Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Drugs

All members of the College are reminded that:

- It can be dangerous to take any drugs other than under medical direction

The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) covers three categories of drugs:

- Class A Drugs (this category includes LSD, ecstasy, heroin and cocaine)
- Class B Drugs (amphetamines, barbiturates and other weaker opiates)
- Class C Drugs (includes cannabis)

The unauthorised possession, use and supply of these drugs are criminal offences. These are regarded as very serious matters by the College, and any student involved may be evicted from College accommodation, if living in; or temporarily or permanently expelled (‘sent down’) from College. This applies particularly to any student found to be using, dealing or in possession of any Class A Drug. It also applies to any student found to be dealing or repeatedly in possession of any of the Classes of Drugs above. This approach is in line with the current policy of the Police. The College’s policy is also to co-operate fully with the Police in any investigation. Students should also be aware that if the College were knowingly to permit drug offences to take place on its premises, it would itself be liable under the Act.

At the same time, the College wishes to offer all possible support to students seeking medical or counselling help regarding drug taking. Those aware of being at risk of drug or other substance abuse are encouraged to seek advice from the College Nurse, your Tutor, your doctor or the University Counselling Service. The Welfare Officers of CUSU and the Graduate Union may also be able to offer advice, and the CUSU-produced Student Survival Guide (available from CUSU or the GU) contains a list of specialist confidential agencies to which students may go for help, such as: The Bridge Project Drug Advice Centre, 154 Mill Road, Cambridge CB1 3LP (tel. 214614).

Any student concerned about another student’s dependence on drugs should encourage him or her to seek advice from one of the sources listed above.

Any member of the College concerned about illegal drug use should refer the matter to the Senior Tutor, or to any Tutor.

‘Designer Drugs’

Officially called new psychoactive substances (NPS), and formerly known as ‘legal highs’, designer drugs are psychoactive substances containing various chemical ingredients intended to produce
effects similar to illicit drugs. Drugs sold under names such as spice and black mamba, are designed to give users the same effect as drugs like cannabis and cocaine.

A recent ban on designer drugs has recently come into force in the UK. The law criminalizes the production, distribution, sale and supply of NPS, designer drugs and legal highs.

Students are reminded that the risks involved in taking designer drugs are considerable, especially if they are combined with other drugs or alcohol. Designer drugs have been linked to more than 100 deaths in the UK in 2015 and a rise in violent assaults. Students are encouraged to seek help from the sources cited above if they are concerned about their own, or someone else's, use of designer drugs.

**Alcohol**

There are very considerable social pressures and numerous opportunities in Cambridge, and in the College, to drink too much. Drinking to excess is dangerous: it may contribute to serious accidents, particularly traffic accidents, to long term problems with health, as well as to psychological problems.

It is particularly important not just to drink sensibly yourself, but to avoid encouraging other students to drink to excess, and to be sensitive to others around you who do not drink alcohol. Encouraging other students to drink to excess puts their safety, as well as their health, at risk. In this context, students should note that drinking games are not permitted at any College dinner.

Students who need a taxi back from Addenbrooke’s Hospital or the city centre to College following intoxication with alcohol (or illegal drugs) will be billed for the taxi fare, plus the cost of any necessary cleaning. Students will also be charged for any damage to College property and for additional cleaning required on site, and in these instances disciplinary action may follow.

As in the case of drugs above, any student worried about their or their friends' drinking is encouraged to talk to the College Nurse, your doctor, Tutor or the University Counselling Service, or to Drinksense, which provides confidential counselling, education and support for those with alcohol problems, their friends or families.

*Updated September 2016*