



# The GTA Substance Misuse Policy

This policy applies to all members of GTA (including staff, learners, volunteers, parents/carers, and visitor users) who access the GTA.

Document Ref	CP4.2
Version	3.7
Issue Date	09/03/2024
Reviewed Date	09/03/2024
Next Review Date	01/08/2024

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Date: 09/03/2024

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## Introduction

The misuse of alcohol or drugs can have an impact on a learner's academic work, mental health, social relationships, and physical well-being.

This policy aims to facilitate the early identification of such problems and to encourage learners to seek advice, help and assistance voluntarily before their studies are adversely affected. Staff will guide as to where appropriate professional assistance is available. The Doncaster, Rotherham & District Motor Trades (GTA) will balance disciplinary action, educational approach and appropriate support for learners who misuse these substances.

In this context, alcohol misuse is defined as;

The habitual or occasional excessive drinking of alcohol by learners, whereby.

- their ability to make sound judgments is impaired or
- their conduct becomes unacceptable, or
- they endanger the health and/or safety of others or themselves.

Drug misuse is defined as;

- dealing (to learners and non-learners)
- the taking of illegal drugs
- the taking of drugs, illicit or otherwise, whereby.
- their ability to make sound judgements is significantly impaired, or
- their conduct becomes unacceptable, or
- they endanger the health and/or safety of others or themselves.

## Support

The GTA group regards an individual's dependence on either drugs or alcohol as a health problem. If someone is experiencing difficulties the GTA can offer information, helpline numbers and a confidential counselling service.

Learners may wish to seek advice from their Assessor/Tutor who will not provide direct advice on substance misuse but can provide guidance as to where professional help is available.

Support is also available external to the GTA from external organisations such as:

Frank: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

Doncaster Drug Hub: [www.drughub.co.uk](http://www.drughub.co.uk)

## Behaviour and Conduct if under the influence

Learners with an alcohol or drug-related problem may come to the notice of staff or students through a change in their conduct and performance. It is in the interest of any learner with a problem to be offered help and guidance at the earliest opportunity.

Any learner attending college under the influence of alcohol or drugs who is deemed by staff to be disruptive or in breach of Health and Safety regulations or the Learner Code of Conduct will be asked to leave the premises. GTA in asking a learner to leave will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the

student can leave safely to an appropriate place. A note is particularly drawn to the importance of safe operating practices for dangerous machinery.

## **The Legal Framework**

- The use and supply of illegal drugs is a criminal offence in the United Kingdom. The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)
- is intended to prevent the use of recreational drugs as well as non-medical use of medicinal drugs.
- Drugs are categorised from Class A to Class C with the latter carrying the lowest penalties. Further information is available online:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/drugs/drugs-law/Class-a-b-c/>

Please note:

These categories are subject to change criminal convictions for drug misuse or supply can restrict future career or travel choices. While consumption of alcohol is not illegal, any resultant inappropriate behaviour may contravene the law and could endanger the health and/or safety of others or themselves.

## **Consequences**

The GTA will take appropriate investigatory action in the case of the use, possession, or supply of illegal drugs and, in the case of unacceptable behaviour arising from excessive consumption of alcohol and/or drugs.

Therefore, this may lead to disciplinary action. This investigatory process may lead to several actions ranging from a verbal reprimand to a formal written warning, and ultimately to expulsion from GTA.

Outcomes of both informal and formal stages of discipline will include positive support for the learners wherever possible.

GTA has and continues to have excellent relationships with the police both in Doncaster and Sheffield. Where an informal approach has not been effective or where offences are more serious or repeated, the police may decide a criminal investigation is necessary, GTA will fully support this action or instigate it if appropriate.