

# Illegal Drugs - Guidance for Students

## Introduction

The University has a duty of care to its students, staff and visitors and aims to provide a safe, healthy and high quality study and work environment.

The University is committed to promoting a safe and supportive environment in which to learn and work. Our Student Charter [Student Charter](#)<sup>1</sup> outlines expected standards of behaviour and consequences of misconduct. Students also have a responsibility for their own safety and that of others.

## Possession and supply of drugs is covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) and is against the law

Students misusing illegal drugs (see definitions below) will be breaking the law. If illegal drugs are misused on University property, students will also be subject to action under the University's disciplinary procedures and any relevant Tenancy Agreement. There may also be occasions when the University takes action against students if illegal drugs are used in the community, for example, if the behaviour brings the University into disrepute, or the student is on a professional programme and the behaviour brings into question their fitness to practise ([Section 3 of Handbook of Student Regulations](#)<sup>2</sup>)

Students should be aware that the University receives Police reports of student arrests, which includes charges relating to drugs. There are a variety of outcomes of Police action for possession of an illegal substance but even a low level outcome such as a 'Cannabis Caution' may show on a DBS check and could therefore affect your future employment.

Where possible, notwithstanding any criminal or disciplinary factors that may apply, the University will offer support to students who are reported for misuse of illegal drugs.

## Definitions

### Illegal Drugs

Under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the term 'misuse' covers the supply, possession and use of illegal drugs and the misuse, whether deliberate or

unintentional, of prescribed drugs and substances such as solvents. Supply or possession of an illegal drug is unlawful. It is an offence for an employer, an

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/student-charter/>

<sup>2</sup> Available at [www.northumbria.ac.uk/handbook](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/handbook)

occupier of premises or persons concerned in the management of premises to allow the supply, use or production of drugs to take place on their premises. The penalties for offences involving controlled drugs depend on the classification of the drug

### Prescription drugs

The University does not place restrictions on use or possession of prescribed medication beyond what the law denotes. However, if a student feels that they or one of their peers is misusing prescribed medication, the University recommends they contact [Student Support and Wellbeing](#) for advice.

### **Information About Drugs and Definitions**

The following is intended to provide information about different ‘popular’ drugs currently in use. It does not try to cover all aspects, but does attempt to offer some useful factual detail. Various sources have been referred to, including the British Medical Association Medication (2004)

#### The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (amended in January 2004)

	<b>Class A</b>	<b>Class B</b>	<b>Class C</b>
Principal drugs include	Opium Heroin/Methadone Cocaine/Crack Cocaine Methadone LSD Ecstasy (MDMA) Crystal Meth (“Tina”) Class B drugs prepared for injection	Amphetamines Barbiturates Codeine Mephedrone (meow meow) Ritalin Cannabis resin Cannabis herb	Anabolic steroids Benzodiazepines (minor tranquilisers GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate (“Gina”) Buprenorphine (including Subutex) Some stimulant, antidepressant (Benzodiazepines) and anti-obesity medicine
Maximum penalty for possession	7 years custody	5 years custody	2 years custody
Maximum penalty for trafficking,	Life imprisonment	14 years custody	14 years custody

supply or production			
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\*The above table refers to some commonly available drugs. It is not a complete list of controlled drugs.

### Misuse

This is the habitual or intermittent misuse of any substance which causes detriment to an individual's health, social functioning or study/work performance. Substance misuse can impair the safety of themselves or others and affect attendance, time keeping, efficiency and conduct.

### Dependency

When a person feels a physical or psychological to take substances to the point that it takes precedence over other activities. Someone with substance dependence may exhibit signs such as: a strong desire to drink alcohol or take legal highs, a difficulty in controlling their use of substances, a persistent use of substances despite being aware of the harmful effects, an increased tolerance for substances and withdrawal when without drugs.

### **On Campus Further Advice and Support**

Student Support and Wellbeing Services:

[Student Support and Wellbeing](#)

[Keeping Healthy Keeping Safe](#)

[Self Help Guides](#)

[Ask4Help@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:Ask4Help@northumbria.ac.uk) or tel: 0191 227 4646

Campus Security:

[Safety on Campus](#)

Northumbria University Student Union:

<https://www.mysu.co.uk/>

### **Off-campus Further Advice and Support**

[NHS Advice on Drugs](#)

[Drug and Alcohol Support Newcastle Council](#)

[FRANK](#)

If you have a problem with drugs or are concerned about someone who has the [NHS Choices - Drug Addiction](#) web page has information about how to get help. You can also contact the **National Drugs Helpline** Tel: 0800 776600 (freephone)  
Available 24 hours, 7 days a week