

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy

We are committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive working environment. This includes ensuring that all staff are fit to carry out their jobs safely and effectively in an environment which is free from alcohol and drug misuse.

The purpose of this policy is to increase awareness of the effects of alcohol and drug misuse and its likely symptoms and to ensure that:

- All staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding alcohol and drug misuse and related problems.
- Staff who have an alcohol or drug-related problem are encouraged to seek help, in confidence, at an early stage.
- Staff who have an alcohol or drug-related problem affecting their work are dealt with sympathetically, fairly and consistently.

This policy is not intended to apply to "one-off" incidents or offences caused by alcohol or drug misuse at or outside work where there is no evidence of an ongoing problem, which may damage our reputation, and which are likely to be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

This policy applies to all employees, officers, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual workers, agency workers, volunteers and interns.

This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or other policy to provide services, and we may amend it at any time.

Any information you provide to us about your health will be processed in accordance with our Fair Processing Notice (Employee Data). We recognise that such data is sensitive and will handle it in a confidential manner.

Our approach to alcohol and drug misuse

We recognise that some of our staff may become dependent on alcohol or drugs. We also recognise that such dependencies can be successfully treated. We wish to promote a culture which understands and is sympathetic to the problems associated with alcohol and drug misuse in which staff with dependency problems are encouraged to seek help and are supported.

However, we will not accept staff arriving at work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and/or whose ability to work is impaired in any way by reason of the consumption of alcohol or drugs, or who consume alcohol or take drugs (other than prescription or over the counter medication, as directed) on our premises.

Identifying a problem

If you notice a change in a colleague's pattern of behaviour you should encourage them to seek assistance through their line manager. If they will not seek help themselves, you should draw the matter to the attention of your line manager. You should not attempt to cover up for a colleague whose work or behaviour is suffering as a result of an alcohol or drug-related problem.

If you believe that you have an alcohol or drug-related problem, you should seek specialist advice and support as soon as possible. An Occupational Health provider can assist you and will, where possible, do so in confidence.

Alcohol and drugs at work

Alcohol and drug can lead to reduced levels of attendance, reduced efficiency and performance, impaired judgement and decision making and increased health and safety risks for you and other people. Irresponsible behaviour or the commission of offences resulting from the use of alcohol or drugs may damage our reputation and, as a result, our business.

You are expected to arrive at work fit to carry out your job and to be able to perform your duties safely without any limitations due to the use or aftereffects of alcohol or drugs. In this policy drug use includes the use of controlled drugs, psychoactive (or mind-altering) substances formerly known as "legal highs", and the misuse of prescribed or over-the-counter medication.

We expect you to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work, work-related functions and work-related social events and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on our reputation. If you entertain clients or represent us at external events where alcohol is served, you are considered to be "at work" regardless of whether you do so outside normal working hours. Consequently, we will expect you to remain professional and fit for work at all times.

Managers should act to prevent excessive consumption of alcohol by any member of staff and should take steps to deal with any unacceptable conduct. Any such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

You must comply with drink-driving laws and drug-driving laws at all times. Conviction for drink-driving or drug-driving offence may harm our reputation and, if your job requires you to drive, you may be unable to continue to do your job. Committing a drink-driving or drug-driving offence while working for us or outside working hours may lead to action under our Disciplinary Procedure and could result in dismissal.

If you are prescribed medication, you must seek advice from your GP or pharmacist about the possible effect on your ability to carry out your job and whether your duties should be modified, or you should be temporarily reassigned to a different role. If so, you must tell your line manager without delay.

Right to search

We reserve the right to conduct searches for alcohol or drugs on our premises, including, but not limited to, searches of lockers, filing cabinets and desks, bags, clothing, packages, or vehicles.

Any alcohol or drugs found as a result of a search will be confiscated and action may be taken under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Managing suspected substance misuse

Where a manager considers a deterioration in work performance and/or changes in patterns of behaviour may be due to alcohol or drug misuse they should seek advice and assistance from an Occupational Health provider.

If your manager has reason to believe that you are suffering the effects of alcohol or drugs misuse, they will invite you to an investigatory interview. The purpose of the interview is to:

- discuss the reason for the investigation and seek your views on, for example, the deterioration of your work performance and/or behaviour; and
- where appropriate, offer to refer you to an Occupational Health provider for medical and/or specialist advice.

If you arrive at work and a manager reasonably believes you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they shall immediately contact a Director in order that you can be provided with assistance and an investigation can be undertaken.

Home Heating and Energy Solutions

If you agree to be referred to an Occupational Health provider, your line manager will request an urgent appointment and prepare a letter of referral, a copy of which will be provided to you.

An Occupational Health provider may ask for your consent to approach your GP for advice. A report will be sent to your manager, who will then reassess the reasons for their investigatory meeting with you and decide on the way forward.

If, as the result of the meeting or investigation, your line manager continues to believe that you are suffering the effects of alcohol or drug misuse, and you refuse an offer of referral to an Occupational Health provider or appropriate treatment providers, the matter may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Providing support

Alcohol and drug-related problems may develop for a variety of reasons and over a considerable period of time. We are committed, in so far as possible, to treating these problems in a similar way to other health issues. We will provide support where possible with a view to a return to full duties. This may include:

- Referral to appropriate treatment providers, where necessary in conjunction with your GP.
- Time off work to attend treatment and recognition of any periods of absence for such treatment as periods of sickness absence.
- Adjusting your duties or other support as recommended by an Occupational Health provider, your GP or specialist during treatment and for an agreed period thereafter, subject to operational requirements and feasibility.

If you do not finish a programme of treatment, or your recovery and return to work does not go as planned, your line manager will meet with you to decide what further action if any should be taken.

Confidentiality

We aim to ensure that the confidentiality of any member of staff experiencing alcohol or drug-related problems is maintained appropriately. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting staff, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary.

If you seek help with an alcohol or drug-related problem directly from Gary Robinson and you wish to keep matters confidential from your line manager and colleagues, this will be respected unless there is reason to believe that this could put you, your colleagues or anyone else at risk or carries some other material risk for the business. In those circumstances, Gary Robinson will encourage you to inform your line manager and will give you sufficient time to do so before discussing the matter with them.

Performance and disciplinary issues

If you agree to undertake appropriate treatment and/or rehabilitation for an acknowledged alcohol or drug-related problem, we may decide to suspend any ongoing disciplinary action against you for related misconduct or poor performance, pending the outcome of the treatment.

Our intention is to support all staff with alcohol or drug-related problems to regain good health. Depending on the progress made on the course of treatment, any disciplinary action may be suspended for a specified period, discontinued or restarted at any time as we see fit.