

College Policy on the use of illegal drugs

(1) The Legal Framework

All students at University College are students at the University of Oxford, and therefore subject to the regulations of the University as well as to those of the College. The University's position on the use of illegal drugs is set out in the Proctors' Memorandum on Drugs Misuse, the full text of which is printed as an appendix to this College Policy.

University College notes that the use of specified drugs is both a criminal offence under UK Law and a disciplinary offence under University Statutes. We recognise that we are forbidden by law knowingly to allow drug misuse to take place on our premises.

We also note that the illegal drug trade is the cause of a great deal of misery, violence, and death for people affected by or caught up in it, and the source of a great deal of money for those who profit from the damage and harm that they cause to others. This means that students or others who use illegal drugs contribute to damage and harm to other people, even if they do not think that they cause damage or harm to themselves.

(2) The Pastoral Framework: Support for Student Wellbeing and for Harm Reduction

The College does not condone the personal use of illegal drugs, or the supply of illegal drugs to other people. We acknowledge that students may encounter a range of illegal drugs in different settings, but their use is always risky. It may pose a threat to the health and wellbeing of the user as well as to other people, and it may be an impediment to the pursuit of academic study and research. The College therefore encourages those who recognise that they themselves or someone else may have a problem with drugs to seek appropriate help in addressing the difficulties that the use of drugs may cause for them or for other people.

There are a number of people and services who can offer support within the bounds of medical confidentiality. These include:

- The College Nurse
<https://intranet.univ.ox.ac.uk/nurse>
- The College Doctors
<https://19bsstudents.com>
- Turning Point
<https://www.turning-point.co.uk/drug-and-alcohol-support>

Independent confidential advice is also available from the Student Advice Service:
<https://www.oxfordsu.org/wellbeing/student-advice/>

Within the College, students may also speak in confidence to members of the College Welfare Team, whom they may approach on a 'no-names' basis.

The College and its Welfare Team are aware of the legal and disciplinary framework noted above, and set out in the Proctors' Memorandum below. We also recognise the benefits of prioritising harm reduction and supporting a public health approach to the use of illegal drugs, or the misuse of prescription drugs.

The College will support students who inform us that they are engaging with appropriate professional help to address their use of legal or illegal drugs (including alcohol). Members of its Welfare Team will treat concerns relating to drugs within the bounds of the College's code of confidentiality in student welfare.

(3) The Disciplinary Framework

If a member of College staff finds what appears to be either illegal drugs or equipment related to the use of illegal drugs the College may confiscate them.

The Dean will take appropriate action against any student who comes to their attention because of their misuse of legal or illegal drugs (including alcohol). As part of any investigation the Dean will take into account whether the student is engaging with appropriate professional services, and whether the student has informed the College Nurse or another member of the Welfare Team that they are doing so.

(4) Sources of information about drugs include the following:

<https://www.talktofrank.com>

<https://www.release.org.uk>

<https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

Appendix: Proctors' Memorandum on Drugs Misuse

Guidelines from Proctors' Office on Dealing with Drugs Misuse

The use of specified drugs is illegal within the UK, and is inimical to the University's primary objectives of the pursuit of academic study and research. The presence of drugs within the University community is detrimental to the welfare of its members generally, and will not be tolerated. Taking illegal substances, including so-called 'soft' drugs, has a rapid and serious effect on academic study, and is likely to lead to long-term health problems. Although addiction to drugs is sometimes curable, it is often not, and therapy is a prolonged, expensive and specialised treatment, which is certainly disruptive. There are secondary but very real health risks such as exposure to infection with hepatitis, and AIDS. The University also recognises its duty to take firm action to protect people who may be affected or put at risk by drug misuse by other people, such as through dealing and supplying, or from the anti-social behaviour consequent upon misuse. The Colleges and the University are forbidden by law knowingly to allow drug misuse to take place on their premises. Students should be aware that the pastoral and disciplinary frameworks for action set out below, apply to activities within a 'University context' which under the University Statutes is defined as 'activities on University or College premises; in the course of University activity within or outside Oxford, whether academic, sporting, social, cultural, or other'.

The Pastoral Framework

One step which anyone who has become involved with drugs needs to take is to recognise that a problem exists. The University and its constituent Colleges also recognise the need to provide appropriate support to students needing help. A variety of sources of help is available. All consultations will be treated in strict confidence subject to the provisions of the law.

Advice is available at both college and University level. Colleges will supply details of persons within the College (e.g. College Advisers, Chaplain), to whom individuals might turn for advice. The Student Counselling Service provides a source of confidential counselling outside the College context. OUSU's Student Advice Service will assist students in finding appropriate support.

Medical Help. One practical way to start the process of recovery is to recognise the medical issues, and to seek help, from a college doctor, who will be able to provide medical help, and will be bound by the conventions of medical confidentiality. Self-referral to The Ley Clinic at Sandy Croft, Sandy Lane, Yarnton, could be considered. Free and confidential advice can be obtained from LIBRA (01865 749800), or from the National Drugs Helpline 'FRANK' (0800 776600), and other contacts are available at <http://www.talktofrank.com>.

The Disciplinary Framework

Those involved with using or supplying drugs should be aware, however, that the University and its constituent Colleges must operate within the framework of national legislation. This is reflected in the University Statutes. Statute XI, section 2.(1)(I) makes it a disciplinary offence for members of the University intentionally or recklessly to possess, use, offer, sell, or give to any person drugs, the possession or use of which is illegal.

Personal use of drugs. Students found using illegal drugs within their own Colleges or in College-owned accommodation are likely to be subject to the provisions of their College's disciplinary code. Students found using illegal drugs in another College or on University premises will be referred to the Proctors. In the case of use or possession for personal use of Class C drugs, the University and its constituent Colleges, on the advice of the local police, will normally on the occasion of the first offence, issue formal warnings, together with such conditions (such as drugs counselling) as they think appropriate to enable the student to address the problem. A record will be made of such formal warnings. Disciplinary action (e.g. a fine) may be appropriate at this stage, depending on

the circumstances. Further offences, or failure to address the problem, will lead to more serious disciplinary action. In the case of Class A and B drugs (e.g. cannabis, heroin, amphetamine sulphate, LSD, cocaine, crack, ecstasy), the University or College authorities will as a matter of policy report suspects to the local police, and will consider suspending the student while police and court proceedings take place. The University Statutes provide that if a student has been convicted of a criminal offence of such seriousness that a term of imprisonment might have been imposed (whether or not such a sentence was in fact imposed upon the student member), then the Proctors may refer the case to the Student Disciplinary Panel. The Disciplinary Panel has the power to rusticate or expel student members.

Supplying and dealing in drugs will be treated severely. Those suspected of dealing in any drugs (including cannabis) can expect to be referred to the local police. Students should be aware that 'supply' includes all forms of passing drugs to someone else, irrespective of whether payment is made. For example, passing a cannabis joint around a group involves a series of 'supplies'. Suspension while police and court proceedings take place will be considered, and criminal convictions may be treated as indicated above.

[Proctors Memorandum: Amended July 2014]