

# Drugs: a policy statement

## 1 Introduction – aims of the policy

- 1.1 The central aim of the College's policy on controlled drugs is to balance respect for the privacy and freedom of individual students with the imperatives of compliance with the law and maintenance of a safe, productive and legal environment in the best interests of all students.
- 1.2 An important feature of the policy is the offer of assistance to students who may need advice or counselling about drugs, or about any issues arising from the use of drugs. King's wishes to support students who have a drug dependency to seek help, and to be supported in doing so. Information on how the College can help students in this situation can be found in Section 3 below.
- 1.3 It is a requirement of College regulations that students observe the terms of the policy, violations of which will constitute misconduct under the B3 Misconduct regulations.

## 2 Drugs and the Law

- 2.1 The misuse of substances known as 'drugs' is against the criminal law. The term 'drugs' covers a wide range of substances, including cannabis, cocaine, and heroin, together with the many derivatives or hybrids of these drugs. It refers to any substance controlled by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.
- 2.2 The term 'misuse' includes the use, possession, trade, distribution, selling, offering for sale, and purchase of drugs, as well as the illegal use of prescription drugs (i.e. the use of prescription drugs that have not been legally obtained, or have been used in a manner or for a purpose other than as prescribed.)
- 2.3 A College student who breaks the law on drugs may be in breach of the College's B3 Misconduct regulations or B5 Fitness for registration and practice regulations, and may be subject to proceedings under these regulations.

## 3 Assistance for students

- 3.1 Any student who has, or fears s/he may have a drug dependency is encouraged to seek professional assistance and advice as soon as possible.
- 3.2 A student's own GP may often be the most appropriate source of such advice, but the College's NHS Health Centre and/or Counselling Service can also offer support and guidance in total confidence.
- 3.3 Contact details for the Health Centre and Counselling Service are as follows: -

**King's College NHS Health Centre**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Macadam Building  
Strand Campus  
Surrey Street  
London  
WC2R 2NS

020 7848 2613  
[kingscollegehc@nhs.net](mailto:kingscollegehc@nhs.net)

**Counselling Service**  
-1 Floor Macadam Building  
Strand Campus  
Surrey Street  
London  
WC2R 2NS

0207 848 7017  
[counselling@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@kcl.ac.uk)

## 4 Reporting of offences

- 4.1 Where a student presents to a member of the College Student Services staff, or their Personal Tutor, an acknowledgement of drug misuse and a request for support and advice, such staff members' responsibilities in respect of client confidentiality will normally obviate the requirement to report the matter to the Director of Students and Education (see paragraph 4.2 below).
- 4.2 The student disciplinary procedures of the College require that where any staff member or student of the College believes that an offence against the Regulations has been committed by a student of the College, s/he should notify the Director of Students and Education in writing as soon as possible (see Regulation 3.1 of the B3 Misconduct regulations). In the case of the use of controlled drugs, the following are examples of instances where a report to the College authorities will be required:
- i) Direct observation of drug misuse or the physical symptoms or manifestations of impairment due to such drug misuse, while on College premises or College business, or in circumstances which have the potential to damage the reputation of the College, or where this affects or concerns other members of the College community;
  - ii) A report of drug misuse provided by a reliable and credible source;
  - iii) Other evidence that a student has engaged in such drug misuse.

## 5 Registrable qualifications

- 5.1 Students on programmes which lead to a professional qualification, registrable with a statutory regulatory body should be aware that use of controlled drugs will not only render those students liable to proceedings under the College's B3 Misconduct regulations, but may also inhibit the College from issuing a certificate of professional registration, as set out in the College's B5 Fitness for practice and registration regulations.
- 5.2 A student's chosen professional career can, therefore, be put at serious risk of termination as a result of the use of controlled drugs. Students are encouraged to seek assistance at the earliest opportunity to resolve difficulties and avoid being barred from entering into their chosen profession.

## 6 Confidentiality

- 6.1 The confidentiality of any information which comes to light about personal and private drug use by students will be strictly maintained by the staff in the various College Student Services (see paragraph 5 above). Confidentiality will only be broken if there is a severe risk to self and/or others.

**6.2** That notwithstanding, the effectiveness and integrity of the College's B3 Misconduct regulations B5 Fitness for practice and registration regulations must not be compromised, and the requirements and provisions of the law will be upheld by the College.