

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY ALCOHOL POLICY SUMMARY

The policy outlined below is the result of the Sub-committees' deliberations and is part of a broader, ecological approach to health on campus, *The Health Promoting University*.

I. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIVERSITY ALCOHOL POLICY

The aims of this University Alcohol Policy are to:

- 1) Ensure that the social and academic life on campus is conducive to the health and well being of students.
- 2) Ensure that the University environment is safe for students and complies with health and safety regulations.
- 3) Promote the University as a supportive environment that enables students to make healthy choices that promote health and well-being.
- 4) Provide supportive services for those who may require assistance during their time at University.
- 5) Contribute to the ongoing development of the University as a Health Promoting University.

The specific objectives include:

- 1) Promoting the health and well being of students.
- 2) Promoting personal responsibility and social obligation to the University community.
- 3) Enhancing a campus environment where low-risk drinking is the "social norm".
- 4) Promoting low-risk drinking and discouraging high-risk drinking (Appendix A).
- 5) Providing an atmosphere free from pressure to drink for those who choose not to drink.
- 6) Providing alcohol-related information and education for all students.
- 7) Supporting and promoting alternatives to drinking, thus creating choice and a balanced social programme.
- 8) Promoting opportunities for brief interventions to reduce high risk drinking.
- 9) Promoting a caring environment for those who experience difficulties related to alcohol.
- 10) Providing confidential and effective supports for those who seek assistance as a result of problem drinking.
- 11) Reducing the incidence of alcohol-related problems among University students.

II. REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Evaluation of the stated objectives needs to be undertaken on an annual basis, with a major policy review, to include a survey of drinking behaviour and attitudes, every four years to ensure a relevant policy.

III. POLICY MEASURES

For an integrated approach, policy measures will on the one hand, encourage those who drink to do so responsibly thus moderating the demand for alcohol, and on the supply side prevent commercial interests from excessive alcohol promotion.

A. Increase Awareness and Education

Students, faculty and staff are expected to be responsible for their actions at all times and respect the rights of all members of the campus community.

- The University community will promote ‘low risk drinking’ behaviour and increase awareness of the potential harmful or negative effects of excessive alcohol consumption.
- “Student Orientation” will be utilised as an opportunity to raise awareness of available programmes and services for all students and to promote a message of low risk drinking.
- Opportunities will be sought to actively involve the student body in the development, promotion and delivery of an educational programme on alcoholic drink and allied issues.

B. Encouraging Alternatives and Choice

- The University will continue to materially support the maintenance and development of attractive alcohol-free environments on campus.
- Under Club Licensing Law, students under 18 years of age are not admitted to the Students Union Club in the evening. The capacity of the Club is also limited. The University will seek to provide regular Pub facilities on campus so that the significant number of students who for one reason or another are currently excluded from the Students Union Club can be catered to on campus rather than in less favourable environments in the city, as is the case at present.
- The Students Union will develop and promote alcohol-free programmes involving cultural, social and entertainment activities for students.

C. Provide Campus Support Services

- Student support services will continue to develop ways to increase awareness of high-risk drinking among students availing of University services.
- Individuals with concerns about their own use or another person’s use of alcohol will be encouraged to seek confidential assistance on or off campus.
- The University will assist individuals or groups who wish to establish self-help groups on campus

D. Controlling Marketing, Promotions and Sponsorship

The university affirms its role in providing a supportive environment for the University community, by identifying a clear set of guidelines on alcohol promotions and sponsorship. These include the following:

1. Sponsorship

- A proactive approach by the University will be pursued as a top priority, to help student organisations find an alternative to drinks companies sponsorship.
- Sponsorship by the drinks industry of University events is permissible provided the sponsorship is in monetary form and not material form, thus allowing groups, clubs and societies to determine their own needs.
- The appointment of on-campus representatives by the drinks companies is prohibited.
- Alcohol sponsorship is not compatible with the sports and athletics ethos. Sports clubs will seek alcohol free sources of sponsorship.

2. Alcohol Promotions

- Alcohol promotions that encourage the rapid and/or excessive consumption of alcohol are prohibited.
- Alcohol in bulk, such as kegs, cases of beer etc, will not be provided as free awards, prizes or rewards to individuals or groups.
- The University will encourage off-campus drinks industry suppliers (bars, clubs and drinks representatives) not to engage in alcohol promotions, which result in high risk drinking among students.
- Agencies external to the University are not permitted to advertise or promote on the campus without the permission of the University, and then only in accordance with the terms defined from time to time by the University. (Currently a facility for promotion and advertising by external agencies is provided on the SIN Website in accordance with the standards defined herein)

3. Advertising Code

- Alcohol advertising on campus will be limited to brand name only, i.e., “Sponsored by Heineken” etc.
- Advertising of social and entertainment events will not use alcohol as the inducement to attend.
- Advertising posters will not encourage excessive use or high-risk drinking or place emphasis on quantity and frequency of alcohol use.

E. Limiting Harm in the drinking environment

- 1) Training in Responsible Serving of Alcohol (RSA) will be provided for all those serving alcohol in the Students’ Union Club.
- 2) Alcohol may not be served to intoxicated persons; it is a criminal offence.
- 3) The Students’ Union Club will promote practices to prevent drunkenness such as serving food and low cost non-alcoholic drinks.

- 4) The main purpose of the Students' Union Club is not to sell alcohol, but to provide for the social and recreational needs of the members of the Club, in this instance the students of the University. In this light, the social aspects of the Club will be strongly emphasised, with, for example, the provision of live entertainment or other activities.
- 5) High-risk sale promotions, such as 'drink until you drop', pub crawls and drinking competitions are prohibited.
- 6) Alcohol consumption is to be confined to designated areas on campus, including the bar, 'beer garden' area adjacent to the bar, and at registered University events. The consumption of alcohol outside of these areas is prohibited.
- 7) Only alcohol served at a registered University event should be consumed at the event.
- 8) Non-alcoholic drinks and food will be available at functions and social events.
- 9) No person will be coerced, even subtly, to drink or to abuse alcohol.
- 10) Liaison with An Garda Síochána, including regular patrolling of the campus and student residence areas, will continue.

Breaches of the policy will be addressed using the University's Disciplinary Code

