

POLICY ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE

**Approved by
School Management Committee
of the Board**

on 16 September 2025

To be Reviewed: May 2030

Internal and external circulation

1. INTRODUCTION AND PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Drug use and drug abuse occur in many societies around the world today. Adults and young people use and abuse drugs for a number of reasons, with a range of complex causes and varied consequences.
- 1.2 Unfortunately, drug use is unlikely to disappear. It threatens to have a growing impact on educational institutions. LPCUWC (the College) recognises that its students will in all likelihood be exposed to drugs at some time in their life and it recognizes the need to equip the students with the knowledge, skills and strategies to handle this exposure. Drug abuse impinges on students and schools in many ways: from physical effects on individuals such as inattention and depression, negative effects on their social relationships and interactions, declining academic and creative performance, through to legal and moral issues surrounding possession of and dealing in drugs.
- 1.3 The Policy is based upon the following principles:
 - a) that the College is an educational institution, and therefore has responsibilities:
 - to inform its students about the consequences of choosing to use drugs;
 - to promote healthy lifestyles and personal responsibility; and
 - to help students learn from mistakes that they might make.
 - b) that a harm-minimisation approach is effective;
 - c) that drug use occurs along a continuum ranging from non-use, experimentation, occasional/situational use, habitual and intensive use. Some young people use drugs for the pursuit of pleasure, others for self-medication to reduce psychological pain or suffering;
 - d) that there exists a well-formulated drug education program within the College;
 - e) that this Policy will have consequences for the whole College community, including students, teachers, and parents/ guardians; and

2. APPLICATION AND DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 This Policy applies to College students at all times when on College premises and/or during College activities. It also applies during the school year where any negative impact upon the reputation of the College and/or the students' performance may occur.
- 2.2 For the purpose of this Policy a drug is defined as:

Any non-prescribed substance, which, when taken in to the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically. This includes all drugs of addiction or dependence, which can be defined as including analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, cannabis, steroids, amphetamines, etomidate as well as solvents that may be inhaled, such as glue and petrol.

Any prescribed substance taken for a purpose other than prescribed.

Unless the context indicates otherwise, this definition shall apply throughout the Policy.

3. HARM MINIMISATION

3.1 Prevention

- 3.1.1 The College's major objective is education. A program in drug awareness education should address many issues related to drug use—in particular, the following:
- (a) Accurate information about legal and illegal drugs in the context of Hong Kong which focuses on benefits as well as risks.
 - (b) Personal drug use in which risk-taking is examined in a non- judgmental manner.
 - (c) Attitudes in which stereotypes and myths are challenged.
 - (d) Information and knowledge about drug usage as well as opposition to it.
 - (e) The law and drugs, which includes an examination of the law, its rules and legal rights.
 - (f) Giving and receiving help, which focuses on skills to help both oneself and others.
 - (g) Community action, which allows students to explore responses to drug use in the local and national environments.
- 3.1.2 Appropriate prescribed drug use needs to be monitored. The College Nurse should be notified about any prescribed medication to be taken on College premises. Students should trust to the College Nurse any prescribed medicine exceeding one week's treatment.
- 3.1.3 All members of the College community, including staff, students and parents, have a responsibility to discourage the abuse of all drugs which are detrimental to health and well-being.

3.2 Intervention

- 3.2.1 The intervention procedure is designed to address incidents of drug use in a way which is in the best interest of all parties, while at the same time, conforming to legal requirements.
- 3.2.2 The College will not permit students, while on College premises and/or during College organized activities whether or not under College supervision to:
- (a) Consume tobacco in any form;
 - (b) Use electronic cigarettes/vaping
 - (c) Consume or possess alcoholic beverages;
 - (d) Be in a inebriated state on campus;
 - (e) Deliberately inhale solvents;

- (f) Possess drug-related equipment such as syringes (unless prescribed for medical reasons and with the knowledge of the College staff), bongs or pipes;
- (g) Possess, use, or be under the influence of drugs prohibited in accordance with Hong Kong law; or
- (h) Be under the influence of drugs, except for medical reasons.

3.2.3 Should the Principal, Director of Student Welfare or Head of House believe that there are reasonable grounds for suspicion of drug use or possession, s/he may,

- (a) in the presence of the student and another teacher, search personal property, or request the Police to do so. If unlawful substances are found, the School Board and police will be notified of the situation within 24 hours. Parents and National Committees will also normally be notified. A report will also be forwarded to the College Supervisor, copied to the Chairman, informing them of the situation and any action taken.
- (b) Request that the student undertake a supervised drug test in Hong Kong either urine or hair depending on the situation- at their own cost. Refusal to accept a drug test when required by the College would be taken as an admission of guilt and treated accordingly.

3.2.4 Any student found to possess or use illegal substances will normally be asked to leave the College immediately and permanently. Even though such a student will have lost the right to remain at the College (in accordance with the UWC Student Code of Conduct), at the total discretion of the Principal, after consulting with Director of Student Welfare, the Head of House and the Tutor, and bearing in mind the student's previous record and conduct, as well as the College's responsibility to help students learn from their mistakes, the Principal *may* choose to permit the student to remain at the College under the following condition:

- the student provides a written undertaking not to possess or use drugs again while enrolled at the College; and
- The student agrees in writing to undertake a course in drug counseling; and
- The student agrees to be the subject of drug testing at their own cost from time to time, both at random intervals of time and immediately whenever there are grounds for suspicion or an allegation is made; and
- If drug testing yields a positive result, then the student must leave the College immediately and permanently without further right of appeal. Refusal to accept a drug test when required by the College would be taken as an admission of guilt and treated accordingly.

- 3.2.5 The option offered in section 3.2.4 would not be available to a student trafficking (i.e. distributing) drugs to other students of the College.
- 3.2.6 Any information provided or discovered will be treated confidentially until a thorough investigation has been completed, at which time it may be deemed necessary to reveal such information.

3.3 Implementation

- 3.3.1 In the case of student use, possession or intention to supply drugs on the College property, the procedures listed in Section 4.2 will be closely adhered to by the Principal, acting on behalf of the College Supervisor.
- 3.3.2 Staff and students have a responsibility to report evidence or suspicion of drug use by students to the Director of Student Welfare.
- 3.3.3 In the event of a student appearing to be under the influence of a drug or drugs, the College administration may seek medical advice.
- 3.3.4 The College will maintain a directory containing local clinics, counsellors and agencies to which students who are under the influence of a drug, or who otherwise have a drug problem, can be referred.
- 3.3.5 The College will attempt to notify parents/guardians before referral to medical agencies or as soon as possible thereafter. However, in situations deemed to be an emergency, the College may act *in loco parentis* without first notifying parents/guardians, but will do so at the earliest available opportunity.

3.4 Consequences

- 3.4.1 Consequences are the actions that will be taken when any student infringes this Policy. Any such consequences that arise will be designed with prime consideration for the emotional and physical health and welfare of the students of the College. All consequences will be applied at the discretion of the Principal acting on behalf of the College Supervisor in consultation with relevant staff members and, where necessary, the Board. All actions will be consistent with the UWC Student Common Code of Conduct.

4. COLLEGE PROTOCOL ON ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

4.1 Alcohol

- 4.1.1 The consumption of alcohol by students is not permitted on College premises or at events sponsored by the College.
- 4.1.2 Students found drinking or in possession of alcohol, or supplying alcohol to other students on the College campus might lose the privilege to remain in the College, and be liable to a range of sanctions dependent on the circumstances, including whether or not previous offences have been recorded. The sanctions will normally include informing parents and National Committees (as per the Rules for the Students Community)

4.2 Tobacco

- 4.2.1 The College is a declared smoke-free environment. In accordance with the UWC Student Code of Conduct, any student who smokes ~~(on or off campus)~~ while enrolled at the College might lose the privilege to remain at the College, Any consequences of smoking will normally include informing parents and National Committees. (as per the Rules for the Students Community)

4.3 Illegal Drugs

- 4.3.1 The possession and/or supply of illegal drugs is an offence and is against the law. The College will view either offence as a very serious matter.
- 4.3.2 Any student found supplying illegal drugs is committing an offence against the law. The Principal will inform the College Supervisor, parents and police, National Committee, and the student will normally be expelled. In exceptional circumstances, the alternative consequence outlined in 4.2.5 may be invoked at the discretion of the Principal.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE

- 5.1 This policy will be posted in a public place, such as on the College's website.
- 5.2 This policy was approved by the Board on 16 September 2025 and replaces the previous edition of the Policy dated April 2015.
- 5.3 This policy will be reviewed by May 2030 or as necessary.