses held.

The UEA Policy and procedures for the protection of students on UEA undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes who are under-18 years old at entry reminds the institution that it is an offence for a person **under-18** to purchase alcohol and for anyone to sell alcohol to such a person. It is also an offence to purchase alcohol on behalf of someone under-18, whether this is for consumption in licensed premises or publicly elsewhere.

While a very significant majority of UEA students are over 18 years of age, nonetheless Higher Education Institutions are commonly regarded as having a **duty of care** towards all its students with regard to the safeguarding of their welfare. In general terms, the institution has a duty to take 'reasonable care' to the level of an 'ordinary' man exercising and professing to have the special skill or role. These latter would include all staff whose role includes some responsibility for the welfare of students, from Academic Advisers to specialist student services staff. When a duty of care arises and/or has been breached will depend on the circumstances arising in any particular situation. In cases where breaches of our duty of care are alleged, claims of **negligence** may be made thorough in the courts in addition to complaints under our institutional procedures.

⁹ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/>

¹⁰ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/17/contents>

The Equality Act 2010 defines responsibilities with regard to discrimination issues. The Act is concerned with discrimination in respect of the specific 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We need to be mindful of the possibility that some of the social and recreational activities provided for students may be perceived as excluding students whose religious or cultural background prohibits the consumption of alcohol or entering environments where alcohol consumption is promoted or facilitated.

Appendix 3: Breach of Regulations Reporting Form

Breach of Regulations Reporting

This form should be used by members of UEA staff only.

The Reporting Person filling in this form:

Name of Reporting Person:	
Department:	
Date of completion of Form:	

If the Reporting Person did not witness the incident, please give details of the member of staff who witnessed the incident:

Name of Witness:	
Department:	

The Nature of the Incident

Please select below the nature of the incident.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mark all that apply
<input type="checkbox"/>	Behaviour preventing, hindering or disrupting students or staff in their duties or academic pursuits.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Behaviour preventing, hindering or disrupting visitors from carrying out their business.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Behaviour resulting in damage or loss to person or property.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disorderly conduct causing a nuisance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Misappropriating property of the university or of staff or student.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupying premises not expressly or by implication permitted.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Incitement to conduct leading to a breach of the regulations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Failure to exercise reasonable care for personal safety or the safety of others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intentionally or recklessly interfering with health and safety equipment.

Students Involved

Please enter the name(s) and registration number(s) of the student(s) you feel were responsible for the breach.

Student Number	Student Name

The Incident

Date of Incident:	
Time of Incident:	
Location of Incident:	
Please write a statement about the incident below. Describe the Incident in as much detail as possible:	
Continue on a separate sheet if necessary	

<p>I confirm that the above statement is true. I understand that this statement may be used as the basis for, and as evidence in, disciplinary action pursued against a student.</p>	Signature of Reporting Person	Date
	Signature of Witness	Date

The Reporting Person should send the completed form to Dr David Thurkettle, Senior Resident Tutor, Student Services Centre, by email to dosreports@uea.ac.uk. If you have further supporting evidence, this should also be submitted with the form. The Senior Resident Tutor will consider the incident under the provisions of section 2.3.3 of the University Disciplinary Procedures. If the SRT considers there is a case to answer, the case will be referred to the University Disciplinary Officer. The Reporting Person will be informed if a referral is or is not made.
