



ST HUGH'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

ALCOHOL POLICY

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Author/Responsible Officer: Damian Jenkins, Dean

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Alcohol Policy

St Hugh's College permits the safe and regulated consumption of alcohol on its premises. This policy provides a framework to ensure alcohol consumption is responsible, consistent with our ambition to create an inclusive and respectful community, and that College members are aware of the associated risks.

Scope

The policy applies to all employees and anyone undertaking work on behalf of the College, irrespective of status, casual and agency workers, hourly paid tutors, and students alike.

Background

The provision and consumption of alcohol on licensed premises is governed by the Licensing Act 2003. College has a Premises Licence. This stipulates the areas approved for alcohol sale, distribution and consumption, and a Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS), who holds a Personal Licence, is responsible for ensuring the Act is adhered to. The College DPS is the Catering Manager.

The Licensing Act has four main objectives which frame the provision and consumption of alcohol within College. These objectives are:

- To ensure public safety.
- To protect children from harm.
- To prevent crime and disorder.
- To prevent public nuisance.

College places community at the heart of all it does. We want our members to feel safe and supported, and we wish to promote their health, safety, and wellbeing. The improper use of alcohol can undermine these efforts, giving rise to a hostile or unwelcoming environment.

Put to improper use, alcohol can also impair personal performance (leading to fatigue, hangover, accidental injury, or impaired mental health) and can lead to serious consequences (poisoning, dependence, chronic health conditions, anti-social behaviour, relationship difficulties, financial difficulties, major injury, or accidental death). As such, the provision of alcohol within College must be responsible and regulated.

The Purchase and Provision of Alcohol

1. The College encourages self-regulation and respect for others on the part of those consuming alcohol.
2. Alcohol served at events held within College must be paid for by those consuming it.
3. Occasionally, College may provide alcohol at a social event. Such events must align with the College's charitable purposes, and the provision of alcohol must adhere to

the relevant licensing laws. Permission to serve alcohol at such events requires the approval of the Principal, Vice Principal, Senior Tutor, Bursar, or Dean.

4. College is responsible for serving alcohol at student events held in public rooms (i.e., in all rooms excluding private accommodation).
5. Individuals must opt-in to the purchase and consumption of alcohol at events where it is served. Alternative, non-alcoholic options should be offered by default.
6. When included in the ticket price for an event, the amount and type of alcohol must be specified in the relevant booking form and approved by the Bursar, Domestic Bursar or Dean. The amount of alcohol provided with a ticket must be reasonable and limited.
7. For student events at which alcohol is to be supplied and/or served by the organiser, the request for permission must specify the amount and type of alcohol provided per person, the method of payment, and a list of non-alcoholic alternatives that will be offered. The request must also name a nominated organiser who must have received bar training by College.
8. Alcohol should be served in moderation and in accordance with the law.
9. No person under 18 years of age may purchase or consume alcohol within College.
10. There should be a designated responsible person for each event who is responsible for dealing with any problems which may arise and for ensuring compliance with this policy.

Personal and Collective Behaviours in Association with Alcohol

11. Each member of College is responsible for their own behaviour at all times, irrespective of their use of alcohol.
12. Employees are responsible for ensuring their own compliance with this policy.
13. No person should apply pressure to another to consume alcohol.
14. Inducing someone to drink alcohol through deception (“spiking”) is a serious misdemeanour and will invoke the full application of the relevant disciplinary procedure. Such an action may also constitute a criminal offence and may be referred to the Police.
15. Irresponsible promotion of alcohol consumption is prohibited. Examples of irresponsible promotion include, but are not limited to:
 - Games or activities that require or encourage a person to drink a quantity of alcohol within a time limit, or to drink as much alcohol as possible (e.g., “pennying”, “funnelling”, or “sconcing”).

- The provision of unlimited or unspecified quantities of alcohol, or alcohol subsidised in such a way as to encourage its consumption.
16. The use of alcohol in association with harassment, sexual harassment, or any other breach of the College's disciplinary procedures will be considered an aggravating factor and may lead to a more severe sanction than would be considered for the same infraction committed whilst sober.

Alcohol Consumption by Employees Whilst Working or on College Premises

17. We have a duty to ensure a safe working and residential environment and so nobody undertaking work for the College is permitted to consume alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol while working, except for in a very limited number of circumstances (see below).
18. Employees may, on rare occasions, drink whilst on duty. This will almost always occur in the context of charitable endeavours and whilst hosting alumni, guests, or donors, or at other official College social events.
19. The College's duties continue to apply at these work-related events, including preventing sexual harassment and discriminatory or negligent acts.
20. As the College is a residential site, when on College premises employees **should** only drink in moderation and **must** not be visibly under the influence of alcohol, even when they are not working. This prohibition does not apply to the private residential space of employees who live on the College site.
21. Employees must exercise good judgement and ensure they are not impaired by alcohol at functions they attend for charitable purposes, ensuring that they uphold the standards required by the College, including those set out in the Equality Policy and the Harassment Policy.
22. Employees are expected to comply with all other College policies and act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect or impact negatively on the College's reputation.
23. Employees consuming alcohol must not exercise professional authority or make business decisions during or after alcohol consumption. This includes but is not limited to:
- Approving contracts or financial transactions;
 - Representing the College in official matters;
 - Supervising other employees or students;
 - Engaging in staffing or student welfare issues; and
 - Exercising decision authority in the context of their role.

Where alcohol is consumed, employees are expected to step back from any activity that requires sound judgement, discretion or managerial responsibility.

24. For this reason, a zero-tolerance approach to alcohol applies in the following circumstances:

- Teaching students;
- The operation of College vehicles or potentially dangerous equipment and machinery;
- Working in confined spaces or at heights;
- Working with live electrical equipment;
- Any other piece of work that could reasonably be considered a safeguarding issue or safety critical.

25. Any employee whose conduct is deemed to be in breach of the Alcohol Policy may invoke the application of the relevant disciplinary procedure.

Risk Assessments

26. Any event involving the serving and consumption of alcohol requires the completion of a risk assessment.

Alcohol Misuse and Ill Health

27. Alcohol misuse is defined as consumption leading to an ill effect on an individual's health, work performance, or social functioning.

28. Alcohol dependence is the strong, often uncontrollable desire to consume alcohol and does not necessarily involve drinking to excess.

29. It is recommended that no one person drink more than 14 units of alcohol per week if they are to limit the health risks associated with its consumption. Ideally, this should be spread over several days, and individuals should aim to have several alcohol-free days per week. Further information is provided by the [Chief Medical Officer](#).

30. Members of College taking medications should remain alert to the possible interaction between alcohol and drugs. Caution should also be shown by anyone experiencing mental ill health, which alcohol can worsen.

31. The units contained within some drinks is as follows:

- A single shot of standard (40% ABV) spirit (25 ml), 1 unit.
- A pint of lager, ale, or beer (5% ABV), 3 units.
- A standard glass (175 ml) of low strength (<12%) wine, 2.1 units.
- A bottle of alcopop (275 ml, ABV 5.5%), 1.5 units.

32. Any member of College who is concerned about their drinking can seek advice from:

- [Drinkaware](#)
- [Alcoholics Anonymous](#)
- The [NHS](#)
- The College [Nurse](#)

- Your GP
- [Turning Point](#)

33. If an urgent concern arises about a member of College who is under the influence of alcohol, help can be sought from the Porters' lodge in person or by calling 01865 274900.

Enforcement of this Policy

34. In order to meet legal its obligations, the College will inform the police and any other appropriate authorities if there is reasonable suspicion that a criminal act has been committed on the College's premises.
35. Any member of staff or worker concerned about breaches of this policy, or who has concerns about their health and safety, should raise these in the first instance with their line manager, Head of Department, or Human Resources.
36. An academic employee concerned about breaches of this policy, or who has concerns about their health and safety, should raise these with the Senior Tutor or the Head of HR.
37. Students who are concerned about breaches of this policy, or who have concerns about their health and safety, should raise these in the first instance with the Dean.
38. Breaches of this policy will be dealt with under the relevant disciplinary procedure outlined below.

Disciplinary Breaches Committed Under the Influence of Alcohol

39. Students whose behaviour falls foul of the Non-Academic Disciplinary Code should be referred to the [Dean](#).
40. Non-academic staff who breach the Alcohol Policy and the rules laid out in the Employee Handbook should be referred to Human Resources.
41. Academics and members of the SCR who breach the Alcohol Policy and the [Disciplinary Code](#) laid down in the By-laws should be referred to the [Principal](#).
42. Members of College are reminded that they are responsible for the behaviour of their guests whilst on site or in attendance at College-run events.