

Appendix 1.1: Drugs & Alcohol Policy

The term 'drug' has been used in this policy to include all drugs and substances, legal or illegal, which could adversely affect behaviour or performance which can lead to an increased risk of accidents and/or injuries occurring whilst staying at a Centre or engaging in fieldwork. This policy covers both the use and misuse of alcohol and drugs.

Field Studies Council recognise that alcohol and drugs will play a part in the lives of some people and will be sympathetic to problems arising from misuse of these substances whilst not condoning such misuse. Field Studies Council also recognises the current national concern regarding excessive drinking, especially amongst 18-24 year olds and the ensuing risks and problems alcohol can cause to individuals. Field Studies Council has a commitment to enhancing the health and safety and wellbeing of our visitors and recognises the risks that may be caused by the misuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances.

Field Studies Council in no way condones the misuse of drugs or alcohol, and will balance action with appropriate support for individuals who misuse them. At all times Field Studies Council reserves the right to request that an individual leaves its premises immediately if centre staff feel that the individual poses a risk through their activities to other visitors. Where we feel the individual is posing a risk to themselves we may suggest they seek professional/medical support.

The law regulating dangerous and otherwise harmful drugs is the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which makes it clear that it is an offence for 'the occupier or someone concerned in the management of any premises knowingly to permit or suffer on those premises the smoking of cannabis; or the production, attempted production, supply, attempted supply, or offering to supply of any controlled drug'. Field Studies Council will require individuals who contravene this law to vacate Field Studies Council property immediately and may require group leaders to remove any individuals who contravenes this law from the field centre. Field Studies Council reserves the right to contact law enforcement officers and/or to rely on the organisation's disciplinary process to deal with these individuals.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires Field Studies Council to do what is reasonable to protect the health and safety of its staff, visiting participants and their staff and other visitors to our premises. Drug and alcohol misuse can have an impact on the health and safety of an individual and for others including Field Studies Council staff, for example in having to handle illegal substances and drug-related paraphernalia. The Head of Centre has the power to search or delegate another to search Field Studies Council premises, including individual visitors' rooms and belongings, where there is reasonable suspicion that illegal activities are taking place.

Searches will be carried out by Field Studies Council staff in the presence of the group leader and / or the individual concerned. If the individual is not present Field Studies Council still has the right to search the room, if there is reasonable suspicion that illegal activities are taking place, although this would not be an in-depth search.

Field Studies Council is not against social drinking but recognises the use of alcohol should not have a detrimental effect on safety, or attendance and performance on a field course therefore, alcohol should not be consumed during working hours or to an extent out of working hours where it will impact on an individual's abilities to safely participate in subsequent course activities.

The inappropriate use of alcohol can create health, safety and welfare problems at Centres for Field Studies Council staff and the communities in which we are located, and can be an inconvenience and nuisance for staff, our neighbours and other customers at Field Studies Council centres.

Field Studies Council is committed to preventing these problems from arising. If, despite Field Studies Council's attempts at prevention, issues regarding the inappropriate use of alcohol do occur, Field Studies Council reserve the right to ask either the individuals directly or accompanying group leader to remove the individuals concerned from the centre. Field Studies Council would expect the organisation to deal with individuals through their disciplinary process on return.