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Further Education Centre
The Neale Road
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Substance Misuse/Abuse Policy

Substance Misuse/Abuse

A drug is considered to be a substance people take, other than food, to change the way they think, feel or behave. When a reference is made to a drug or a substance the list can include medicines, nicotine, alcohol, solvents, illegal drugs and this list is not exhaustive. There is an obligation on Students or Parents/ Guardians to inform the centre co-ordinator if Students are taking prescribed medication which could affect their ability to learn. The use, possession or trafficking of illegal drugs is against the law and will be treated by all staff as such.

All drug related incidents will be treated with upmost confidence; however limits of confidentiality need to be taken into consideration with regard to legal considerations and the health and wellbeing of the student. In order to ensure that Students and staff are in a safe learning environment, 'with-cause' drug testing may be carried out. This means that a drug test will be carried out if there is a Health and Safety concern and/or if the student appears to be under the influence of an intoxicant and therefore falls into the criteria for 'with-cause' testing.

The judgement as to whether 'with-cause' testing needs to be applied can be based on a number of factors including the following:

- Apparent disorientation
- Unsteadiness
- Slurring of words
- Smell of alcohol
- Admitted or observed taking of illegal or non-prescribed drugs or volumes of alcohol which might cause the legal limit for driving to be exceeded
- Unusual or abnormal behaviour

In all cases, prior to a student being requested to undergo 'with-cause' testing, more than one staff member will have submitted an opinion as to the





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existence of circumstances or conditions sufficient to warrant testing. Normally, one of these would be the centre co-ordinator.

If a student is under the age of 18, parental/ guardian support will be sought in relation to any tests that may have to be carried out. A parent/ guardian will be asked to accompany their child to an external competent source. The type of test to be administered will be decided by the external competent source.

By signing this code of conduct, students who are 18 years of age and over and also parents/guardians of students who are under the age of 18, are giving their consent to 'with-cause' drug testing. A student or parent/guardian will be made aware of the concerns regarding the student's behaviour and the reason for the test. Students or parents/guardians must co-operate with this process if the student wishes to continue their training here. The results will be notified to the student and the parents/guardians where appropriate.

If the 'with-cause' drug test proves positive, the student will be given the full support of the centre co-ordinator and the support of all the staff in the centre. Students will be asked to seek professional addiction counselling services with an agreed external source and to co-operate with these services as required. Students will be free to return to the centre once they show they are drug-free and provide evidence that they are co-operating with the agreed addiction counselling service.

