

SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the physical and mental health, safety and welfare of MRG Services staff and learners.
- 1.2. Impaired performance, absenteeism, sickness, poor timekeeping and accidents can be linked to substance misuse. The Company seeks to work constructively and deal sympathetically with staff and learner problems that are related to substance misuse.
- 1.3. The Company recognises substance misuse or dependency as primarily a health related and social problem requiring specialist counselling and/or treatment. Staff and learners should feel assured that any problem they may have will be dealt with in a fair and sensitive manner. The Company is committed to offering every assistance and guidance in accordance with the provision of this policy.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1. This policy applies to all staff and learners of MRG Services and anyone else involved with MRG services business.
- 2.2. MRG Services always expects staff and learners to take a responsible attitude towards substance misuse and maintain an acceptable standard of conduct.
- 2.3. For the purpose of this policy, substance misuse is defined as:
 - 2.3.1. The consumption of alcohol to the extent that it affects an individual's work performance, normal social behaviour, attendance or the safety of themselves and/or others whilst at work.
 - 2.3.2. The taking of drugs other than prescribed as medication, which adversely affects their performance, conduct, attendance or their colleagues at work.
 - 2.3.3. The use of substance e.g. solvents which adversely affects their performance, conduct, attendance or their colleagues at work.

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3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION / RATIONALE

- 3.1. MRG Service recognises that the use of many substances is accepted as part of everyday life for many people, including prescribed drugs, alcohol and nicotine. MRG Services recognises and accepts the statutory requirements of The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended), The Children and Young Persons (Protection from Tobacco) Act, and prohibits any user on its premises from supplying, possessing or being under the influence of any illegal substances on those premises.
- 3.2. The following are **not permitted on any site** unless in special circumstance e.g. MRG events with the agreement of the Board of Directors:
 - 3.2.1. The consumption of alcohol or being under the influence of alcohol.
 - 3.2.2. Illegal possession, use or supply of drugs or abuse of substances
- 3.3. Substance use for some people has become an accepted part of social life and is normally a personal matter. However, when substance use impairs performance, safety or interpersonal work relations, it becomes a matter of concern for MRG Services.
- 3.4. The policy is intended to be supportive of individuals with alcohol/drug related problems and sets out to re-establish appropriate conduct, wherever possible without having to resort to MRG Services Disciplinary Procedure.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY – DRUGS MISUSE IN THE WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974, SECTION 2 MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999

- 4.1. It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 for any person knowingly to permit the production, supply or use of controlled substances on their premises except in specified circumstances (e.g. when they have been prescribed by a doctor).
- 4.2. You should also be aware of duties under the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Transport and Works Act 1992. Drivers of road vehicles must not be under the influence of drugs while driving, attempting to drive or when they are in charge of a vehicle.

5. KEY MESSAGES

- 5.1. Drug and other substance (e.g. solvent) misuse is everyone's concern. In the context of work, not only does it damage the misuser's health, but it can cost employers through absenteeism and reduced productivity. It may also increase the risk of accidents.
- 5.2. MRG Services will adopt a substance misuse policy, in consultation with the staff. This policy will also aim to support affected employees rather than punish them; however, possession or dealing in drugs at work will be reported immediately to the Police. If an employee admits to being a drug user, it is MRG Services policy to seek to help them rather than simply dismissing them.

6. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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- 6.1. MRG Services is committed to providing assistance and support to staff and learners whose performance is impaired by regular alcohol, drug or other substance misuse.
- 6.2. MRG Services is predisposed to regard such persons as suffering from an illness and will offer practical assistance to staff and learners showing signs of dependence, by signposting to specialist advice and where appropriate, time off to attend specialist advice and support.
- 6.3. MRG Services reserves the right to use the Disciplinary Procedures in cases of excessive alcohol consumption, drug or substance misuse leading to behaviour contrary to accepted standards of conduct and safety or inadequate performance and medical problems through substance misuse.
- 6.4. MRG Services will seek to make staff and learners aware of the effects and implications of the consumption of alcohol and drugs, in moderation and excess, through regular promotion and awareness-raising.
- 6.5. Many issues surrounding misuse are within the law; however, some issues which are in breach of the law will need to be dealt with by the appropriate authorities. MRG staff must ensure they act within the constraints of the law.

7. SAFETY ISSUES AND PROCEDURES

- 7.1. Any situation in which an individual's work or the work of others is considered to be adversely affected by a person's use of any drugs, alcohol or solvents while on MRG business, or where injury arises from contaminated material, (e.g. Syringes) must be reported to the Health & Safety Manager regarding staff and the Safeguarding Manager regarding learners and investigated as soon as practicable.
- 7.2. Individuals must be made aware that they may as a result of intoxication be in breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 if they continue to work.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. MRG Services expects all staff and learners to comply with this policy. The supporting guidelines provide details of the procedures that must be followed and provide guidance to staff and managers alike.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1. Publicise and communicate the policy and supporting guidelines widely across the MRG Services via:
 - 9.1.1. Learner Induction
 - 9.1.2. Staff handbook
 - 9.1.3. Staff Induction
 - 9.1.4. Summary issued to all contractors, service providers, and those working in partnership with MRG Services
 - 9.1.5. Provide Staff with awareness training with appropriate organisations
- 9.2. Ensure that substance misuse education is undertaken:

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- 9.2.1. As an integrated element of all provision
 - 9.2.2. By appropriately trained members of staff
 - 9.2.3. With access to external advisors from bodies including the Police and local agencies/services
 - 9.2.4. With separate facility for individual help and advice, through external services that specialise in specific areas.
- 9.3. Ensure that the policy is an integral part of MRG Services induction and training programmes for all staff and learners.
- 9.4. Put in place arrangements to deal with requests from individuals who require the policy to be translated into another language or communicated in a different format (e.g. Braille or cassette)
- 9.5. Monitor the implementation and operation of the policy on an annual basis through The Values Team and SLT meetings.

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