SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY – Review Feb 2027

1 Definition

Substance misuse includes the non-medical use of illegal drugs, prescribed drugs, solvents and alcohol, to effect changes in mood, perception or physical performance.

2 Purpose

Bespoke Training & Education (BT&E) is committed to:

- Helping and supporting, as far as is practical, those learners or staff who either have a personal substance problem or whose lives are affected by the substance misuse of a partner or relative.
- Encouraging any learners/staff member with a substance related problem to seek help at the earliest opportunity.
- Providing drug education and information programmes for staff and learners.
- Recognising its legal obligations as identified in relevant legislation, including the Misuse of Drugs Act 1968 (Revised 1971, 1993 and 2005).

3 Scope

This policy applies to everyone within the organisation, including learners, staff and contractors regardless of status or seniority. It applies to substance misuse within, or having an effect within, the grounds and premises of the College, during normal working hours. This includes all settings where college activity (including off site visits and residentials) is taking place.

4 Organisation and responsibility

BT&E will:

- Maintain **confidentiality** in accordance with BT&E policies, and support referrals as appropriate.
- Facilitate time off for advice and treatment in accordance with the normal learner/staff absence/sick leave arrangements.
- Assess the severity of incidents and carry out normal disciplinary procedures if behaviour endangers others or is considered to be seriously affecting the individual or BT&E community.
- Facilitate and support the return to previous studies/employment.
- Establish links with suitable sources of professional advice and treatment.
- Make learners aware of the existence of this policy through the Learner Handbook.
- Make sure that staff are aware of this policy through the Staff Handbook.
- Make provision for training, both for those involved in specifically implementing the policy and for BT&E staff as a whole.

All BT&E staff will:

- Observe the requirements as identified above.
- Encourage any learner/staff member who has a substance problem to seek advice and help.

Organisational Development will:

- Provide advice and help for any learner/staff member with a substance problem.
- Direct learners/staff members to other sources of help and advice.
- Provide, as part of BT&E's on-going health education programme, materials and workshops for learners/staff members regarding the dangers of substances.

The Tutor will:
- Take responsibility for handling substance incidents as reported.
- Deal with the person or persons involved within agreed guidelines and using their discretion.
- Liaise with relevant college personnel.
- Liaise with relevant external agencies.
- Log written reports of any incidents and any further steps taken

5 Procedures

General
In responding to incidents of suspected substance misuse the primary concern is to protect individuals from harming either themselves or others. Certain circumstances may dictate that the College must meet specific legal obligations.

5.1 Learners/staff making disclosures about their own substance misuse
Individuals should be made aware of the confidential support that is available within BT&E health and wellbeing programme, which is organised by Croner Consultants (BrightHR) or, for staff, through a confidential referral to Organisational Development. This may include referrals to external agencies such as Occupational Health or Alcohol Services.

5.2 Learners/staff who are experiencing difficulties as a result of others' substance misuse.

Curriculum Support and Organisational Development will offer guidance and support to learners/staff members making such a disclosure.

5.3 Learners/staff found under the influence of a substance where an individual's ability to study or carry out their normal duties is impaired

This will be dealt with through their line manager, who will follow the relevant Learner or Staff Disciplinary Procedure. The incident should be logged on the appropriate Disciplinary Report Form.

5.4. Finding, using, supplying, cultivating or bringing substances on College premises

a) Staff
If a member of staff finds a substance/substance equipment or discovers or suspects that a learner (or other member of staff or contractor) has been using, supplying or bringing onto BT&E premises a substance, they should contact the company director.

Individual members of staff will not normally be expected to contact the police direct, but should contact the company director as soon as possible (see Guidelines for BT&E staff – Appendix 1).

In the event of any learner/staff member/contractor found to be coming onto college premises to supply or cultivate a substance, the appropriate Disciplinary Procedure will be implemented.

b) Learners

Learners should immediately report such incidents to their tutor or nearest staff member who will then take action as identified above.

6 Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be monitored along with incident reports to ensure its effective operation. This will be done through BT&E management and appropriate school, should a student be involved. A summary report will be included within the annual Health and Safety report.

Appendix 1

Guidelines for the Duty Manager

In the event of a member of staff reporting that a learner, staff member or contractor is using, supplying, cultivating or bringing substances onto BT&E premises.

The Duty Manager will:

- Take prompt, preventative action.
- Implement the relevant Disciplinary Procedure.

In the event of a member of staff reporting that illegal drugs or substance paraphernalia/equipment have been found on BT&E premises.

The Tutor will:

- Dispose of the substance and or paraphernalia/equipment in the 'Sharp Box'. The Sharp box and disposable gloves will be located in the 1st Aid unit of the appropriate building.
- If a drugs laboratory or illegal manufacturing is suspected, seal off the area.
- Contact the Health, Safety & Welfare Manager if it is thought that the equipment poses a possible danger for the individual or others (ie used needles).
- Ask a colleague to witness the disposal.
- Carry out the disposal promptly (eg substance should not be left in a desk drawer for a few days).

It is both appropriate and legally permissible in most cases to dispose of an illegal drug immediately without informing the police, particularly where small amounts are involved.