



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Drugs, Alcohol, University of Leeds and You

About this booklet

You will have a great time at the University of Leeds, meeting new people, making friends and trying out lots of new things. We really want you to enjoy yourself and the city, while getting the best education possible.

It would be wrong of us to think that with this new found sense of freedom, none of our students will drink or take drugs while at Leeds. We have produced this booklet to guide you through a few facts, the effects (both physical, mental and on your ability to study) plus where to turn to for help with these issues.

We want you to be informed, so you can assess the risks and consequences of the actions you take, as well as staying healthy, safe and happy so that you get the best out of your University life.

Leeds University is concerned about the use of all illegal drugs such as cannabis, Mephedrone (MCAT), heroin, crack cocaine, crystal meth, amphetamines (speed) and ecstasy. We know our students are also likely to come into contact with other substances such as alcohol, prescription drugs, over the counter drugs, solvents, tobacco and steroids.

All of these have different physical and mental effects when used or misused, as well as carrying different legal penalties if caught with them in your room at University or by the Police.

This booklet is designed to help with any questions you have concerning these substances.

Alcohol

Many students come to University and drink safely or choose not to drink at all and we hope you are part of that group. However, there are issues about drinking and staying safe when you are out which you should think about. Despite being legal, alcohol is a drug and you should be aware of the effects drinking has upon your body and mental state.

Safe Drinking Levels

“Official guidelines for both men and women recommend no more than 14 units a week on a regular basis. One unit is half a pint of beer, lager or cider, one small glass of wine, or a 25ml measure of spirit”. Don't try to drink your unit allowance in one go, as this would not be a healthy thing to do.

The Effects

Alcohol will exaggerate whatever mood you're in when you start drinking. If you're feeling a bit low when you start, the chances are you will feel worse after a few drinks. It takes your body about an hour to process one unit of alcohol, so pace yourself or your body won't be able to cope.

Vomiting, loss of balance and slurring of speech are just a few of the more visible effects of drinking, and binge drinking can even lead to alcohol poisoning, which can put you in a coma or even kill you. Long term drinking can lead to stomach cancer, heart problems, obesity and liver problems to name but a few.

Alcohol

The problems with drinking

Crime and Anti Social Behaviour

“An estimated 23,000 alcohol-related incidents take place in Britain each week. Regular visitors to pubs and bars are twice as likely to be victims of assault.”

Being on the streets under the influence of drink puts you at greater risk of physical or sexual assault. Try to stay with friends, don't walk home by yourself. Be careful walking anywhere at night, particularly around Hyde Park and Woodhouse.

Be aware of your belongings, don't flash your mobile phone around in public (81% of mobile phone theft victims are young men). Drinking and driving is putting not only yourself at risk, but others too. If you're caught there is a chance you will lose your licence, go to prison or even worse, kill someone! So just don't bother with it.

Antisocial behaviour is a problem when drinking. When you are drunk you may appear more threatening to others – influencing how they react to you. Avoid violence with other people by talking your way out of situations, use open body language and avoid using aggressive language. Don't be dragged into something which is potentially very dangerous.

Safety

When under the influence of drink your perceptions are dulled. It takes longer to think things through, your reactions are slower, and your judgment of factors such as speed and distance may be reduced. So be careful when crossing busy night time roads. Every year students from Leeds University are tragically injured or worse when crossing the road at night.

Drink Spiking

Drink spiking is the unlawful administration of a mind-altering substance into another persons drink. This includes Alcohol. The most common reasons for spiking a drink are: amusement; sexual assault/rape; theft/robbery; kidnap/ extortion. You are less likely to become a victim of drink spiking if you don't leave your drink unattended.

Drink spiking happens to both men and women. The two most commonly used drugs are Rohypnol (benzodiazepineflunitrazepam) and GHB (gammahydroxybutyrate – sometimes referred to as liquid ecstasy), which are collectively known on the street as Roofies. They are colourless, odourless and virtually tasteless chemicals, which makes them difficult to detect in drinks. Both take effect relatively quickly, acting after 15 to 30 minutes.

Alcohol is also commonly used to spike drinks, so be aware of a stranger pouring extra alcohol into your drinks. But it's not just strangers that will use alcohol to spike your drinks, your friends might put some extra shots in your drink while you're not looking, or order you a double without you realising. Although they are probably only doing this for a joke, the consequences can be far more dangerous. Your friends don't know how much you've already had and you could potentially drink far more than you know you can handle.

By staying aware while out you should be ok. But if you think your drink has been spiked: for example you're feeling drunk when you have only had a drink or two, tell a friend to keep an eye out for you, or speak to bar staff, who will often have tester kits to test your drink for added substances.

If you think you have been taken advantage of sexually, we advise you to get in touch with the police as soon as possible. University Security and the police have an excellent team of people who can help you out in a private and safe environment.

Please see the NHS website (www.nhs.uk/conditions/Drink-spiking/Pages/Introduction.aspx) for more information about preventing drink spiking, the symptoms of drink spiking and advice on what to do if your drink has been spiked.

Alcohol and your study

Alcohol is the UK's favourite drug, and many people drink without it affecting them too much – apart from the odd hang over. However, abuse of alcohol and alcohol dependency can have a serious effect on your life and studying.

Poor attendance and disciplinary problems are often related to alcohol. Many students drink to forget about stresses in their family or home life, their University life or their personal situation if they are unhappy.

Evidence shows that many people use alcohol as a coping mechanism. Although drinking alcohol appears to offer an escape and deal with anxiety and depressive thoughts, it actually has the opposite effect, exaggerating whatever mood you are in.

If you need help with these issues or you know somebody in this situation, the following organisations are here to listen and help you. You will not be judged and they will help you find the next step to help you or a loved one or friend.

For personal help with alcohol related problems telephone the **Alcoholics Anonymous Tel: 0800 9177650** (24 hour help line) **Email: help@aamail.org**

Useful website: **www.drinkaware.co.uk**

Visit www.unitcheck.co.uk to see how much other university students are drinking and to check if your drinking patterns might be impacting on your health.

If you need advice and information, or need one to one counselling to help you deal with your own or a friend or family member's alcohol problem contact the **ADS (Addiction Dependency Solutions)**
135-141 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LN
Tel: **0161 831 2400**
Email: headoffice@adsolutions.org.uk
Web: www.ADSolutions.org.uk

If a family member or friend is (or has been) a problem drinker, you can get understanding and support from **Al-anon**.
Tel: **0800 0086 811** (Confidential helpline 10.00am - 10.00pm daily.) Web: www.al-anonuk.org.uk

If you are aged between 12 and 17, and have been affected by someone else's drinking (usually that of a parent) you can get support from **Alateen** (a part of Al-anon). For details of meetings throughout the UK and Eire contact the helpline number above.

If you need practical and confidential advice on how to deal with your own or someone else's drinking problem, or need to talk to someone in confidence about any related issues go to the **Leeds Student Medical Practice**.

4 Blenheim Court, Blenheim Walk, Leeds,
LS2 9AE

Tel: **0113 295 4488**

Web: www.leedsstudentmedicalpractice.co.uk

Illegal Drugs

Maximum penalties under the law

Supply and possession is an arrestable offence. Buying illegal drugs for a friend or sharing them can also be classed as supplying.

A Heroin, Cocaine, Crack, Methamphetamine (crystal meth), LSD, Ecstasy and Magic Mushrooms.
It is illegal to have, give away or deal in Class A drugs. Offences under Class A are the most serious and carry the heaviest penalties.

Possession

Up to 7 years in jail plus an unlimited fine

Supplying/dealing and possession with intent to supply

Life imprisonment plus an unlimited fine

B Cannabis, amphetamines, Mephedrone (MCAT). The law treats any Class B drug that is prepared for injection as a Class A drug.
It is illegal to have, give away or deal in Class B drugs. Possession with intent to supply is also illegal.

Possession

Up to 5 years in jail plus an unlimited fine

Supplying/dealing and possession with intent to supply

Up to 14 years in jail plus an unlimited fine

C GHB, anabolic steroids and tranquillisers such as Valium.
It is illegal to have, give away or deal in Class C drugs. Possession with intent to supply is also illegal, as is growing Cannabis plants.
Possession of anabolic steroids for personal use is legal in certain circumstances.

Possession

Up to 2 years in jail plus an unlimited fine

Supplying/dealing and possession with intent to supply

Up to 14 years in jail plus an unlimited fine

Illegal Drugs cont...

Temporary Class Drugs

Some methylphenidate substances (ethylphenidate, 3, 4-dichloromethylphenidate (3,4-DCMP), methynaphthidate (HDMP- 28), isopropylphenidate (IPP or IPPD), 4-methylmethylphenidate, ethynaphthidate, propylphenidate) and their simple derivatives.

Possession

None, but police can take away a suspected temporary class drug

Supplying/Dealing and Possession with intent to supply

Up to 14 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both

Psychoactive substances such as NOx Gas and sometimes called Legal Highs (which are no longer legal)

Things that cause hallucinations, drowsiness, or changes in alertness, perception of time or space, mood or empathy with others, Food, alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, medicine and the types of drugs listed above don't count as psychoactive substances.

Possession

None, unless you're in prison.

Supplying/Dealing and Possession with intent to supply

Up to 7 years in prison, an unlimited fine or both.

The negative effect of drugs

Although many drugs may make you feel great temporarily, they also have massive down sides to them, some of which can be irreversible. The side-effects of each substance are unique, but the list includes anxiety, panic attacks, confused episodes, vomiting, seizures and paranoia. Long-term use may cause symptoms of depressions, personality change and memory loss. A lot of drugs are also mixed with other ingredients, so you can never be sure what you're getting, and how that mixture will affect you.

Amphetamines (Speed) – Can give the user a sense of anxiety, irritability, restlessness and paranoia. There is a threat of dependency, and users may feel depressed, lethargic, lacking in energy, and aggressive. Some users suffer from delusions, panic attacks and hallucinations.

Cannabis – Nervousness, anxiety, paranoia, panic attacks, short-term memory loss, and reduced co-ordination and inhibitions.

Cocaine – Anxiety, panic attacks, paranoia, incoherence, hallucinations, respiratory or heart failure (increased risk when mixed with alcohol). After-effects include depression, fatigue, insomnia, nausea and psychological dependency.

Crack – Similar to cocaine, but with greater risk of dependency.

Ecstasy – Anxiety, panic attacks, confused episodes, vomiting, seizures and paranoia. Long-term use may cause symptoms of depressions, personality change and memory loss. Negative side effects from other ingredients in the tablet may also be experienced.

GHB (Liquid Ecstasy) – Overdoses. Mixing GHB with other depressants (especially alcohol) can lead to respiratory depression, depressed breathing, seizures and convulsions, vomiting and unconsciousness. Regular use may lead to withdrawal symptoms and dependence.

The negative effect of drugs

Heroin – Dizziness, nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, coma and death from respiratory failure. Regular use can lead to dependence and withdrawal symptoms.

Ketamine – Hallucinations, detachment, numbness, strong muscle movements, nausea, vomiting, disorientation and unconsciousness. Long-term effects may include memory, attention and vision impairment.

LSD – Bad trips can be terrifying, resulting in 12 hours of fear and paranoia. May precipitate pre-existing psychopathology.

Mephedrone (MCAT) – A stimulant drug which can produce feelings of euphoria, alertness, talkativeness and empathy. Effects have reportedly included anxiety, paranoid states, psychological dependence, over stimulation of the heart and nervous system causing fits, nose bleeds and blistering to the mouth and nose. Some individuals have reported an unpleasant come down after use. Due to limited research in this area short and long term effects are still being researched and are relatively unknown.

Mushrooms – Sickness, tiredness and disorientation. There is a risk of accidentally consuming a poisonous variety of mushrooms by mistake.

Psychoactive Substances such as Nitrous Oxide (NOx) –

An ever changing range of substances very often containing stimulant chemical compounds used in human and veterinary medicine.

Substances that mimic the effects of illegal drugs such as ecstasy and speed but are not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

Products often marketed as ‘not for human consumption’ and very commonly untested on humans. Of varying quality and strength with little known about the potential longer term side effects of use due to the absence of meaningful research or testing.

The following organisations are available to listen to you and give help and advice. You will not be judged and they will help you find the next step to help you or a loved one or friend.

If you want to access a community based support and treatment service for people in West/North West Leeds coping with problems related to drug use, go to **Forward Leeds**.

74 Kirkgate, LS2 7DJ

Tel: 0113 388 72477

Email: info@forwardleeds.co.uk

If you are a drug user, or have friends or relatives who take drugs, you can get advice, support and counselling from: **The Market Place**

18A New Market Street, Leeds, LS1 6DG

Tel: **0113 246 1659**

Also, talk to **FRANK** - free and confidential drugs information. Tel: **0300 1236600**

Web: www.talktofrank.com

If you need to talk in confidence to someone about your drug problem, or are struggling to cope with the effects a friend's drug taking is having on you go to **The Student Counselling Centre.**

19 Clarendon Place, Leeds, LS2 9JY

Tel: **0113 343 4107**

Web: <https://students.leeds.ac.uk/counsellingandwellbeing>

Email: scc@leeds.ac.uk

If you need practical and confidential advice on how to deal with your own or someone else's drugs problem or need to talk to someone in confidence about any related issues go to the

Leeds Student Medical Practice.

4 Blenheim Court, Blenheim Walk, Leeds, LS2 9AE

Tel: **0113 295 4488**

Web: www.leedsstudentmedicalpractice.co.uk

The Leeds University Union Student Advice Centre can offer you free independent and confidential advice on your situation if you are affected by the University's Policy on drugs or alcohol. You can contact them on the details below.

Tel: **0113 380 1400**

Web: <https://www.luu.org.uk/student-help-support/>

What's the University's Position on Drugs

The University has a legal obligation to ensure that drugs are not used on its premises. Along with Leeds University Union, Leeds University has drawn up a set of guidelines regarding drug usage:

The University will not allow students or their guests to be involved in illegal drug activities (including Cannabis) whilst on University premises.

The University may also take action against students where they are involved in illegal drugs activities whilst off University premises, if such activity may have an impact on the University, students or staff.

Students should anticipate that, if involved in illegal drugs activity, disciplinary action will be taken, including possible eviction from University accommodation.

The University may use a full range of disciplinary action, including fines, suspension from studies and expulsion from the University.

Students or their guests who are involved in illegal drug activities may be reported to the police.

The University takes a particularly serious view of students involved in the manufacture or supply of illegal drugs, which includes giving, sharing and stealing.

Remember:

A drug conviction, or even a caution, can get you expelled and seriously restrict your eligibility for certain careers.

Smoking

Many people coming to University try smoking for the first time and many people become addicted. The health effects of smoking are well known; lung cancer, emphysema, increased heart rate and increased blood pressure to name a few.

But other effects such as bad breath, the lingering smell of tobacco on your clothes and skin (nobody wants to kiss a stinker!) and yellow fingers all make you an 'unattractive package'. That added to the fact that if you have a 20 a day habit it would cost you around £2,500 a year.

Nicotine is a highly addictive drug. Smokers can get hooked very quickly and it can take years and a huge effort to kick the habit. Not many people are able to remain occasional smokers.

To view the University policy and to learn about our smokefree campus visit

http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/info/34/support_and_wellbeing/37/smoking

Giving up

Support to give up smoking is available through Leeds NHS Stop Smoking Service, please ring 0800 169 4219 for more information and to book an appointment. Tel: 0800 169 4219 or Text: SMOKEFREE to 60066. Email: stopsmokingleeds@nhs.net



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