



University of Greenwich Students' Union (GSU) Responsible Drinking Policy and Procedures

(Updated & reviewed: December 2019)

GSU recognises that a huge diversity of cultures, backgrounds and lifestyles are present in the student population. For many groups of students, drinking alcohol simply does not feature in their social activity. Hence, it is key for us to embrace this diversity in the provision and support of social activity. GSU hosts a spectrum of Clubs and Societies, as well as offering an array of other activities. At the same time, it is also understood that many students will choose to consume alcohol as part of their social routine, and the Students' Union (SU) recognises that the consumption of alcohol is, for many students, part of the "student experience" and University life. We also recognise that:

- When alcoholic beverages are consumed irresponsibly, it can create problems for the individual, the University community and the local community as a whole.
- We have a duty of care to ensure that we market, promote and sell alcohol responsibly and that our students are always encouraged to drink responsibly by us, both in our venues and visiting non-GSU venues.
- Many of our students may come from backgrounds where alcohol is not part of their culture and may not understand the repercussions of alcohol consumption.

1. POLICY

The Students' Union is committed to operating a policy that supports sensible and responsible drinking. Our alcohol policy covers the 4 key areas of legal responsibility under the Licensing Act 2003, namely: Prevention of Crime and Disorder, Public Safety, Prevention of Public Nuisance and Prevention of Children from Harm.

This policy is largely centered around the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages in our on-trade venues. However, retail staff working in our outlets which sell alcoholic products are given equally thorough training in the responsible sale of alcohol, particularly with respect to underage sales and refusal of service to intoxicated people.

GSU policy will be reviewed on a regular basis or in advance of any changes made to the Licensing Act. The Union policy will be reviewed by the Head of Commercial Services and Chief Executive Officer with other staff and/or Full-time Officers as appropriate.

2. PROCEDURES

The following rules are key to the safe operation of our licensed venues and the welfare of students, their guests and staff, and are an integral part of training for student staff, supervisors and managers.

- GSU operates an ID verification system under the 'Check 25' scheme All staff will ensure that they request ID from all customers who appear to be under 25, and refuse the sale if ID is not provided. At large scale events, security staff will also check ID of all customers refuse entry where appropriate.
- GSU believes that members and their guests should be able to enjoy GSU facilities in a safe environment, and therefore reserves the right at the discretion of authorised persons to refuse to serve alcoholic drink to any member who appears to be heavily intoxicated. This right to refuse also extends to the purchase of alcoholic drink intended for others who have the appearance of having had enough.
- Where a member or guest has the appearance of having had enough the staff will act in accordance with the relevant licensing law. If a customer is refused service by the bar staff, security staff must work with them to ensure the safety of both the person involved, the bar staff, and other customers should the person in question become aggressive. As much information should be obtained as possible with regards to the identity of the person and recorded as explained at staff training.
- Persons trying to enter GSU premises when it appears that they are heavily intoxicated already will be refused admission.
- The ABV of any one drink will not be altered without making this clear to customers via drinks menus: for example, if a change in supplier has led to a substitution in product.
- No drinks deals may be offered that could lead to anti-social behaviour. However, GSU believes customers should benefit from reduced supplier pricing as part of our contract with NUSSL, via sensible, risk assessed promotions: please refer to policy on drinks promotions.
- Single-serve cocktails are to have no more than two units of alcohol.
- Drinking games will be actively discouraged. These include 'speed drinking' games that involve 'down in one' principles.
- GSU will promote the 'Drink Aware' campaigns to promote safe drinking which will include awareness posters within the licensed premises.
- As required by law, free drinking water is available in all bars, and this is to be advertised to customers.
- Point of sale (POS) information will be on display in our venue showing the best way to get home by public transport, posters will also include the details of taxi services where available.
- GSU Safe Space Policy will be available on the website and a copy available behind the bar.

3. BARS RELATED MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY

GSU encourages students to use its bars to enable them to socialise in a safe environment and to help them feel part of the wider student community. Drinks, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, will be offered at reasonable prices. In accordance with GSU Responsible Drinking Policy, excessive consumption, or binge drinking, are discouraged.

General Promotional guidelines

All promotional activity should not, in any direct or indirect way:

- Have the alcoholic strength, relatively high alcohol content or the intoxicating effect as the dominant theme
- Suggest any association with aggressive, violent or anti-social behaviour
- Suggest any association with or allusion to illicit drugs
- Suggest that alcohol consumption leads to acceptance or social success
- Suggest immoderate or irresponsible consumption, such as binge-drinking, drink-driving or drunkenness
- Urge the consumer to drink quickly or 'down' drinks
- Have direct appeal to under 18s
- Suggest that alcohol can enhance mental or physical abilities
- Be linked to sexual imagery implying sexual prowess
- Refer to consuming alcohol as a solution to recover from previous overindulgence
- Be demeaning in any way to any gender, sexuality, race, religion, age or minority group
- Be based upon unpredictable events i.e. first goal scored
- Be based on drinking games or 'all-in' promotions

The following guidelines relate to promotional activity within bars:

- Drinks promotions change on a regular basis but will be available at various times with no heavy discounts at one particular time. "Happy Hour" (where relates to a short space of time) promotions will not be run.
- There will always be a wide selection of drinks available, and when promotions are run, these will include at least one soft drink alternative available.
- Promotions are run in conjunction with NUSSL and current drinks supplier(s).
- Advertising of promotions should not promote excessive alcohol consumption.
- Signage encouraging responsible drinking shall be displayed wherever alcohol is sold.
- Advice and information should be available through GSU with regards to problem drinking, avoiding alcohol poisoning/drink spiking, etc.

- Large-scale drinks promotions run by drinks marketing companies should not encourage excessive alcohol consumption. Any campaign that comes to us that we deem with that type of messaging will not be run in the venue.
- Advertising for the promotion, and all events, must carry the GSU logo and terms & conditions of entry. Advertising must be in line with GSU policy, in particular Equality and Diversity and must not risk interpretation as promoting any form of prejudice against any group or individual.

4. SAFER DRINKING CAMPAIGNS

GSU recognises that simply requesting students do not drink too much alcohol is not an effective mechanism, so our responsible drinking campaigns are pro-actively focused, aimed at changing perceptions associated with the consumption of alcohol. Responsible drinking is about knowing one's own limits, responsibilities to those around, and the awareness of the array of effects alcohol as a drug is creating.

Staff training is fundamental to creating an environment where alcohol is consumed responsibly. Bar staff and security staff understand the legal importance of their actions and their responsibilities to our customers and fellow team members. The importance of teamwork and communication are illustrated in training activities, applicable in the workplace to ensure all staff working are aware of potential causes for concern.

The target audience for such campaigns is not limited in any way, regardless of culture, background, age, gender and lifestyle. The same alcohol-related laws apply to all, as do the risks. The following points detail some of the groups we believe most at risk from the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption:

- Those students (particularly those just starting to drink alcohol) who are not aware of the dangers and implications, their own limits etc.
- Those under peer pressure to drink large quantities
- Those for whom drinking alcohol is central to their social activity, potentially daily,
- Those drinking large quantities at home before going out ("pre-drinks")

Our methods and services for supporting these students are detailed throughout this policy.

5. LIAISON WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

A working relationship is maintained with licensing departments of the police and local council. A working relationship has been established with the local licensing authority and police, who are contactable for practical advice on issues such as

the discouragement of drink-driving, and action should we believe there is a drugs-related problem occurring at any time.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

For an understanding of how alcohol affects the body, the UK Chief Medical Officers Low Risk Drinking Guidelines and sources of support visit <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

Further information and sources of support can also be found here:

- **Drinkline** – a confidential helpline for people who are concerned about their drinking, or someone else's – **0300 123 1110**
- **Addaction** <https://www.addaction.org.uk/> – A UK wide treatment agency, helping individuals, families and communities to manage the effects of drug and alcohol misuse
- **Alcoholics Anonymous** <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/> – a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism – **0800 9177 650**
- **Al-Anon** <https://www.al-anonuk.org.uk/> - Al-Anon is worldwide and offers support and understanding to the families and friends of problem drinkers. Confidential Helpline 0800 008 6811 (open 10am-10pm)
- **NHS Choices** <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-support/> – website provides advice and information on alcohol and offers a database of support and treatment services
- **Drinkaware** <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/> – alcohol awareness information & resources
- **Drinkchat** <https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/chat-with-an-advisor/> - friendly online chat service, users can talk to a trained advisor if concerned about their drinking or someone else's.

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1- Safe Space Policy

Appendix 2- Drinking Policy Signage

Appendix 3- Staff Training Manual Extract

APPENDIX 1 – SAFE SPACE POLICY

This policy covers any GSU space, or GSU event, and is produced in line with the requirements of By-law 3 “Conduct & Complaints”.

GSU is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive space for all students. This policy is applicable to our whole student community, whether an individual or a member within a group, GSU ratified student activity group, representative group, or sport team. GSU believes all students should be free from intimidation or harassment, resulting from prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, marital or maternity/paternity status, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, trans status, socio-economic status, or ideology or culture, or any other form of distinction.

GSU will arrange mitigation to ensure the safety of our members and ensure a balance of opinions at any academic discussion or debate. Freedom of speech is important, yet intention to incite hatred is never acceptable.

Any events held within GSU spaces must be in line with the GSU Guest Speaker Policy to ensure the safety of GSU members.

GSU recognises discrimination can occur wherever it is not consciously challenged. Therefore, the event organiser is responsible for upholding this policy at any event, and GSU venues staff or elected full-time officers may act in accordance with this policy within GSU spaces.

Any person in a GSU space or attending a GSU event is accountable for their own language and behaviour. If behaviour is reported that is not in accordance with this policy, members may be asked to leave immediately by staff or an elected full-time officer.

Student activity Group Leaders (in particular Presidents/Chairs/Captains/other named lead committee members) will receive specific training on GSU Safe Space Policy at the start of each academic year or when they are elected. These Group Leaders have the responsibility to ensure this policy is enacted at their event and if needs be may ask individuals to leave. If Group Leaders are not in attendance the lead committee member must take responsibility.

Complaints received may result in disciplinary action by GSU in accordance with the GSU Members Disciplinary Procedure (By-Law 3.d)

External speakers and GSU students attending a debate, GSU Assembly, a Members Meeting or the Annual Members Meeting must be briefed on GSU’s Safe Space Policy. The Chair, member of GSU staff, GSU elected representative or student Group Leader may immediately act upon a complaint through a number of ways including:

- Giving the complainant a platform to express their complaint.



- Reiterate to speakers and those in attendance of the Safe Space policy and issue them with a warning that they can be asked to leave an event.
 - Ask any speakers or students complained against to leave.
 - Work with any security put in place to remove speakers/ attendees.
 - Make GSU aware of any complaint or incident that has violated the policy.
- Any complaints after an event should be reported through the GSU Complaints Form

APPENDIX 2 – DRINKING POLICY SIGNAGE EXAMPLES

Mate's in a state?



**It's against the law to
buy alcohol for someone
who is drunk**

Let's stay within the law and make sure everyone has a good night.
For more information go to www.beerandpub.com/campaigns/servingdrunks

Can't get served?



**It's against the law for
our staff to sell alcohol
to anyone who is drunk**

Let's stay within the law and make sure everyone has a good night.
For more information go to www.beerandpub.com/campaigns/servingdrunks

APPENDIX 3 – STAFF TRAINING MANUAL EXTRACT

Alcohol has a number of effects on a person; they tend to become single-minded; focus on one thing intensifies, and the impact on their surroundings of what they're doing, becomes less important. This means that the rational approach of a sober person becomes less easy to relate to. The mood the individual is in will often become intensified: happy moods get better (and louder!) and a low mood may end in tears or violence; annoyance or frustration may turn to anger or aggression.

Which of the above happens, depends a lot on circumstances. The situations contributing to aggressive behaviour can include:

- Bad attitude of staff
- Relationship/domestic issues
- Slow service/poor quality products
- Attitude of other customers e.g.: pushing at bar
- Family feuds – weddings, birthday parties
- Rivalry – football teams, cultural issues, defending friends
- Games rules e.g.: pool
- Dispute of house rules e.g.: re-entry, closing time

Some of these situations can be avoided by us. Some can't. What we can have some control over are the consequences.

Remain CALM! Don't rise to provocation. You're sober and in control. They're not. Don't take bad language etc. personally, most people will regret what they have said in the morning.

All we ask is you remain rational, as you may end up in as much trouble as the aggressor if you react in the wrong way. And never hesitate to ask for back-up as soon as a situation starts to arise.

To lessen the chances of this

- Constantly clear empty glasses & bottles
- Don't leave the service area unattended
- Regularly check blind spots/quiet areas/toilets/outside areas including beer garden.

Also be aware of the effects of illegal drugs; someone might not be heavily intoxicated but if other substances are/have been used they will produce similar, often worse, effects. We operate a Zero Tolerance approach to the use and sale of illegal drugs and if you have any suspicions please let management and security know.