



IONA COLLEGE DRUG POLICY

Rationale

The influence and effects of drug use on the individual, family and community are evident in our society. Associated problems are often of a most serious nature. Drug use is a complex issue and it is recognised that drug use problems result from a combination of many contributing factors.

The College has a pastoral interest in the health and social, personal and legal wellbeing of its students. It recognizes that the use of various drugs can impair the wellbeing of students and interfere with their ability to learn and function in society. Further, the College acknowledges that student drug use, either on its property or at its events, interferes with the legitimate academic and co-curricular interests of other students and staff and can have a detrimental effect on the tone, morale and reputation of the College.

The College's Drug Policy aims to be comprehensive, combining intervention with prevention through its Personal Development and Health Education Programmes and other means. These other means include; identification of those students at risk, nurturing a close partnership with parents, enthusiastically attempting to busily involve students in a variety of wholesome and worthwhile co-curricular activities, and trying at all times to develop healthy attitudes, interests and lifestyle habits. For the purpose of this policy, a drug is defined as any substance, with the exception of food and water, which when taken into the body, alters its function physically and/or psychologically.

This definition includes analgesics, alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, amphetamines, hallucinogens and solvents.

This drug policy has been developed in an attempt to:

- Address prevention, intervention and actions with regard to drug use;
- Publish guidelines and sanctions relevant to the College; and
- Be consistent with State and Federal laws.

Policy

Iona College adopts a **“zero tolerance”** approach to the possession and use of drugs. This means that it is never acceptable to possess, supply, trade or use drugs. **The most likely outcome for any transgression will be exclusion from the College.** It is not appropriate to equate the imposition of appropriate consequences with a lack of forgiveness. The College will act in the best interests of all at the College in mind.

The College, as an educational institution has a responsibility to ensure student learning in many domains, including behaviour. Given the insidious and destructive nature of drug use and the associated culture, **the College's most likely response will be permanent exclusion.**

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(a) Prevention

The College recognises that clearly the most important agent of education in all social issues, including drug education, is the home. Further, it recognises the need for the College and the home to enjoy a clear understanding and form a supportive partnership.

The College's drug education programme includes the teaching of factual information, attitudes and values, decision-making skills and appropriate information about support systems.

The College makes counselling services available to students and parents who voluntarily seek help with issues associated with drug use. Discretion and confidentiality will be observed as requested.

The College is prepared to make a clear statement about what it will not allow with respect to drug use. It is this:-

The College does not permit students, while in uniform, on College premises, at or travelling to or from the College or at any College sponsored occasion to:

- Possess, supply, trade or smoke tobacco products;
- Possess, supply, trade or consume alcoholic beverages;
- Inhale solvents deliberately;
- Possess, supply or trade drug-related equipment such as syringes, bongs, pipes, etc. except in cases of lawful medical use;
- Possess, supply, trade or use prohibited drugs and
- Possess, supply or trade legal drugs (except where this is for legitimate reasons and with the full knowledge and support of the College).

(b) Intervention and Sanctions

Students must be aware that particular behaviours have specific consequences. These are likely consequences of the following behaviours and they have the physical and emotional health and welfare of the student body of the College as a priority:

Misdemeanours with respect to tobacco, alcohol and solvents can lead to a suspension or an expulsion. First offences will normally carry a stern warning, consultation with and a letter to parents, various detentions/suspensions and the possibility of compulsory attendance at a tobacco/alcohol/solvents prevention and counselling programme. Second offences are likely to lead to a suspension and the satisfactory participation in a tobacco/alcohol/solvents prevention and counselling programme. A subsequent offence within a reasonable period of time, will normally lead to an expulsion.

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If any student brings any illegal substance to use, sell or convey, onto College properties, to and from the College, or before during and after College events, either on or off the properties, then it is probable that he will be excluded from the College. This is at the sole discretion of the Rector or his appointee. Also if boys are using illegal substances away from the College, but this becomes part of the College talk / culture, then similar consequences will likely apply. This is at the sole discretion of the Rector.

Notes

- Where it is suspected that a student is under the influence of a drug, an immediate assessment of the condition of the student is likely to be made by the College Nursing Sister or Doctor.
 - Students and parents are encouraged to seek experienced and confidential counselling from the Counsellors, the Oblate Priests, the Nursing Sister, the Rector, the Dean of Students, the Heads of House / Year Level Coordinators or others who may be suitable.
 - The College will attempt to assist in the placement of a student who has been asked to leave the College and provide counselling for him upon request.
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- If it is considered to be right and appropriate for the Rector or his delegate to allow a student to continue in the College following a misdemeanour with a drug forbidden by law, due to extraordinary or exceptional circumstances, then the following are guidelines for procedures to be followed:
 1. The police to be notified and requested to follow those procedures that would be normal for them in the circumstances of the misdemeanour.
 2. The student to be suspended for 4-6 weeks.
 3. The student and his parents to undergo and satisfactorily complete a drug education and counselling program recommended by the College.
 4. In order to avoid interruption to studies during the period of suspension, parents to assume responsibility for their son's continued and sustained classroom work load; there to be consultation with the Rector and Dean of Students on the best method of achieving this.
 5. The student and parents to have regular interviews with the Rector or his delegate. If these procedures are satisfactorily enacted and the Rector is confident that lessons have been learned and the student's future in the College looks promising, then the Rector may enable the student to continue upon the signing of a written Student Commitment.