Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



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CONTENTS

Ir	ıtrodı	uction		1
1	Sı	ubstan	ice abuse among students	2
2	Preventive actions			3
	2.1	The	role of the University	3
	2.1.1		Organisation of activities	3
	2.1.2		Student guidance and counselling	3
	2.1.3		Student tutoring	3
	2.2	The	role of the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS)	4
	2.3	The	role of subject associations	4
3	Re	ecogn	ition of substance abuse problems	5
	3.1	The	role of the University	5
	3.2	The	role of the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS)	5
	3.3	The	role of students and subject associations	5
4	Intervening in substance abuse problems		ning in substance abuse problems	6
	4.1	Ado	dressing the problem	6
	4.1.1		Addressing by the teaching and counselling staff	6
	4.1.2		The coordinator for student substance abuse issues	6
	4.1.3		The role of the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS)	7
	4.1.4		The role of students and subject associations	7
	4.2	Dis	missal from a teaching setting	8
	4.3	Tes	ting for narcotics	8
5	Re	eferral	l to care	10
	5.1	Neg	gotiation for referral to care	10
	5.2	Car	e commitment	10
	5.3	5.3 Care options		10
	5.4 Returning to studies		urning to studies	11
6	Sı	ubstan	ce abuse problems and their consequences	12
	6.1	Dis	missal from an educational setting	12
	6.2	Der	nial of participation	12
	6.3	Wri	itten warning and suspension for a specified time	12
	6.4	Car	ncelling of study rights	12



Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions

6	5.5	Use of intoxicants during a study period abroad	13
		andling of sensitive and confidential information	
		nces	
Ар	pend	dices	17
I	- Арре	endix 1: Removal from an educational setting due to the use of intoxicants	17
A	Арре	endix 2: Care commitment	18
		endix 3: Data transfer form for health care services. The student is obliged to stertificate.	_



INTRODUCTION

Substance abuse may considerably affect a person's work performance and wellbeing at work. A student's substance abuse problem can manifest at the university, for instance, as absenteeism, lateness, and inefficiency or delay with the studies. Substance abuse problems are often accompanied by other psychosocial problems, which may be detrimental to studies and later work performance.

This action plan applies to all students pursuing degree studies at the University of Jyväskylä as well as to exchange students. Postgraduate students with an employment relationship are part of the staff and are subject to the model of early intervention. Furthermore, the action plan also concerns students studying at independent institutes.

Substance abuse refers here to any alcohol, narcotics, and drugs that have been used for narcotic or intoxicating purposes. This action plan aims to do the following:

- promote capability for studying and working
- promote students' health and wellbeing
- prevent problems of substance abuse
- support intervention in a student's substance abuse problem
- enhance referral to appropriate care.

With reference to the points above, a long-term objective of this action plan is to influence intoxicant-related behaviour in the university context. The plan was prepared in collaboration with university experts, the Student Union of the University of Jyväskylä (JYY), and Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS). The action plan builds on a model designed by Universities Finland UNIFI. The plan is implemented in phases, and instead of sanctions it seeks to emphasise prevention, recognition, guidance and early intervention. In all cases, the legal rights of the people involved must be carefully secured. For the processing of sensitive and confidential information, please see section 7.

One of the tasks of the University of Jyväskylä's working group for student wellbeing is to plan and coordinate preventive measures for substance abuse within the University. The team also coordinates the implementation of this action plan and negotiates common procedures for these issues. The University has also appointed a coordinator for student substance abuse issues.



1 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG STUDENTS

Substance abuse among JYU students has been charted as part of the University Student Health Survey 2012. The response rate in this survey was rather low, and the results are therefore only indicative. Of the 212 respondents, about 75% reported using alcohol moderately and 12% not at all. Six percent of the respondents said they used cannabis moderately and less than one percent used other narcotics; these percentages are quite small in comparison to national population surveys.

At the beginning of 2015, attitudes toward substance abuse were surveyed by a questionnaire for all students. Response rates (N = 849) varied by faculty, ranging from 2.3% to 10.4%, while the overall response rate was 6.9%. Of the respondents, roughly a half were 21- to 24-year-olds and 26% were 25- to 29-year-olds. Most respondents did not consider moderate alcohol use as a problem in student life. In contrast, opinions on experimenting with narcotics and drugs were very negative, as only 4% approved of these. Opinions regarding intoxication at extracurricular events arranged by the University were ambivalent, with those under 20 and those over 30 taking a more negative position on this than the respondents in the intermediate age group, of whom about a half would tolerate such intoxication for students as well as for staff members. Of all respondents, 44% saw that intoxicants were not used excessively at student events, whereas 38% considered that the present level of use was too high.



2 PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

2.1 The role of the University

The University of Jyväskylä promotes welfare in learning environments as well as students' responsible attitudes to intoxicants. Students receive information about this action plan in each autumn term, during the first week in connection with initial orientation for new students, and where applicable, later in conjunction with practical training periods, for example, and on the course Brush up your Academic Learning - Skills over Credits (HYVY001).

2.1.1 Organisation of activities

The University's working group for student wellbeing is composed of representatives of teaching staff, students, and FSHS, together with the coordinator for student substance abuse issues and other expert members. The team's tasks include the planning of preventive measures for substance abuse, agreeing on common procedures and dealing with other issues pertaining to student welfare.

2.1.2 Student guidance and counselling

At the beginning of their studies, every student has a designated teacher-tutor or a personal study plan supervisor. The teacher-tutor advises in matters related to the progress of studies and guides the student in designing a personal study plan. Issues relating to the student's wellbeing and possible substance abuse may come up in the context of personal counselling. The University provides adequate training and support to ensure that the counsellors are capable of acting in such settings.

All JYU departments have student wellbeing advisers, 'goodies'. If a student so wishes, he/she can turn to them for help in issues of substance abuse.

2.1.3 Student tutoring

At the beginning of studies, each student also receives a designated student tutor. These tutors are senior students who guide, instruct and support the students in this new stage of life. The tutors are peer instructors selected by the subject department and trained for the task by the local student union. In tutor trainings, the responsible use of intoxicants is also discussed. In events arranged by student tutors, it should be taken into account that not all students use intoxicants.



2.2 The role of the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS)

The Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS) delivers information about the effects of intoxicants on students' health and social life both in connection with clinical work (health checks, appointments) and through their website, news articles and various campaigns. Practical cooperation with the University and the Student Union is organised in the multiprofessional health team of the FSHS and in the 'goodie' activities.

Data on higher education students' use of intoxicants are collected by a national student health survey conducted every four years. FSHS gives faculties feedback on the survey results. In addition, feedback is given to the University regarding wellbeing and the use of intoxicants among first-year students as indicated in an online questionnaire about health issues (Sätky).

FSHS has produced, together with the former Elämäntapaliitto (current EHYT ry), various materials for higher education students, such as a drinking diary, guidebook for partying, and test of social responsibility. The purpose of these materials is to increase students' knowledge on the health effects and controlled use of intoxicants. Materials for students are available also through the University's working group for student wellbeing.

2.3 The role of subject associations

The working group for student wellbeing discusses with the representatives of subject associations about intoxicant-related culture in the University's student activities. In collaboration with the subject associations it is possible to agree on procedures that suit the University's working environment and support a responsible culture regarding intoxicants. The collaboration also allows emerging problems to be reacted to.

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



3 RECOGNITION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS

3.1 The role of the University

Excessive use of intoxicants by a student may show as

- absenteeism
- lateness
- a decline in study performance
- avoidance of teachers or other students
- vague excuses and explanations
- disturbing behaviour in student groups
- appearing intoxicated or with a hangover in public.

If the staff have concerns about a student's possible substance abuse problem, the issue will be addressed with the student (see section 4.1).

3.2 The role of the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS)

In health checks and clinical appointments, the FSHS personnel seek to recognise risk users of intoxicants. Students' health and use of intoxicants are charted with an online questionnaire for first-year students, which includes the AUDIT test and a question about the use of narcotics. Students receiving more than 10 points in the AUDIT test or having used narcotics are invited to see a public health nurse in order to discuss more broadly about one's use of intoxicants as well as health and general circumstances. This meeting involves addressing the problem with subsequent follow-up appointments (see section 4.1). Where this mini-intervention is not enough, further need for care is considered and planned at an appointment with either a physician or a psychiatrist.

3.3 The role of students and subject associations

Students and subject associations are in a key position as regards the recognition of possible substance abuse problems of their fellow students. It is likely that compared to other people they perceive these problems earlier and more easily.

The University and subject associations should agree on common procedures for addressing substance abuse issues. The working group for student wellbeing gives support for the development of these procedures.

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



4 INTERVENING IN SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS

When concerns arise, intervening in a student's substance abuse problems as early as possible is of primary importance. The earlier the use of intoxicants is addressed, the easier it is to prevent the problem from getting worse.

On certain grounds, the University can oblige a student to present a drug test certificate. The preconditions for a drug test, as stipulated in the Universities Act, section 43d (see section 4.3 in this document), need to be determined separately for each case.

4.1 Addressing the problem

4.1.1 Addressing by the teaching and counselling staff

If the teaching or counselling staff become concerned about a student's use of intoxicants, the issue should be addressed immediately with the student. Another student may also bring up the issue. Support for taking up these issues is available.

Addressing the problem involves an open discussion, where the sensitive character of substance abuse problems must be taken into consideration. The problem is always addressed privately between two persons. A student's use of intoxicants must not be discussed in any group setting or in the presence of other students, for example. The purpose of the discussion is to express concerns for the student's use of intoxicants and the related impact on his/her studies and wellbeing. The discussion is a form of early intervention, but the situation should be reviewed again after a few months, for instance. While addressing the problem, it may also be recommended that the student contact FSHS for a doctor's appointment in order to make an overall assessment of the situation. If the use of intoxicants is hindering the student's studies, referral to appropriate care is recommended (see section 5). The coordinator for student substance abuse issues gives advice and support on how to address the problem.

The purpose of intervention is primarily to support the students in their studies. In all events, the legal rights of the people involved must be carefully secured. Discussions about a student's use of intoxicants are confidential.

4.1.2 The coordinator for student substance abuse issues

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



Teaching or counselling staff or a student can contact the University's coordinator for student substance abuse issues if a student's use of intoxicants raises concerns and they seek advice and support on how to address the problem. The coordinator is a member of the working group for student wellbeing.

The coordinator collects notifications about students dismissed from teaching due to their use of intoxicants (Appendix 1). The coordinator acts as a liaison between the faculty, FSHS and, where necessary, various care units. In addition, the coordinator takes care of questioning the student before a drug test, and coordinates/organises such tests. Moreover, the coordinator arranges negotiations on referral to care and participates in these as a representative of the University (see section 5.1).

4.1.3 The role of the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS)

When observing or suspecting that a student is suffering from excessive use of intoxicants, a health care professional (a public health nurse, doctor, dentist or psychologist) at FSHS charts the student's use of intoxicants, related history, and somatic and psychic state. Where necessary, the professional refers the student to another FSHS employee experienced in assessing the need of care for substance abuse patients. Usually such assessments are made at a physician's or public health nurse's appointment. In most cases, further care takes place at clinical appointments at FSHS with a public health nurse, physician or psychologist. Other possibilities for further care are provided by the City of Jyväskylä's Youth Station and Sovatek.

All FSHS employees are under the obligation of confidentiality. This means that any discussions with a patient are fully confidential, and no information about these is disclosed to teaching staff if the student has sought out the care or assessment on his/her own initiative.

If a student's substance abuse problem is observed somewhere else than at FSHS, for instance in an educational setting, a physician from FSHS will, as invited by the coordinator for student substance abuse issues, participate in the negotiation of referral to care. After the negotiation, the physician assesses the need for care either independently or by consulting other health care professionals (a psychologist, psychiatrist).

4.1.4 The role of students and subject associations

If a fellow student's use of intoxicants raises concern, the issue should be addressed with the student as soon as possible. It is important to let the fellow student know that his/her use of intoxicants has raised concern. Advice, support and help for such intervention can be requested from the coordinator for student substance abuse issues or from the social secretary of the

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



Student Union without revealing the fellow student's identity. It is recommended to advise the fellow student to contact FSHS for a closer assessment of the situation.

When a student's problematic use of intoxicants is observed during an association's activities, it should be addressed by a representative of the association's board in a private discussion with the student. Upon his/her discretion, the representative may bring the case anonymously to the attention of the board. Where necessary, the representative may encourage the student to turn to FSHS for an assessment of the situation. If the problematic behaviour continues, the board of the student association may give the student a warning or ban him/her from attending their events.

4.2 Dismissal from a teaching setting

Under the Universities Act, section 45, a student who is disturbing teaching, behaving violently or in a threatening manner or endangering another person's life or health can be ordered to leave the premises where the teaching is taking place, or the event organised by the university. If a dismissal was due to the use of intoxicants, it is recommended that the issue be addressed at the event or as soon as possible after it. The dismissals are recorded (Appendix 1) and submitted to the coordinator for student substance abuse issues.

If a student feels that he/she was dismissed from a teaching situation on false grounds, he/she may submit evidence of his/her sobriety. In disputes, the student is instructed to provide the person in charge of the dismissal with a breath test result and/or a drug test certificate. FSHS can help the student in obtaining such evidence.

4.3 Testing for narcotics

A drug test certificate can be required from university students regardless of their field of study, not just from those subject to suitability review under SORA legislation (SORA is an abbreviation for 'solutions for unsuitability'). The University may oblige a student to present a drug test certificate if there is a substantiated reason to suspect that the student is under influence of narcotics in practical assignments belonging to the studies or in practical training, or that the student is addicted to narcotics (Universities Act, section 43d).

A further prerequisite for this is that such testing is necessary for determining the student's functional capacity and the student works in tasks that require particular precision, reliability, independent discretion or good reactions, and where working under the influence or addicted to narcotics would

- 1) severely endanger the student's or other people's life or health
- 2) severely endanger the confidentiality or integrity of classified information



3) considerably increase the risk of illegal trading and spreading of such substances in possession of the University or the place of practical training that are referred to in the Narcotics Act (373/2008), section 3, subsection 1, paragraph 5) (Universities Act, section 43d).

For a drug test, the teacher or the practical training supervisor fills in the first page of the form in Appendix 3 and submits it to the coordinator for student substance abuse issues. An opportunity is reserved for the student to be heard about the grounds for the drug test before referral to the test. The hearing is recorded in the form and signed by the student. The coordinator indicates the health care professional (usually from FSHS) who will provide the needed certificate. The certificate has to be submitted to the coordinator within a reasonable time limit, which is usually specified as 3 to 5 days.

The University is liable for the costs of the drug test certificate. It is recommended that the coordinator for student substance abuse issues informs the local FSHS as soon as a student is obliged to present a drug test certificate. The blood or urine sample is given under control, in compliance with the instructions by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health regarding drug testing at the workplace. The test result is interpreted by a health care unit that is independent of the University. The person being tested is always entitled to receive the test result in written form. Refusal of a drug test required under the Universities Act, section 43d, will lead to further actions (see Section 6 in this document).



5 REFERRAL TO CARE

5.1 Negotiation for referral to care

Where the use of intoxicants has clearly affected the student's study performance or severely endangered the student's own health or general safety, the coordinator for student substance abuse issues arranges a negotiation for referral to care. For this purpose, necessary background information is collected and a written invitation is sent to the participants. The invitation includes a list of the participants and describes the purpose of the negotiation.

The negotiation participants include (1) the student, (2) a representative from FSHS, (3) one or more representatives of the University, and (4) when needed, the student's support person. The negotiation is chaired by the FSHS representative. It is recommended that in order to speed up the referral to care the student should, prior to the negotiation, contact FSHS for an assessment of the situation and for the planning of appropriate care. The contents of appointments at FSHS are confidential, and the matters discussed there will not be disclosed, without the student's consent, in the negotiation for referral to care.

5.2 Care commitment

In the negotiation for referral to care, a written care commitment is signed (Appendix 2) and further plans and a follow-up meeting are agreed on. The realisation of the care commitment is reviewed in the follow-up meeting. If the student skips a scheduled appointment during the care commitment period, the care unit informs the coordinator for student substance abuse issues about this deviation from the commitment. In cases where the commitment has been breached, a separate discussion session is arranged to review study performance and possible consequences, which are determined by the student's field of study (see section 6).

5.3 Care options

Outpatient care can be provided by the City of Jyväskylä's Youth Station and Sovatek or by FSHS, or in the private sector as individual psychotherapy or appointments with medical staff or psychotherapists specialised in this field. The need for KELA-funded individual psychotherapy for the student can be assessed at an appointment with an FSHS psychiatrist. If there is need for a period of institutional rehabilitation, funding is arranged in cooperation with the social and health department of the student's home municipality. The student can get a KELA allowance for the duration of institutional rehabilitation.



5.4 Returning to studies

If a student has been away from his/her studies due to substance abuse problems, for instance on a long sick leave or a rehabilitation period, on suspension or dismissed for a fixed term, returning to studies calls for particular support. The returnee may need special support and a tailored study plan. The personal study plan is designed in collaboration with a student counsellor or teacher-tutor or with the persons involved in the negotiation for referral to care. The plan sets out the forms of necessary support, outlines the course of remaining studies, and states how the implementation of the plan is to be monitored and what measures will be taken if the studies do not progress as planned.



6 SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

According to the Universities Act, section 45, the University can resort to the following disciplinary measures: dismiss a student from the educational setting, deny participation in teaching for three days, issue a written warning or suspend a student for a specified time. Furthermore, the University is entitled to cancel the study rights in cases stated in the SORA legislation.

6.1 Dismissal from an educational setting

If a student has to be dismissed from an educational setting because of the use of intoxicants, the issue is addressed with the student as soon as possible. Furthermore, a notification of intoxication-based disorder is submitted to the coordinator for student substance abuse issues, who then, if necessary, arranges a negotiation for referral to care.

6.2 Denial of participation

According to the Universities Act, section 45, a student's participation in teaching can be denied for three working days at maximum if the student's violent or threatening behaviour might endanger the safety of another student or someone working at the university or other educational setting, or if the student's disturbing behaviour would unreasonably hinder teaching or related activities.

6.3 Written warning and suspension for a specified time

A written warning can be issued to a student who disturbs teaching, behaves violently or in a threatening manner, cheats or otherwise misbehaves, refuses from a drug test, or has used narcotic substances (Universities Act, section 45). Such warnings are decided on by the Rector of the University. If the student's misconduct is severe or the misbehaviour continues after a written warning, the student can be suspended from the University for a maximum of one year. Suspension decisions are made by the University Board.

6.4 Cancelling of study rights

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



Where the studies contain requirements for the safety of minors, patients or clients, the University is entitled to cancel a student's study rights (Universities Act, section 43a) in the following cases:

- 1. By repeatedly or severely endangering in their studies another person's health or safety, the student has proved to be clearly unsuitable to perform the practical tasks or exercises related to these studies.
- 2. It is obvious that the student does not meet the admission criteria in terms of his/her health and functional capacity in compliance with section 37a, subsection 1.
- 3. When applying for the studies, the student has concealed a fact about a decision on cancelled study rights that under section 37a, subsection 2 could have prevented the admission.
- 4. The student has been convicted for specific crimes mentioned in the law, such as indecency and sexual crime, murder, manslaughter, voluntary manslaughter under mitigating circumstances, aggravated assault, robbery with violence, and drug offences (excluding drug user offences), when their studies or related practical training essentially require working with minors and the cancellation of study rights is necessary in order to protect the minors.

Cancellation of study rights at the University of Jyväskylä concerns the degrees in which the major subject is psychology or social work as well as all teacher education studies and psychotherapist education.

In any case, before making a cancellation decision, the University must investigate, together with the student, the possibilities for him/her to seek some other education. By the student's consent, he/she can be transferred to another study programme at the University, providing that the student meets the admission criteria for that programme. Study right cancellations are decided by the University Board.

Under certain conditions prescribed in legislation, study rights can also be restored. A prerequisite for this is that the applicant demonstrates, by appropriate statements concerning his/her health or functional capacity, that the grounds for the cancellation of his/her study right are no longer valid. Decisions on the restoration of study rights are made by the University Board. The University is obliged to inform Valvira (the national licensing and supervision agency in the field of social and health care) about the cancellation or restoration decisions, with their respective groundings, in the educational fields within the agency's jurisdiction.

6.5 Use of intoxicants during a study period abroad

The use of intoxicants during a study period abroad is regulated by the rules of the host institution and by the local legislation. If the use of intoxicants affects study performance or endangers the student's health, the host institution or practical training provider contacts the home university. In such a case, the international coordinator / International Office will instruct



the student to return to the home country, where the student will be directed to the negotiation for referral to care.

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



7 HANDLING OF SENSITIVE AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

According to the Personal Data Act, 'personal data' refers to any pieces of information that describe a natural person or his/her qualities or living conditions, by which information the person or his/her family or other persons living in the same household can be identified. Sensitive data include, for example, personal data concerning one's health, illness or disability or medical care or other such measures.

Such data may not be processed (i.e. collected, saved, organised, used, delivered, stored, changed, combined, erased, destroyed) without legal permission or permission given by the person. Universities are entitled by law to process students' personal data and sensitive data in order to perform duties or meet obligations set for it in the legislation (Personal Data Act, sections 3–8 and 11–12).

The Universities Act, section 45b, limits the scope of university personnel authorised to process personal data concerning a student's health so that they include only those persons who prepare or make decisions on study right cancellations or restorations, disciplinary measures or who give statements on these matters. The University must specify the tasks that include processing of sensitive information. Sensitive information is kept separate from other personal data. Sensitive data are erased from the records immediately when their storage is no longer needed for performing the tasks prescribed in legislation, yet at the latest within four years from entering the data in the records. A member of the University staff who, through work, has obtained some information about a student's qualities, personal circumstances or economic status, may not disclose any such information to outsiders (Personal Data Act, section 33).

All investigations, discussions and negotiations relative to a student's use of intoxicants are confidential, and their contents may not be disclosed to outsiders. Health care staff has a professional obligation of confidentiality regarding the health and other personal data of their customers. The Universities Act, section 90a, stipulates certain exceptions to the rule of confidentiality. It restricts the delivery of information to data that concern a student's health and functional capacity and are necessary to perform the duties. Information may be given to the following persons and for the following purposes:

- 1. To the rector and another person in charge of security at the university in order to ensure safe study circumstances
- 2. To persons responsible for student counselling in order to guide the student to other studies and support services
- 3. To persons in charge of student health care in order to secure the student's health and safety and to guide him/her to necessary supportive measures
- 4. To persons in charge of practical training in order to ensure the safety of the student as well as of the local staff and customers
- 5. To the police and to the representative of the university who has the prime responsibility for addressing a security threat, in order to assess an imminent security threat or when according to a health assessment the student is found to pose a threat to other people's safety.



REFERENCES

Kunttu, K. and Pesonen, T. (2013) Korkeakouluopiskelijoiden terveystutkimus 2012 [Student Health Survey 2012: A National Survey among Finnish University Students]. Helsinki: Finnish Student Health Service.

Päihdeasenteita ja käyttöä kartoittava kysely Jyväskylän yliopiston opiskelijoille 2015 [A survey for JYU students in 2015 about their attitudes and use of intoxicants].

Universities Act 954/2011, Universities Decree 770/2009 and Personal Data Act 523/1999 with their amendments.

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Removal from an educational setting due to the use of intoxicants

Student's name	Identity number			
Course / educational setting				
Description of the situation				
•				
77 10 10 10 10 10 10				
How was the intoxicant issue manifested? Drunkenness				
Drunkenness	Other withdrawal symptoms			
Other intoxication				
	Improper and disturbing behaviour			
Hangover				
0. 1. //				
Student's view of the situation:				
Admitted the use of intoxicants				
Transition the use of into Acadia				
Denied the use of intoxicants				
Further measures				
A drug test recommended				
Other plans:				

Date and place

Teacher's signature, printed name and contact information

The form is submitted to the University's coordinator for student substance abuse issues.

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



Appendix 2: Care commitment

Student's name	Identity number			
What negative effects has substance a	buse had on the student's studies?			
What hegative effects has substance a	base had on the stadent s stadies.			
Hangover days Injuries Drunkenness Other intoxication Absenteeism	Neglect of study assignments Patient safety endangered? Difficulties with social relationships Other detriments, please specify			
The coordinator for student substance abuse issues acts as a liaison between the care unit and the University/faculty. The coordinator is entitled to receive information from the care unit concerning the student's health status and progress of care. The care unit will also inform the coordinator if the care is not continuing as planned.				
I commit myself to appropriate care because of my substance abuse problem. The specific content of the care will be defined in the treatment plan made in the health care unit.				

Date and place

Student's signature, printed name and contact information

This commitment form is submitted to the University's coordinator for student substance abuse issues

Procedures to prevent substance abuse and support interventions



Appendix 3: Data transfer form for health care services. The student is obliged to show a drug test certificate.

Student's name		Identity number				
Grounds for the request to present a drug test certificate Suspected case of being under the influence of drugs Suspected narcotic addiction						
Suspected intox	kication					
Place	Place					
Date and time						
Person estimati	ng the state of intoxication *					
Name		Tel.				
*Representative	e of the University or the practic	cal training unit				
Estimation of th	ne state of intoxication					
Speech: _ Clear _ Blurred	Communicational capacity: _ Yes _ Diminished	Sense of time and place: _Yes _Diminished				
Walking: _ Steady _ Unsteady	Reactions: _ Normal _ Slowed	Smell of alcohol: _ No _ Yes				
Appearance: _ Calm-controlled _ Euphoric-overexcited _ Anxious _ Sleepy _ Defiant _ Tearful						
Physical symptoms: _ None _ Restlessness _ Sweating _ Shaking _ Vomiting						
Description of the student's diminished functional capacity						
Contact details of the representative of the University who obliged the student to present a drug test certificate:						





Name	Tel.		
The student has been referred to health care for a drug test.			
Date and time			
Name of the health care unit			
Name of possible attendant			
The state of the s			
Signature and printed name			
Student's view			
I admit the use of narcotics / drug addiction			
☐ I deny the use of narcotics / drug addiction			
Date			
Signature			

At the drug test, the student must prove his/her identity by a valid identity card with a photo.

The original of this document remains with the University. One copy has been given to the student and another one remains with the health care unit.