

Tocal College Student Alcohol & Other Drugs Policy

SECTION A Introduction

This policy provides Tocal students with information on supporting the College's approach to;

- reducing alcohol and other drug use
- responding to drug or alcohol related incidents
- supporting students involved in alcohol and other drug use

This policy includes information about the obligations and responsibilities of students and the consequences associated with breaches that undermine the safety of the College environment. While individuals have a right to privacy, the College also has a duty of care to manage alcohol and prohibit illicit drug use. Please see **Student Alcohol Testing Policy** to more information about how we manage use or suspected use.

Drugs

A drug is any substance that, when taken or administered into the body, has a physiological effect. This can include a range of substances including legal drugs such as alcohol, or illegal drugs. Illegal drugs refer to drugs that the law makes illegal to use, possess, cultivate, or traffic.

No student can participate in illicit drug use, as described by NSW State Law (https://www.police.nsw.gov.au/crime/drugs_and_alcohol/drugs). This includes use of illegal drugs, non-prescribed use of prescription drugs and the inappropriate use of other substances e.g. sniffing glue, huffing aerosols, bagging, chroming or general abuse of inhalants and other products.

Legal drugs refer to drugs that are legal but may also be used in ways that are unlawful and/or harmful.

Harm minimisation

A harm minimisation approach aims to reduce the risks associated with alcohol or drug use, and promote healthier, alternative behaviours for individuals. The College will provide resources and programs from a harm minimisation perspective to equip students with information for making their own choices in life.

More information on alcohol and other drug harm minimisation can be found via the [Alcohol and Drug Foundation's website](#).

All students must read and agree to abide by this policy.

SECTION B Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure the health and safety of all students, staff and visitors to the College. In particular, it seeks to ensure that students engaging in specific, higher risk activities only do so with nil blood alcohol and free of the influence of illicit drug use.

SECTION C Scope

This Alcohol and Other Drug Policy applies to:

- Full Time Students at Tocal College, Paterson
- Trainees participating in training at Tocal College, Paterson
- Students undertaking practical or work experience at Tocal College, Paterson

SECTION D Key requirements

Unlawful, inappropriate, and irresponsible use of alcohol and other drugs can impair judgment, performance, health, relationships and safety. It can also result in injury or harm to individuals, damage to property and equipment and adversely affect the rights, comfort, and enjoyment of others.

This policy is guided by the following principles and requirements:

1. Tocal College is committed to preventing and reducing alcohol and drug-related harm and damage to its people, to its property and facilities and to its reputation.
2. Members of the Tocal community must not be impaired by alcohol or other drugs while undertaking any Tocal College related activity.
3. Tocal College permits the lawful and responsible use of legal drugs, insofar as it is undertaken in compliance with appropriate legislation, Tocal policies and procedures and their intended prescribed use.
4. Tocal College considers a number of activities to be of higher risk from a safety perspective. Members of the Tocal community who undertake higher risk activities, as defined in **Student Alcohol Testing Policy**, must have zero blood alcohol concentration; and notify their trainer (or appropriate Tocal staff member) if they are using a drug that may impair their ability to carry out the activity safely or could impair their ability if they do not take prescribed medication.
5. Support is available to any student who wishes to address their use of alcohol or other drugs or experience adverse impacts with the use of alcohol or other drugs.

SECTION E Roles

Lecturers, trainers and staff supervising students are responsible for;

- Ensuring staff and students under their supervision are aware of this policy.
- Addressing identified risks to the wellbeing or welfare of any member of Tocal College, or damage to property due to the misuse of alcohol or drug use.
- Identifying and addressing practical training performance issues and/or academic performance issues that may be associated with alcohol or drug use.
- Reporting any incidents which may contravene this policy through the appropriate channels.
- If a staff member considers that someone is adversely affected by alcohol or other drugs, to the extent that they are a risk to themselves or others, the supervisor will direct them to cease work or academic activities immediately, ensure the person's welfare and safety and provide details with respect to support options at an appropriate time (e.g., when the person is no longer affected by alcohol or other drugs).

Additionally, Tocal must follow the procedures below:

- Assess immediate health needs
- Call 000 to report any situation where there is a threat to life
- Stay calm. Increasing physical and psychological stress may increase the risk of harm, particularly for people affected by stimulants and inhalants
- Keep other students safe and isolate other students from the situation if necessary
- If possible, gather facts and relevant information that is, ascertain what substance(s) were taken, how much was taken, when was it last taken and if taken in combination with other substances (including medications)
- Safely remove and store any suspected alcohol, drugs and related materials until they can be handed over to the relevant authorities

SECTION F Discipline

Please see **Student Alcohol Testing Policy** to more information about how we manage use or suspected use.

SECTION G Support & Confidentiality

Tocal College provides support to students via the Student Welfare Support Officer and a contracted Counselling service. We can also arrange external referrals for support for any substance use issues. Tocal College understands the importance of and encourages the use of appropriate non-judgmental language and tone when responding to incidents and to ensure that the focus is on student safety and promoting behaviours that are conducive to learning and wellbeing.

Confidentiality

Staff and students should be aware that information about alcohol and other drug treatment needs (for example, counselling and alcohol and other drug treatment) is a private matter which only needs to be shared between students and their parent or carers, supporting community agencies and designated student wellbeing staff.

This information may also be provided to staff who have direct responsibility for the student if they need to know that information to discharge their duty of care to the student or to other students.

An example of where information about a student's treatment may be communicated to a lecturer/trainer is where a student's concentration or alertness may be affected by prescribed medication, including pharmacotherapy, or withdrawal from a drug.

Related Policies

- Tocal College Student Alcohol & Drug Testing Policy
- Complaints & Appeals Form
- Incident reporting
- Student Discipline Points System

