



BBC Studioworks – Kelvin Hall

# Workplace Drug and Alcohol Procedure

Health and Safety Procedure

## 1. Introduction

Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs can seriously impair an individual's judgement and reactions, leading to an increased risk of accidents and injuries.

Other examples of damaging consequences in a workplace environment can include:

- Loss of productivity and poor performance
- Lateness and absenteeism
- Short and long-term health issues for the individual
- Effect on team morale and employee relations
- Bad behaviour or poor discipline
- Adverse effects on studio operations, company image and customer relations

## 2. Awareness

### 2.1. Alcohol

Alcohol consumption can affect people in different ways and depends on many factors. Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream within a few minutes of being drunk and is carried to all parts of the body, including the brain.

The concentration of alcohol in the body (known as the blood alcohol concentration) will be determined by aspects such as how long an individual has been drinking, whether they have eaten, and their size and weight. It takes a healthy liver about 1 hour to break down and remove 1 unit of alcohol. A unit is equivalent to 8 gm or 10 ml (1 cl) of pure alcohol. The following all contain 1 unit of alcohol:

- A half pint of ordinary strength beer, lager or cider (3.5% ABV)
- A single 25 ml measure of spirits (40% ABV)
- A small glass of wine (9% ABV)

If someone drinks 2 pints of ordinary strength beer or half a bottle of wine (i.e. 4 units) then they will still have alcohol in their bloodstream at least 3 hours later. Similarly, if someone drinks heavily in the evening then they may still be over the legal drink/drive limit the following morning. Only time can remove alcohol from the bloodstream\*.

Even a blood alcohol concentration lower than the legal drink/drive limit can reduce physical co-ordination and reaction speeds. It also affects thinking, judgement and mood. It can also raise the drinker's blood pressure and increase the risk of contracting other illnesses or medical conditions. People who drink very heavily may develop psychological and emotional problems, including depression.

## **2.2. Drugs**

For the purpose of this procedure, “drugs” refers to illegal drugs and misuse (whether deliberate or unintentional), prescribed drugs and other substances such as solvents.

Similar to the consumption of alcohol, drugs can affect the brain and body in a number of ways, which can have an adverse effect on an individual’s abilities and behaviour.

The principal legislation in the UK for controlling the misuse of drugs is the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Nearly all drugs with misuse and/or dependence liability are covered by it. The Act makes the production, supply and possession of these controlled drugs unlawful except in certain specified circumstances (i.e. when they have been prescribed by a doctor). The Act lists the drugs that are subject to control and classifies them into 3 categories (Class A, Class B and Class C).

Again, drug consumption can increase the risk of the user contracting other illnesses, medical or psychological conditions.

## **3. Principle procedures**

BBC Studioworks expects all its employees to act responsibly in terms of any consumption of alcohol and to ensure that there is a safe and appropriate recovery period before they are due to commence work. No employee should report or try to report for work when unfit due to alcohol or drugs or substance abuse. Where there is reasonable belief that an individual is under the influence of alcohol or drugs on reporting for work or during work then their immediate health and welfare would be assessed in terms of any medical intervention being necessary. Disciplinary procedures may also be instigated.

The use of alcohol by employees on the premises during working hours will not be permitted, nor will the consumption of any recreational drugs or similar substance at any time which affects their ability to conduct their work duties. Possession of illegal drugs on the premises by an employee will, without exception, be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Should an employee be prescribed medication by a doctor (or use “over the counter” medication) which has side effects which may impact on their capacity to fulfil their duties (whether short or long term), they are expected to raise this with their line manager at the first opportunity in order that an assessment may be made. Dependent upon their specific job role and the result of the assessment, it may be appropriate to adjust the duties of the employee concerned in order to protect both the welfare of themselves and others affected by their activities.

Should any staff have any concerns regarding the behaviour, abilities or well-being of a colleague which they think may be caused by consumption of either alcohol or drugs, then they must raise this immediately with their line manager. All such concerns will be treated confidentially.

## 4. Support

BBC Studioworks would support any employee who recognises that they may have a dependency on alcohol or other drug or stimulant in accessing the correct professional advice to assist them. This may include help from an occupational health service, GP or a specialist support agency.

Other sources of confidential advice include:

- Drink line (National Alcohol Help Line) tel: 0300 123 1110  
[www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)
- Alcoholics Anonymous tel: 0800 9177 650  
[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)
- National Drugs Help Line tel: 0300 123 6600  
[www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

It may occasionally be necessary to request that the employee refrains from work temporarily or undertakes restricted duties.

## 5. Studio Activities and events

### 5.1. Alcohol

In terms of events taking place within the venue, any supply of alcohol to visitors is managed by the nominated venue Personal Licence Holder and/or the venue Designated Premises Supervisor in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003, unless a non-licensable activity (invited studio audience for example).

### 5.2. Drugs

It is recognised that some productions will take place whereby visitors and studio audience members may need to self-medicate with prescribed or “over the counter” medication whilst within the Television Centre. Where possible, a private location can be arranged and additional services such as sharps and medical waste removal provided.

Should any employee notice a discarded sharp item within the studio property (i.e. syringe, needle, blade) please do not touch it as it may be contaminated and there is a risk of cross-contamination. Instead, please report the item immediately to facilities and prevent anyone else in the vicinity from touching it until its safe removal.