

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Context

Purpose

(1) The objectives of this policy are to:

- a. meet the University's obligations, including under the [Liquor Act 2007 \(NSW\)](#), the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#), the [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 \(NSW\)](#) and other supporting regulations, including duties relating to psychosocial hazards, and equivalent legislation within all States and Territories that Southern Cross University operates;
- b. support the University to provide a safe environment for all members of the University community;
- c. prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm; and
- d. guide the effective management of alcohol and drug related problems within the University Community.

Context

(2) This policy applies to:

- a. all members of the University Community; and
- b. all University-endorsed, sponsored or affiliated events or activities, including student association and club activities, whether on campus or off campus, whether conducted during or outside business hours.

(3) This policy should be read in conjunction with the University's [Code of Conduct](#) and [HRP12: Fitness for Work](#).

Section 2 - Definitions

(4) Impaired: adversely affected by alcohol, illicit drugs, prescription medication, or any substance (including vaping products) that reduces a person's capacity to work, study or participate safely. Some roles, for example operating heavy machinery, may require a zero-tolerance standard.

(5) University Community: employees, students, contractors and visitors.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

Responsibilities of staff, students and others

(6) Members of the University Community are expected to comply with legislative requirements.

(7) Members of the University Community are expected to display a responsible attitude towards the legal use of drugs and alcohol on University premises and at any offsite University event, or any other event that is attended as a representative of the University.

(8) Work health and safety legislation, and the University's [Code of Conduct](#) places a duty of care on members of the

University Community to ensure they are not, through the consumption of drugs or alcohol, diminished in their ability to perform their duties nor are they endangering their own safety or that of others.

(9) Members of the University Community who are Impaired by alcohol or drugs should not engage in any work or academic activities at the University.

(10) Employees must advise their supervisor before commencing work, if they are taking prescription or over-the-counter drugs that may affect:

- a. their ability to perform their duties;
- b. their safety; or
- c. the safety of others.

(11) Disclosures regarding impairment or medication impacts will be managed in accordance with the [HRP 12: Fitness for Work](#).

(12) Any member of the University Community working alongside a colleague whose wellbeing or job performance they perceive to be adversely affected by alcohol or drug use (whether legal or illegal) is required to share their concerns with the relevant immediate supervisor.

(13) Any alcohol or drug-related incident that meets the definition of a notifiable incident under Workplace Health and Safety legislation must be reported to Workplace Health and Safety immediately.

Responsibilities of Heads of Work Units

(14) Heads of Work Units are responsible for:

- a. ensuring all staff and students in their unit are aware of this policy;
- b. ensuring all activities within their unit are conducted in accordance with this policy;
- c. identifying and addressing safety issues or impaired performance resulting from alcohol or drug use;
- d. directing persons perceived to be affected by drug or alcohol use to cease work immediately; and
- e. documenting, or causing to be documented, all incidents involving alcohol and/or drugs on an [Incident, Accident and Hazard Report](#).

(15) If the problem persists or if an employee or student has been encouraged to seek assistance for an alcohol or other drug problem but fails to do so and his or her actions impact on the safety or enjoyment of other employees or students, the problem should be discussed with the relevant [HR Business Partner](#) to determine if disciplinary action is required.

Responsibilities of Supervisors

(16) Supervisors are responsible for taking appropriate action if there is a risk to the wellbeing or welfare of the person affected by drug or alcohol use, or others. Strategies may include:

- a. instructing the person to leave University premises and, if necessary, arranging safe transportation home for them (by contacting next of kin or arranging a taxi) or medical attention where required;
- b. informing the person that their conduct was unsatisfactory and encouraging them to seek assistance;
- c. recommending the [Employee Assistance Program](#) to employees and the [University Counselling Service](#) to students as options for assistance;
- d. discussing relevant behaviours or incidents that may be subject to misconduct provisions and documenting the discussions;

- e. contacting Campus Security where there is an immediate safety issue; and
- f. documenting all incidents involving alcohol and/or drugs on an Incident, Accident and Hazard Report .

Responsibilities of Employees who Supervise Students

(17) Employees who supervise students are responsible for:

- a. instructing students that they are not to attend the University if they are adversely affected by alcohol or drugs;
- b. complying with student safety and wellbeing minimum standards;
- c. encouraging students to seek assistance if they believe misuse of drugs or alcohol is occurring. Employees are not expected to diagnose or counsel students who appear to be misusing drugs or alcohol. Confidential help is available through the University's Student Counselling Service;
- d. immediately informing their Head of Work Unit or Supervisor where the behaviour of a student is perceived to be influenced by drug or alcohol use and this behaviour is improper, unsafe or constitutes a risk to themselves or others; and
- e. where there is an immediate safety issue, contacting [Campus Security](#).

Licensed University Premises

(18) The bringing, keeping, selling or consuming of alcohol on University premises must be done in accordance with the requirements of the [Liquor Act 2007](#) and the Responsible Service of Alcohol requirements .

(19) Alcohol must be served by people who hold a current Responsible Service of Alcohol certificate and is to be consumed within the designated area. Appropriate standards of conduct are to be maintained, the property and safety of persons protected, noise restrictions observed and littering minimised.

(20) Alcohol may not be made available in a way that encourages rapid consumption, for example, in a shot glass.

(21) Energy drinks should not be sold or promoted within licensed premises on University grounds.

(22) Affordable food should be available at all times when alcohol is available. Convenience snacks, such as packaged chips or nuts, is not sufficient.

(23) BYO alcohol is prohibited unless expressly approved by the relevant Executive Member.

(24) Non-alcoholic beverages should be the lowest priced option available.

Functions and Events Involving Alcohol

Alcohol-free Functions and Events

(25) The University encourages alcohol-free events to maximise cultural inclusivity and the health and safety of the University Community.

Assessment of Risk

(26) A risk assessment should be carried out for any event, function or field trip involving alcohol.

Approval Authority

(27) Executive Members have the authority to approve the provision of alcohol at non-licensed:

- a. University-wide events; and
- b. University events that are open to members of the public.

(28) Details of the event must be provided to the relevant Executive Member on an [Application for Alcohol on University Premises](#). The completed form, together with details of promotional advertising material if any, are to be provided at least five working days before the event.

(29) Heads of Work Units have the authority to approve the responsible consumption (not including sale) of alcohol at all other work unit based events and field trips. Prior to approval, an assessment of any risks associated with the event should be undertaken, to minimise risk to attendees, University property and the University's reputation.

Responsibility of Event Managers

(30) Once approved by the relevant Executive Member, Campus Services must be notified at least four working days in advance of events that are open to the public and University-wide events where alcohol will be served by way of emailing a copy of the approved [Application for Alcohol on University Premises](#) to: events@scu.edu.au.

(31) Campus Services will nominate an event manager who has current training in Responsible Service of Alcohol.

(32) The event manager takes responsibility for planning and managing the event in line with this policy.

(33) The event manager is responsible for:

- a. assessment of any risks associated with the event, to minimise risk to attendees, University property and the University's reputation;
- b. obtaining the relevant approvals. External approval may be required from the Liquor Licensing Authority and/or local government following internal University approval;
- c. ensuring the event is conducted in accordance with the [Liquor Act](#) and Responsible Service of Alcohol requirements; and
- d. notifying Campus Security in advance of any event that is to be held on campus.

(34) Alcohol should not be served at University events where minors can reasonably be expected to be present.

(35) Alcohol should not be the primary focus of University events.

(36) Precautionary measures must be in place to ensure alcoholic beverages are not accessible or provided to people who are under age or who appear intoxicated.

(37) A variety of non-alcoholic beverages must be available at an event and be displayed as prominently as the alcoholic beverages.

(38) A reasonable proportion of an event's budget should be allocated to providing a variety of food items at the event.

Other Events, Functions and Field Trips

(39) The responsible consumption of alcohol at events such as working meetings, planning days, celebrations and field trips may only take place with the prior approval of the Head of Work Unit.

(40) The Head of Work Unit or nominee must monitor the events to ensure the wellbeing or welfare of employees, students, contractors and visitors (including workers as defined in the relevant work health and safety legislation) and take appropriate action where behaviour is improper, unsafe or constitutes a risk to themselves or others.

Gifts and Prizes

(41) Prizes, incentives or gifts in the form of alcohol should not be offered or rewarded for any event, competition or University activity.

On-Campus Accommodation

(42) On-campus accommodation managers and partners may determine when and if alcohol may be consumed in common or outdoor areas.

(43) University events in residential areas, involving alcohol, must follow this policy and any rules or guidelines set by Campus Living Villages.

(44) Alcohol must not be supplied to any person who is intoxicated or aged under the age of 18 years.

(45) Residents and/or their guests must not be subjected to pressure to drink alcohol.

(46) Drinking games including digital/online trends, and drinking apparatus, such as funnels, which enable a person to drink large quantities of alcohol rapidly, are not permitted in University residential areas.

Disciplinary Action

(47) Subject to clause (15), if the performance of an employee affected by drugs or alcohol continues to be adversely affected, supervisors should consult with their HR Business Partner before following unsatisfactory performance procedures or other appropriate University processes.

(48) Disciplinary action may be taken under the [Rules - Student Academic and Non-Academic Misconduct Rules](#), for a student's drug or alcohol-related behaviour.

Health Promotion

(49) The University is committed to embedding primary prevention and harm minimisation in relation to drugs and alcohol into all relevant University policies, procedures and guidelines.

Assistance

(50) The University acknowledges that some members of the University community may experience problems as a result of their own or others' drug and/or alcohol use.

(51) Employees and students who believe they have a drug or alcohol problem are encouraged to seek professional assistance and treatment. Assistance for employees is available through the confidential [Employee Assistance Program](#) and students may access the University's confidential Student Counselling Services.

(52) Where employees, students, contractors or visitors (including workers as defined in the relevant work health and safety legislation) are concerned about the welfare of a co-worker or student, they should share their concerns with either their supervisor or HR Business Partner.

(53) Seeking confidential assistance from any treatment or support service, or being referred to them, will not result, by itself, in disciplinary action, or affect the professional position of the individual in the University setting.

(54) If an employee or student is in need of immediate assistance, first aid should be provided in accordance with the first aid provisions .

Policy Implementation

(55) Information about this policy will be provided through student orientation and staff induction, as well as through programs for senior University staff.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	10th July 2026
Review Date	10th July 2029
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	10th July 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Kim Franks Vice President (People and Culture)
Head of Work Unit	Kath Drew Director, Human Resources
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