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ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND NO-SMOKING POLICY

QRS is concerned with the general health and welfare of our employees and is committed to ensuring the highest possible safety standards in all its operations. We also recognise that we have a statutory responsibility to the general public and workers or representatives of other organisation who visit our premises.

Alcohol and/or drug misuse can create problems in the workplace such as absenteeism, increased accident rates and deterioration in work performance and work relationships. We acknowledge that alcohol and/or drug dependency are difficult cycles to break without support. We want to create a culture of openness where people can feel able to share concerns and seek help.

Alcohol and/or drug dependency may be treated as an illness and an employee affected by such issues will be encouraged and helped to obtain appropriate treatment. However, we expect employees to co-operate with us in the support being offered.

Where alcohol and/or drug misuse affects work performance action will be taken in line with the Capability Procedure. If there are conduct issues relating to alcohol and/or drug misuse, these will be dealt with according to the Disciplinary Procedure. Sickness absence will be dealt with in line with the Sickness Absence Policy.

The section of the Policy that deals with no-smoking is not about whether someone smokes, but where they smoke and the impact smoking has on the health of others.

This Policy forms part of your terms and conditions of employment and any breach may be dealt with under the companies Disciplinary Procedure.

ALCOHOL

Introduction

We recognise that there are problems associated with the misuse of alcohol. How much people drink, and at what time, is generally held to be a private matter for individuals, but alcohol misuse can have negative effects on workplace performance with damaging consequences for colleagues and the organisation as a whole. This policy seeks to find a balance between allowing freedom of choice about drinking patterns, ensuring performance at work is not affected, and caring for the health, safety and welfare of all our employees.

Aims

Through this Policy QRS endeavours to:

- ensure that employees' use of alcohol does not impair the safe and efficient running of the organisation or the health of its employees
- encourage good practice within the company with regard to alcohol and enable employees to take control of and to improve their health with respect to alcohol consumption

Rules

- No employee must be under the influence of alcohol while at work.
- Employees must not be under the influence of alcohol when driving their own vehicle while engaged on company business.
- Employees must not be under the influence of alcohol when operating equipment and machinery.
- The smell of alcohol on the breath should be avoided.
- The drinking of alcohol on company premises is only acceptable in designated areas, at approved times and with prior permission, e.g. at a staff event, and should be balanced by the provision of non-alcoholic drinks.

Alcohol and Health

This policy is not intended to offer comprehensive advice on the consequences for health of excessive alcohol consumption. Access to further information can be obtained through Drinkline 0800 917 8282 or go to www.downyourdrink.org.uk .

Managers' Role

Managers should be sensitive to the needs of individual staff by being aware of the link between drinking and work performance. Inappropriate drinking may be an individual's way of coping with problems at home, in the family, at work or with finance. Inappropriate alcohol consumption can be a symptom of underlying tensions. Managers need to watch for signs that might indicate alcohol misuse:

- absenteeism that is frequent, follows a regular pattern, or has no specific reason
- tensions or lack of communication with colleagues
- leaving work early or arriving late with no warning or without adequate explanation
- frequently talking about drinking
- avoiding supervisors or other staff
- drop in work performance, or increase in mistakes
- changed behaviour or personality (withdrawn, irritable)

- poor personal hygiene or appearance
- smell of alcohol about a person

It is important to remember that this is not an exhaustive list and these circumstances may arise from problems other than alcohol misuse

QRS seeks to deal sensitively with employees who become dependant on alcohol. It expects its managers and supervisors to ensure that employees under their control and who have alcohol related problems, are confidentially but quickly encouraged to seek help. It expects employees to share responsibility and to co-operate with the help offered.

Confidentiality is an essential component of all support mechanisms and must be maintained. The only exceptions to this would be:

- occasions where there is a serious and immediate health and safety risk
- if information is provided which indicates that a crime has been committed
- If information is provided which indicates a breach of the MRS Code of Conduct, Data Protection or breach of Confidentiality (Client and/or company)
- If information is received which indicates a possible terrorist threat.

While alcohol dependency can only be diagnosed by a medical practitioner, line managers and supervisors should always be alert for changes in work performance and productivity which could be the result of alcohol misuse.

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with under QRS's Disciplinary Procedure. We reserve the right to organise future random testing by a person qualified to administer alcohol testing, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that drinking is affecting performance and service delivery, or where there are significant health and safety risks.

Advice for Managers

Where an employee's absences, deterioration in performance or possible misconduct at work are due to perceived consistent heavy drinking then it may be appropriate to treat the problem as one of illness. The following steps may help:

- Keep accurate, confidential records of instances of poor performance or other problems
- Talk to the employee in private
- Concentrate on the instances of poor performance that have been identified
- Ask for the employee's reasons for the poor performance, problems with attendance, misconduct etc
- Discuss possible work related causes e.g. workload, relationships with colleagues
- Identify future action
- Arrange regular meetings to monitor progress and discuss any further problems if they arise

Employees' Role

It is an employee's responsibility to:

- ensure that, if you drink alcohol, your drinking habits and patterns do not have a negative impact on your ability to work effectively and safely
- ensure that your drinking patterns do not compromise the health and safety of your colleagues
- ensure that you do not drink and drive or operate machinery whilst under the influence of alcohol
- ensure that your drinking habits do not have a negative effect on services to your customers
- take responsibility for your own health and wellbeing in relation to your own alcohol consumption
- seek advice and help through your Manager or Director if you feel you have an alcohol related problem which is affecting your performance at work
- adhere to the content of this policy
- ensure that you are sensitive to colleagues who do not drink either for personal or religious reasons

Support

Free confidential counselling is available from the following organisations:

Alcoholics Anonymous in Hertfordshire Phone(s): 0845 769 7555 (National Helpline, 24 hour service)	Turning Point. Hertsreach Watford 20 Upton Road Watford Herts WD18 0JP Phone(s): 01923 221037 Fax: 01923 224747 Web pages: www.hertsmh-turning-point.co.uk
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DRUGS

Introduction

Drug use can impair work performance long after consumption with detrimental effects on behaviour.

Drugs taken outside of work time may remain detectable during working hours. In these circumstances the policy will apply.

References to drugs in this policy include controlled substances, prescription drugs, 'over the counter' drugs and other substances eg solvents.

Staff will from time to time use drugs purchased over the counter or prescribed by a health professional. In some cases these drugs may cause impairment of mental or physical performance at work and, where this happens, the policy will apply to these drugs. Examples of such prescribed or 'over the counter' drugs include tranquillisers, sleeping pills, anti-depressants, painkillers, anti-histamines, cough/cold remedies and any other drug with a safety warning on the packaging or label. If your work may be affected by taking any of these medicines, you should consult your GP or a Pharmacist and advise your manager accordingly.

Aims

Through this Policy QRS endeavours to:

- ensure that employees' use of drugs do not impair the safe and efficient running of the organisation or the health of its employees
- reduce the negative effects on work caused by misuse of drugs, for example accident rates and the amount of short term sick leave taken
- outline and encourage good practices with regard to prescribed drugs, or excessive use of 'over the counter' drugs when it will affect work performance: ensuring a health and safe working environment for all employees.
- Ensure that any illegal use or sale of banned substances in work time is not tolerated and is dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure and possibly reported to the police depending on the circumstances.
- Illegal drug misuse that takes place outside of working hours and on QRS premises could be dealt with through the Disciplinary Procedure insofar as QRS is brought into disrepute or if the individual's performance at work is affected.

Rules

- No employee should take or be under the influence of illegal drugs whilst at work
- If prescribed or 'over the counter' drugs have a negative effect on your ability to work effectively and safely, you must inform your Manager who will consider what appropriate action to take. This may involve a temporary adjustment to your duties or you may be sent home if you cannot work safely. This is particularly important when operating equipment or driving a vehicle while engaged on QRS business

Drug Misuse and Health

'Drug misuse' refers to the use of illegal drugs and the misuse, whether deliberate or unintentional, of prescribed drugs and substances such as solvents. Drug misuse can cause long term physical and mental harm and can have a negative impact on other people and the environment. The simultaneous use of alcohol and drugs is particularly dangerous.

Drugs can affect the brain and the body in a number of ways. They can alter the way a person thinks, perceives and feels, and this can lead to either impaired judgment or concentration. Drug misuse can also bring about the neglect of general health and well-

being. This may adversely influence performance at work, even when the misuse takes place outside the workplace.

Drug misusers are 3.5 times more likely to injure themselves or someone else at work and a member of staff under the influence of drink or drugs will only achieve 67% of their work potential.

The use or possession of any controlled drugs listed in the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 is illegal, exposing the misuser to the risk of criminal charges as well as causing harmful effects to their health. Anyone found in possession of a controlled drug will be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

Information about the effects of drug misuse on health is available from the Drugs Helpline 0808 1 606 606. We reserve the right to organise random testing by a person qualified to administer drug testing.

Controlled Drugs

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended by the Drugs Act 2005) lists the drugs that are subject to control and classifies them in 3 categories according to their relative harmfulness when misused.

Class A includes ecstasy, cocaine, crack, heroin, LSD, magic mushrooms, amphetamines (if prepared for injection).

Class B includes amphetamines, methylphenidate (Ritalin), Pholcodine.

Class C includes cannabis, cannabis resin, tranquilisers, Gamma hydroxybutyrate (GHB), Katamine.

It is recognised that, on occasions, some of these drugs are prescribed by GP's and hospital doctors for certain medical conditions. If you have been prescribed any of these drugs, you should notify your Manager and let them see a prescription. You do not necessarily have to explain the condition for which they have been prescribed. The discussion should be about the potential impact on your work performance.

Unauthorised possession, sale or use of any controlled drugs is illegal. Being found in possession of, or under the influence of, a controlled drug in the workplace constitutes gross misconduct, which may lead to dismissal (see Disciplinary Procedure).

Prescription and 'Over the Counter' Drugs

If your GP prescribes a drug which causes you side effects, you should contact the surgery for advice. Other prescribed drugs such as tranquillisers, sleeping pills and anti-depressants can affect your concentration. It is important to read the instructions relating to all prescribed and 'over the counter' drugs carefully, and not to exceed the prescribed dosage. If you feel you are becoming over-reliant on any drugs you should discuss it with your GP.

Manager's Role

Managers should be sensitive to the needs of individual staff by being aware of the link between drug misuse and work performance. They need to watch for signs that might indicate drug misuse:

- Sudden changes in mood, energy levels or behaviour patterns
- Unusual irritability or aggression
- A tendency to become confused
- Abnormal fluctuations in concentration and energy
- Impaired job performance
- Poor time-keeping
- Increased short-term sickness absence

- A deterioration in relationships with colleagues, customers or management
- Dishonesty and theft (possibly arising from the need to maintain an expensive habit)

This is not an exhaustive list. These signs may be caused by other factors, such as stress, and should be regarded only as indications that an employee *may* be misusing drugs

If there are conduct issues and 'over the counter' drug misuse or dependence is found by management to be a genuine factor, then this will be taken into account. Each case should be judged on its merits and consideration given to what is fair and reasonable. A Director's **must** be consulted before any formal action is taken.

Employees' Role

It is an employee's responsibility to:

- ensure that misuse of prescribed, 'over the counter' or other drugs do not have a negative impact on your ability to work effectively and safely
- ensure that misuse of prescribed, 'over the counter' or other drugs do not compromise the health and safety of your colleagues or have a negative affect on services to customers
- take responsibility for your own health and wellbeing in relation to your use of prescribed, 'over the counter' or other drugs
- seek advice and help through your Manager or Director if you feel you are having a problem with prescribed, 'over the counter' or other drugs
- adhere to the content of this policy

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with under the QRS Disciplinary Procedure. We reserve the right to organise future random testing by a person qualified to administer drug testing, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that drug taking is affecting performance and service delivery, or where there are significant health and safety risks.

<p>Narcotics Anonymous UK UK Service Office 202 City Road London EC1V 2PH Phone(s): 0300 999 1212 (24 hours Helpline) Fax: 020 7251 4006 email: ukso@ukna.org Web pages: www.ukna.org</p>	<p>UK National Drugs helpline (Talk to Frank) Phone(s): 0800 77 66 00 82111 (text) Web pages: http://talktofrank.com</p>
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NO-SMOKING

Introduction

This No-Smoking Policy has been developed to protect all employees, customers and visitors from the exposure to second hand smoke and to assist compliance with the Health Act 2006.

QRS wishes to provide employees with a healthy, safe and comfortable working environment.

Scope and Boundaries of the Policy

The Smoke Free (Premises & Enforcement) Regulations 2006 require all enclosed and substantially enclosed workplaces to be smoke free with effect from 1st July 2007. This means that smoking is not allowed anywhere in our offices or immediately outside the front doors.

This policy applies to all staff, agency workers, contractors, members of the public, suppliers etc.....

It is an implied term of every contract of employment that employers will provide staff with a safe working environment and, likewise, that no employee would put at risk their own health or that of their colleagues whilst at work.

This No-Smoking Policy is a condition of employment. Any breach of this Policy will lead to the normal disciplinary procedures being applied.

QRS will not provide smoking shelters and there will be no provision for smoking breaks. Staff are advised not to smoke during working hours.

Help for those who Smoke

It should be noted that this policy is not concerned with whether someone smokes, but with where they smoke, and the effect that this has on non-smoking colleagues. If anyone wishes to give up smoking they can get information from the following government helpline or website:

<p>The NHS Smoking Helpline can provide practical advice and details of local services. The number is 0800 169 0 169 or go to www.givingupsmoking.co.uk</p>
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Monitoring of the Policy

Managers will monitor and enforce the no-smoking rule.

Employees are required to support the application of the No-Smoking Policy to ensure that all colleagues, visitors, contractors etc who enter or use QRS premises are aware of and comply with this policy.

If necessary, employees should advise smokers to refrain from smoking whilst in the buildings or if necessary ask them to leave the premises. However, no employee is expected to enter into any confrontation which may put their personal safety at risk.

These policies supplement your terms of employment but are not of contractual effect. Their purpose is to explain the Company's current policies and procedures but they may be subject to change without notice if changes are considered appropriate by the Company or if there are changes in relevant legislation.

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