



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

POLICY for the RESPONSIBLE USE of **ALCOHOL**

1. POLICY PARTICULARS

DATE OF APPROVAL BY RELEVANT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

Office of Dean of Students: July 2007

Student Services Council: August 2007 / 26 May 2011

DATE OF APPROVAL BY SENATE: October 2007 / 2 September 2011

DATE OF APPROVAL BY COUNCIL: November 2007 / 8 September 2011

COMMENCEMENT DATE: January 2008

REVISION HISTORY: revised April 2011

REVIEW DATE: 3-yearly

POLICY LEVEL: All University students

RESPONSIBILITY:

- IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING:

* The Dean of Students, through the Student Service Committee, will ensure that the various strategies outlined in this policy are implemented.

* Specific task-linked responsibility rests at several levels, as follows:

- Controlling marketing, sponsorship: Registrar, Dean of Students
- Encouraging Alternatives: SRC; University at large
- Serving of alcohol on campus: Registrar, Wardening staff, SRC, Clubs, societies
- Increasing awareness: Dean of Students, SRC, Wardening staff, Counseling Centre, Health Care Centre; proctors
- Providing support services: Health Care Centre, Counselling Centre

- REVIEW AND REVISION:

The Policy for the Responsible Use of Alcohol as a whole will be reviewed by the Student Services Council every three years.

REPORTING STRUCTURE: Dean of Students → Board of Residences → Student Services Council → Senate → Council

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Recognising that students are young adults, able to make choices about their personal life-style, the University encourages an enlightened, mature and responsible approach to moderate alcohol consumption, based on the undeniable fact that social drinking is normal for large numbers of people. However, in the past few years, growing concern has been expressed about excessive levels of use of alcohol by our students. Concerns include high-risk drinking among students, the impact of this drinking on academic achievement, personal safety, addiction and student attrition. In addition, there is dissatisfaction among the local Grahamstown population, who complain about unacceptable noise levels and rowdy, drunken behaviour of students in town.

2.1 POLICY DECLARATION:

This document recognises that the excessive use of alcohol contributes to a spectrum of health, behavioural and social problems, and has negative effects in terms of its toxicity, its potential to create dependency and its impact on behaviour (often resulting in violence, injuries and death). The period of late adolescence is a phase of freedom, adaptation to new environments, new relationships and financial and academic challenges. All may be exacerbated by heavy alcohol consumption. This policy aims to counteract these effects.

2.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES:

This policy aims to create and maintain a safe and pleasant campus environment which supports the health and well-being of students. Specifically, the objectives are to:

- a. encourage students to make healthy choices as regards alcohol consumption, and promote personal responsibility and respect and consideration for the community
- b. control marketing, promotions and sponsorship of alcohol on campus
- c. create an atmosphere free from pressure to drink, which encourages abstinence or low-risk social drinking and discourages high-risk drinking
- d. increase awareness about the dangers of heavy drinking
- e. encourage alternatives to drinking, creating choice and a balanced social programme
- f. promote a caring environment which will support those experiencing alcohol-related difficulties
- g. develop a partnership with stakeholders, including the SRC, Counselling Centre, Health Care Centre, Wardens, police and proprietors of local bars, and the Grahamstown community.

3. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Specific strategies are outlined in terms of six areas:

- increasing awareness
- encouraging alternatives and choice
- encouraging responsible consumption of alcohol on campus
- limiting harm in the drinking environment
- controlling marketing, promotions and sponsorship
- providing campus support services.

3.1 STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS:

A Increasing awareness

1. The office of the Dean of Students will provide appropriate information on alcohol-linked issues in the Orientation Booklet and Student Support Booklet.
2. Advice on alcohol will routinely be included in the annual sub-Warden and house committee training workshops, and in workshops for all first-years during orientation week.
3. The SRC will be actively involved in promoting a message of responsible drinking (See Appendix A).
4. The Health Care Centre and Counselling Centre will display appropriate notices in public spaces.
5. This policy will be widely distributed to all members of the University community, and will be posted on the University website, with a link to the Dean of Students website.

B Encouraging alternatives and choices

1. The University community will encourage events which promote “low-risk” social drinking and give special support to alcohol-free events in terms of provision of venues and resources.
2. Hall Wardens, Wardens and subwardens will actively seek to arrange social events where no alcohol is served.
3. All social events on campus must provide suitable non-alcoholic refreshments for students.
4. The University will give special consideration to providing after-hours alcohol-free environments on campus (e.g. a coffee bar).

C Limiting availability of alcohol on campus:

1. No function (including Hall and inter-Residence functions) which involves the consumption of liquor may be held during Orientation Week and the first ten days of the first term without the Vice-Chancellor’s permission.
2. No function may be held on campus during the 3-week period prior to June and November examinations (i.e. 2 weeks before Swot Week). Neither may they be held during the examination period.
3. In Residences, only wine, beer, cider and liqueurs may be served at special functions, usually only twice a term, and only with permission of the Hall Warden and when Wardens are in Residence.
4. Students are permitted to have only beer, cider, wine or fortified wine in their rooms.
5. The Registrar’s permission must be obtained to serve alcohol at any official University event (including all society’s evenings) other than Hall and Residence functions, which must be approved by the Hall Warden.
6. The Head of Sports Administration must give permission for sports clubs to

serve limited amounts of alcohol at small functions.

7. Drinking in public on campus is prohibited.
8. At large sporting events, drinking of alcohol will only be permitted in designated areas (e.g. on the stands) and organisers should arrange for additional security to ensure that this requirement is adhered to.
9. Residence pubs may not sell alcohol; they only store it for students who have bought it in advance. Residence bars are permitted to operate only at restricted times in Halls which allow such pubs to operate, and are run in terms of the signed agreement with the Hall Warden, closely supervised by the Hall and House Wardens.
10. All drinking clubs of any kind involving students on or off campus are expressly prohibited.
11. Student clubs and societies are encouraged to use the licensed venues on campus such as the Rhodes Club and the Sports Bar for their functions.
12. Student Clubs and Societies must follow the Dean of Students guidelines relating to the serving of alcohol at their functions. These will be promulgated to all societies annually.
13. Events involving rapid and/or excessive consumption of alcohol are forbidden, and all SRC societies are forbidden from holding such events both on and off campus.

D Limiting harm:

1. Students and staff who serve alcohol to students must have read and understood this policy.
2. Alcohol may not be served to intoxicated persons.
3. Halls should avoid serving punch from open containers
4. Non-alcoholic drinks, and food, must be served / on sale at all events and venues where alcohol is served.
5. Intoxicated students are encouraged to use the Get Home Safe service.
6. The Dean of Students and SRC will seek outside sponsorship to promote awareness about responsible consumption of alcohol.
7. No glass is permitted in areas of the campus which are declared glass-free zones, including all sports fields.

E Controlling promotions and sponsorships:

1. Student Societies and Sports Clubs should seek alternatives to alcohol companies for sponsorship.
2. Sponsorships from alcohol companies should be in monetary form and not material form. Where sponsorship is in the form of a product, a monitoring system should be in place to restrict free drinks to two per person.
3. Prizes may not take the form of large quantities of alcohol (e.g. cases of beer).
4. Off-campus drink suppliers, pubs and bars should be requested not to offer special alcohol promotions which result in high-risk drinking.
5. Advertisements from SRC societies and Sports Clubs promoting alcohol consumption are not permitted. This prohibition extends to the use of electronic media such as Facebook and twitter.
6. Adverts may not portray alcohol as necessary to social or sexual success.
7. Sports Clubs and Societies functioning under the auspices of the SRC shall not identify access to free or cheap alcohol as a primary incentive to join or to attend meetings or functions.

8. Societies wishing to use their funds for cocktail parties or receptions must obtain prior permission from the SRC.
9. Clubs, societies, Residences and departments should reserve the label “cheese and wine” for functions which genuinely serve a range of cheeses, biscuits and wine, along with non-alcoholic beverages.

F Providing support services

1. The Health Care Centre and Counselling Centre should play a key role in identifying and referring students who appear to have alcohol-related problems and providing them with confidential and effective support.
2. Special training workshops should be held regularly on alcohol-linked problems and the value of brief interventions.
3. The Counselling Centre will help students to form self-help support groups.
4. Students worried about their own use or another person’s use of alcohol should be encouraged to seek confidential assistance on or off campus.
5. Students appearing before Residence disciplinary authorities and Proctors for disciplinary offences which are alcohol related should be strongly advised to seek confidential assessment and counselling.

3.2 REVIEW PROCEDURE:

The Dean of Students should set up a sub-committee to reconsider the effectiveness of the Rhodes Alcohol Policy at the beginning of 2015. This committee should include the following people, or their nominees:

- President and one Vice President of the SRC
- Head: Counselling Centre
- Head: Health Care Centre
- 2 Hall Wardens (one male and one female)
- A University Proctor or Prosecutor

The Committee will submit the revised policy to the Board of Residences, Student Services Council, and then to Senate and Council for consideration. If revisions are recommended and approved, a copy of the revised policy must be widely distributed and the web version must be updated.

Breaches of the policy will be addressed via the University’s Disciplinary Code.

Acknowledgement: this policy is closely based on the recommendations of the working group consisting of representatives from tertiary institutions in Ireland:
<http://www.healthpromotion.ie/pdf/College.pdf>

APPENDIX A: LOW-RISK DRINKING TECHNIQUES

BEFORE YOU GO OUT:

- Eat a full meal
- Take a limited amount of money with you
- think about whether you will drink, what you will drink and how much you plan to drink.
- If you are taking medication, consider the effect of combining this with alcohol

- plan how you will get home safely

WHILE YOU ARE OUT

- be aware of what you are drinking, watch where your drink comes from and keep it with you at all times
- avoid mixing alcoholic drinks
- watch yourself for signs of intoxication (ringing in the ears, dizziness, slurred or slow speech, unsteady walking)
- pace yourself to about one drink per hour
- sip your drink slowly and focus on enjoying the taste
- alternate between alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks all night
- don't let others persuade you to have more to drink than you had planned