



UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO & DRUGS IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

OVERVIEW

The University is committed to continuously improving the management and standards of Occupational Health and Safety. This extends to minimising the adverse affects of alcohol, tobacco and drugs whilst employees are engaged in University business.

DEFINITIONS

Accountable Person

An individual, who assumes responsibility for the health or welfare of any other person in a workplace by providing instruction, direction, assistance, advice or service, is deemed an accountable person in accordance with the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998*. All management and supervisory staff (which includes those with responsibility for students) are therefore considered "accountable persons".

Adversely Affected

Where an employee's functioning is impaired by the consumption of alcohol and/or drugs.

University Vehicle

Either a vehicle that is supplied by the University to an employee or a private vehicle used to carry out official University business.

Employee

For the purposes of this Policy, employee refers to any staff member, student, contractor or visitor.

Responsible Officer

Deans, Heads of Division, Heads of School and Administrative Sections have been designated as Responsible Officers under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Accountable Persons

The *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998*, Section 26(3), states that:

"An accountable person who has reasonable grounds for believing that a person is putting themselves or others at risk by being incapable of safely performing their duties due to the effects of alcohol, drugs or illness must arrange for that person's removal from the workplace."

Employees

The *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998*, Section 26(1), states that:

"Except with the permission of the employer or for legitimate medical reasons, an employee must not consume alcohol or drugs in the workplace", and Section 26(5) states that "a person must not smoke in an area declared to be a smoke free area."

It is also a requirement under Section 26(2) that an employee is "to notify his/her employer if the taking of, or failure to take, medication is likely to affect the safety of the employee or any other person at the workplace."

Employees must therefore follow this Policy in addition to all local, State and federal laws in relation to using, possessing, giving or selling alcohol and/or other drugs.

Any employee who knows of individuals on University premises who are engaged in unlawful drug related activities that have the potential to cause harm to those involved or to the University, should advise their Accountable Person or Responsible Officer.

Responsible Officers

Responsible Officers need to ensure that this Policy is implemented within their area of responsibility.

Background

Section 26 of the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998* provides specific provisions relating to alcohol, tobacco and drugs in the workplace.

Alcohol

An employee whilst engaged in University business must not be adversely affected by alcohol or other drugs.

An employee driving a University Vehicle must not drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs and must not exceed the legislative limits for blood/alcohol levels.

Tobacco

Smoking is prohibited in all University vehicles and buildings occupied by the University with the following exceptions:

On the Newnham campus

- the areas that the Student Association is licensed to operate as bar areas, but only during approved trading hours; and

On the Sandy Bay campus

- the area that the Tasmanian University Union is licensed to operate as a bar, but only during approved trading hours; and
- the 'conservatory' area of the lower refectory that is designated as a smoking area; and
- the buildings deemed to be residential colleges.

Drugs

Prescribed & Over the Counter

The possession and/or use of medications, including prescribed and over-the-counter drugs, is prohibited except when prescribed by a medical practitioner or permitted by law.

Illicit

No employee shall unlawfully possess, use, sell, or distribute illicit drugs while engaged in University business or on University premises.

Counselling Service

The University acknowledges that some employees will experience problems as a result of their own or others alcohol and drug use. While this use will not be accepted as an excuse for poor performance or inappropriate behaviour, alcohol and drug related problems will be addressed in a supportive and constructive way for those who are willing to deal with their problems and work to overcome them. Counsellors will respect the privacy and confidentiality of those who seek help unless the health and safety of others is at risk.

For further information, contact the Occupational Health and Safety Unit on 6226 7535.

REFERENCES

The following legislative provisions have guided the development of this Policy:

- *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995*
- *Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 1998*
- *University of Tasmania By-Laws - Implementation of No Smoking Policy 1997*

Approved by OH&S Committee : 24th November, 1999

Disclaimer

This Policy/Procedure was designed for use within the University of Tasmania. The University makes no guarantee and assumes no responsibility as to the absolute correctness for all circumstances or for the adaptation outside the University of Tasmania environment.