



## Student Services

### Policy on the use of illegal drugs, Psychoactive Substances, Nitrous Oxide and misuse of legal drugs by students

**Issued by the Quality Transformation Unit**  
**Approved by Senate:** n/a

Technical updates of this document take place on an annual basis to reflect changes to the University of Greater Manchester's organisational and management structure and to incorporate earlier, approved amendments to related policies, procedures and regulations.

Date: December 2025  
Version Number: 5  
Author: Student Services  
NAME: Head of Student Services

## Purpose Of Policy: Introduction

The University has a duty to provide a safe and healthy study, work and leisure environment that respects the laws relating to the possession, supply and production of illegal substances.

The 'Misuse of Drugs Act 1971' makes it an offence to possess, use or supply to other persons, any controlled drug. The Act also makes it an offence for the occupier of the premises or a person concerned in management of premises to knowingly permit or suffer any of several activities to take place on those premises. The activities specified in the Act include smoking cannabis or cannabis resin, and supplying or attempting to supply a controlled drug to another person. The University, as the landlord, is obliged to comply with the Act and notify the police if a student is found to be in possession of drugs or to be supplying or producing illegal substances.

## Policy statement

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Support the health and welfare of students, staff and visitors
- Enable the University to fulfil its duty of care towards students with respect to the use of illegal drugs
- Enable the University to discharge its legal obligations with respect to the use of illegal drugs.

The University is committed to reducing the risks associated with drugs usage within its community including raising awareness, and providing appropriate training of the dangers of drugs misuse, to actively discourage the use of drugs on university premises.

The University will offer support and encouragement to those members of its community who are affected by drugs misuse, to seek help.

The University does not condone:

- the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs within its community
- the misuse of legal drugs including drugs in sport
- the use of any illegal drugs or any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed for the user
- the possession, use or supply of Psychoactive Substances Previously known as 'Legal Highs' or Nitrous Oxide also known as 'Laughing Gas'
- any unacceptable behaviour associated with the misuse of drugs.

It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute an illegal substance. If any such incidents take place on university premises, in vehicles being used for university business or at a university function, they will be regarded as serious, will



be investigated by the University, subject to disciplinary action and possible reporting to the police where appropriate. The consequences resulting from a police caution or prosecution for the possession or trafficking of illegal drugs are not limited to fines and prison sentences. A criminal record can have a serious impact on employment prospects, particularly for professions such as law or teaching.

Any person found on or at premises under the control of the University who is found or suspected to be involved with drugs misuse, will be subject to an immediate ban from those premises. Any associate of that person who had invited them on the premises and is a student, may be considered for disciplinary action for allowing the incident to take place.

The University is committed to providing a comprehensive educational and disciplinary framework by promoting awareness, understanding and knowledge about drugs and drug abuse. The University will provide supportive harm minimisation strategies which reduce the risks associated with drug use, including self-referral opportunities and access to confidential counselling for those who experience difficulties associated with drug abuse.

Any student who is concerned about their use of drugs is encouraged to seek advice. The University will regard anyone seeking support as having a health problem and will provide assistance to enable appropriate help or treatment to be accessed.

If a member of staff or student believes that a student has a difficulty in controlling their use of drugs, the individual will be signposted to seek support. If there are concerns that a student maybe a danger to themselves or others it is recommended that persons with these concerns are reported to a member of academic staff or discuss their concerns with Student Services.

Staff, students and visitors are clearly required to comply with the law and therefore residents at the University Halls of Residence may not bring in or cause or allow to be brought into the accommodation any unlawful drugs or other such substances. Where there is reasonable suspicion that illegal activities are taking place in the Halls of Residence, an investigation and searches will be carried out by the Police in the presence of the Warden, Student Services staff and/or Security.

Anyone found using, supplying or in possession of illegal substances will face disciplinary action through the Student Disciplinary Procedure. The individual may also be evicted from the Halls of Residence without notice or warning.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed on this policy.

The University of Greater Manchester is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our



commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy has been screened in relation to the use of plain English, the promotion of the positive duty in relation to the protected characteristics of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

All University policies are subject to periodic review under the equality impact assessment process.

## Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored to judge its effectiveness and updated in accordance with changes in the law via the Organisational Development, Equality and Diversity Committee.

See the University of Greater Manchester's Policy Zone for other related policies and procedures <https://greatermanchester.ac.uk/student-policy-zone>,

## Dissemination of and Access to the Policy

This policy will be published on the University of Greater Manchester's website to be available to all staff, students, visitors and contractors.

<b>Summary – Policy on the use of illegal drugs, Psychoactive Substances, Nitrous Oxide and misuse of legal drugs by students</b>	
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