Alcohol: Policy and Guidelines on Consumption

Approved by: Senate on 2 November 1992
Date of effect: 3 November 1992

1. Policy

(1) The University recognises that alcohol consumption is an established part of life in Australia and is enjoyed by many members of the University community. The University will not attempt to stop drinking on the campus, but will encourage moderation in and a responsible attitude towards the consumption of alcohol. It will aim to create a climate that enables individuals to make a free and informed choice as to the level of their alcohol consumption, in an environment free of inducement and social pressure to drink to excess. The University's specific objectives are to:

(a) minimise alcohol-related harm to the individual;

(b) minimise alcohol-related damage to property;

(c) preserve the reputation of the University in the community;

(d) provide members of the University community with adequate information about alcohol and the consequences of its excessive use;

(e) offer appropriate forms of assistance to those for whom alcohol has become a problem.

(2) While the University accepts that alcohol consumption is ultimately a matter of individual choice, it expects that those responsible for the organisation of functions which involve alcohol and those responsible for the management of venues at which alcohol is consumed will ensure that such functions and venues are conducted and managed in a manner consistent with the achievement of the above objectives.

(3) To assist in the achievement of those objectives the University has established a number of specific guidelines relating to the conduct of functions and/or the management of venues within the University, at which alcohol is consumed. The guidelines assume that those responsible will observe licensing and other relevant legal requirements.

2. Guidelines

(1) Practices the University considers desirable:

(a) structuring the price of function tickets to include the cost of admission, food, entertainment and a small amount of alcohol, with further alcohol to be purchased from a cash bar;

(b) availability at functions and venues of low alcohol and attractive non-alcoholic drinks in adequate quantities;

(c) price subsidisation of low alcohol and non-alcoholic drinks;

(d) adequate security at functions and licensed venues with provision of security being the responsibility of the venue manager;

(e) functions and licensed premises offering a mix of alcohol, food and entertainment, rather than alcohol only;

(f) function organisers and/or venue managers negotiating and determining amounts of alcohol to be available at functions in advance, using the University's "Alcohol Quantity Guidelines" as a guide;

(g) use of trained bar staff to serve alcohol and use of serving practices consistent with the "National Guidelines For Responsible Serving Of Alcohol".

(2) Practices the University considers undesirable:

(a) promotional activities, including alcohol promotions conducted in cooperation with alcohol suppliers, which offer inducements or otherwise encourage drinking;

(b) subsidisation of alcohol either directly (e.g. free or discounted drinks) or indirectly (e.g. structuring the price of function tickets to include all the purchaser wishes to drink, which effectively means the subsidisation of heavy drinkers by non-drinkers and moderate drinkers);

(c) customs which exert social pressure on students to drink to excess, including particularly, competitive drinking practices.

3. Quantity Guidelines

(1) While it is difficult to define in quantitative terms what constitutes "moderate" drinking, a suggested guide is that drinkers should aim to keep their blood alcohol level within the limits 0.0 - 0.05.

(2) Health authority guidelines suggest that a BAL of 0.05 would be achieved and maintained, for a male, by drinking three standard drinks in the first hour and one drink per hour thereafter. For females the amounts are two standard drinks in the first hour and one per hour thereafter. It is noted that these figures are averages and may vary for different individuals. Standard drinks for this purpose are 285 ml full strength beer, 120 ml wine and 30 ml spirits. Drinkers wishing to stay below 0.05 should clearly drink less than the amounts indicated above.

(3) 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.

4. Further Information

Members of the University community who require further information about alcohol and its effects or who wish to seek help in connection with their drinking are invited to consult either the University Health Service or Student Services (Counselling Service).