



THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE

Within the University of Sydney

ALCOHOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The College recognises that alcohol use is a part of the social life of many students and that, as the vast majority of student residents and affiliates are 18 years or over, they are legally entitled to obtain and consume alcohol.

However, the College is also aware of the risks of alcohol-related harm and seeks to create an environment that encourages moderation and a responsible attitude to the consumption of alcohol. No student should be induced to drink alcohol or to imbibe to excess. Many students choose not to drink alcohol for individual and cultural reasons, and this choice must be respected. Drunken behaviour or inappropriate activities associated with, or caused by, the use of alcohol will not be tolerated and may result in the cancellation of a student's place at College at the discretion of the Principal.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Outline the strategies the College has in place to assist student safety and harm-minimisation.
- Detail the circumstances in which alcohol will be served at student events.
- Clarify the processes by which inappropriate behaviour will be addressed.
- Identify the mechanisms through which this policy will be disseminated and broader educational opportunities occur.

Where alcohol-related behaviour may constitute sexual harm or gender-based violence, the matter will be managed under the Women's College Sexual Harm and Gender-Based Violence Policy in addition to this policy.

Related policies for reference include:

- The Women's College Student Code of Conduct
- The Women's College Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy, Guidelines and Procedure
- The Women's College Sexual Harm and Gender-Based Violence Policy
- The Women's College Handbook
- The University of Sydney Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy 2015
- The University of Sydney Student Charter 2020
- The University of Sydney Alcohol Policy 2019
- The University of Sydney Liquor Accord

Student safety and harm-minimisation strategies

The College seeks to promote a culture which respects the rights of all students and is free from any inducements to consume alcohol. It looks to ensure that the potential harms associated with alcohol use are minimised. A number of strategies are therefore in place. They include (but are not limited to):

- Specific training by qualified personnel for student leaders, such as in First Aid, Drug and Alcohol Education Training, and Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) certification.
- Student leaders, including Resident Assistants (RAs), House Committee, Academic Assistants (AAs) and student convenors, being expected to role model responsible behaviour that is consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and this policy, formally agreeing to abide by

these expectations as mandatory when accepting the roles and responsibilities of the leadership positions.

- Clarity about the circumstances in which and how alcohol will be served at student events – see below.
- The prohibition of hazing¹ and drinking games that involve alcohol and the imbibing of alcohol in a fast and dangerous manner, including sculling/skolling, singing and chanting.
- Pastoral care mechanisms that seek to ensure student safety, e.g. during Women's Welcome Weeks: Resident Assistants and staff attending student events; students accompanied home from other non-Women's College events by senior students where appropriate.
- The provision of alcohol free days and prohibition of back-to back events where alcohol is served during Welcome Weeks.
- Additional security that is provided on Wednesday nights/Thursday mornings during semester and for relevant student events at College.
- All new students to College receive information and training on the responsible use of alcohol, and the whole College is regularly reminded of acceptable standards.
- Modelling of moderate alcohol consumption at College functions, e.g. Formal Dinners.
- Ensuring that student activities include mainstream events that are alcohol free.
- Supporting the Heads of College implementation of carefully managed and timetabled intercollege events where both alcohol and no alcohol is served.
- Encouraging involvement in alcohol-free events, e.g. sports and cultural activities, and social events, such as through social sport.

Service of alcohol at student events

The following requirements relate to student events that involve the consumption of alcohol:

- Students are not permitted to drink alcohol in communal College spaces, including but not limited to, the Dining Hall and the Sibyl Centre and/or on College grounds, without submitting a request form for approval / or gaining permission from a Senior Staff member. This does not apply to official College events, such as Formal Dinner.
- Pre-planned events must be approved by the Principal, or her delegate, using the relevant online *Student Event Request Forms* (SERF) for which the link is available on The Women's College Woogle. The amount of alcohol supplied will be based on RSA guidelines and the Australian Government's [National Health and Medical Research Council Guidelines](#)² regarding standard drinks per head over the time of the event³. Sober student leaders must be nominated for each event.
- The Students' Club may not use Students' Club funds to purchase alcohol directly from suppliers for student events. They may not store alcohol on campus for future events.
- These events are managed by the College Licensee (currently the Catering Manager) who is responsible for the composition of any mixed drinks and monitors the service of alcohol.⁴
- For all student events held at College all alcohol must be organised through TWG Catering with any excess alcohol returned to the provider after the event by TWG and the Students' Club invoiced for the subsequent net cost.
- For student events held at venues external to the College, licensed caterers must be used. All alcohol must be organised through these caterers with any excess alcohol returned to the provider after the event as above. The College reserves the right to wristband students at College events to monitor alcohol consumption, or similarly monitor RSA standards of consumption.

¹ Hazing is defined as any action taken or any situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule and risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of a group or team, whether new or not, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

² The NHMRC guidelines recommend drinking no more than four standard drinks on a single occasion reduces the risk of alcohol-related injury arising from that occasion. Standard drinks for this purpose are 285 ml full strength beer, 100 ml wine and 30 ml spirits.

³ There is a legal requirement when driving to have a blood alcohol concentration between 0.00 and 0.05%. For learner or provisional drivers the BAC limit is 0.00%.

⁴ The amount of alcohol to be provided at a function can be calculated using these figures in combination with a knowledge of the number of male and female participants and the duration of the function with an allowance for a proportion of very light drinkers.

- Where possible, for student events held at venues external to the College, a ‘Cash Bar’ applies, i.e. there is to be no external ‘Bar Tab’. Where this is not possible, any private room hire must be covered by an additional ticket cost to cover the hire and must not be applied to beverage costs, except with the prior approval of the Principal.
- Trained wait staff are used to ensure responsible service of alcohol at events. In some instances, senior students with RSA training may serve alcohol in addition to staff, but the College Licensee will supervise these activities.
- Non-alcoholic beverages and ample food must be provided at these events.
- Energy drinks with high content levels of caffeine, such as “Red Bull” and “V”, cannot be served in conjunction with alcohol at any event.
- The event must meet the requirements of the University of Sydney Liquor Accord.
- BYO events will not be approved except in exceptional circumstances when the alcohol consumption can be carefully managed, and where the drinking of alcohol is ancillary to, and not the primary purpose of the event, e.g. College ‘Cabaret’ event. Approval is at the Principal’s discretion.
- Underage students will not be permitted to attend these events unless they are identified and managed by the Licensee and Resident Assistants. They will not be offered alcohol and may not consume alcohol.
- College ‘wing’ events organised by the Resident Assistants that involve the service of alcohol will need to be approved using the *Student Event Request Form*.
- Students planning informal student parties held in spaces such as student common rooms or on balconies, and which involve alcohol, must submit a Student Event / Notification Request form in advance of the event, so that the function can be adequately monitored, and numbers approved, otherwise the College reserves the right to close the event and require guests to depart the College. The organisers **must**:
 - inform the College of the number of expected attendees, including non-College students, and when the party will begin and end
 - meet all guests at a College entry point and be responsible for them while on site
 - ensure that their wing neighbours are informed
 - ensure the event concludes by 11pm
 - be responsible for the event and any cleaning up that is required.
- Students must not have glass or bottles of any kind on balconies or stairwells.
- Any “after event” celebration must be held off-site and not within the College. This is to respect the rights of all residents, including those not part of any “after event”.

Management of inappropriate behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour resulting from the consumption of alcohol will not be tolerated. Intoxication is frequently associated with significant harm to people and property, constituting issues of both student welfare and discipline. Any behaviour which compromises the reputation of the College will not be tolerated and may result in termination of a student’s residency or affiliation. Students should refrain from using language that praises or encourages excessive alcohol consumption.

Instances of alcohol abuse must be immediately reported using the *College Incident Reporting Form* submitted to the Dean of Students. The matter will be addressed confidentially by Senior Staff and with the Senior Student where the Principal deems her involvement appropriate, with the individual(s) concerned. Actions may include:

- Meeting with the Principal and Vice Principal to discuss behaviour and circumstances.
- Disciplinary action under the College disciplinary processes.
- Charges levied to student accounts for damage to property.
- Individual follow up and monitoring using a College Student Wellbeing Agreement.
- Referral of the individual(s) to an external professional service, e.g. the University Counselling Service, for support and assistance.
- Repeated similar behaviour may jeopardise a student’s continued residency at College and this is entirely at the discretion of the Principal.

In the case of serious intoxication by Student Leaders, related injury and/or other incidents, the student/s will be required to meet with the Principal and Vice Principal; the outcome will include disciplinary action, mandated counselling and demotion.

Policy dissemination and educational opportunities

The College acknowledges the importance of raising awareness of the risks attached to alcohol misuse and the importance of education regarding a responsible and moderate approach to alcohol consumption. In order to achieve these outcomes, the measures taken may include:

- The provision of an information session in Welcome Week on the Alcohol Policy and Procedures and broader community issues. In addition to Senior Staff, this may be undertaken in association with an external provider or with presentations by professionals working/researching in the area.
- All students will be provided access to the Alcohol Policy and Procedures via the online induction portal on initial admission to the College and further access to it on the Women’s Woogle.
- Related student information sessions, such as those on the College’s Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy, cross reference the Alcohol Policy and Procedures.
- The College Handbook includes information on:
 - where the Alcohol Policy and Procedures document can be obtained
 - external resources including counselling services and the Alcohol and Drug Information Service.
- Current information and references on health and welfare with respect to alcohol consumption will be made available to student leaders for distribution to students as appropriate from time to time.
- Opportunities for further education will be sourced via Formal Dinner speakers, student seminars, RSA training, etc.

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