

13 SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

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Montfort College is not exempt from the current global reality of drug abuse or the drug market which plagues communities and targets people, especially young people. Substance abuse impairs the rational thinking and actions of individuals, and may lead to accidents, poor performance and poor social interactions. The substance abuse policy shall seek to protect both its employees and students and to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for all.

The Policy Statement

According to the Indian Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (1985), it is illegal for a person to produce/ manufacture/cultivate, possess, sell, purchase, transport, store, and/or consume any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance.

The use, possession or distribution of a 'substance' is banned on the campus, in its facilities, in the functions and programs organized /conducted by the college. The college shall take disciplinary action against any member of its community, if he/she is found to consume, possess, sell, purchase, transport or distribute any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance. Guidance and compassionate care underlie the enforcement of the policy.

Objectives

- The policy seeks to make individuals personally and socially aware and protect themselves and others from risk, preventing the acquisition of a habit which can affect or shorten lives.
- To provide a safe and healthy work environment and promote the general health and well-being of its students and employees.
- To take all necessary measures to prevent, curb and eradicate 'substance' abuse in the campus.
- To deal with cases of abusing or suspected of abusing substances with sensitivity and discretion.
- Emphasis on rehabilitation of persons affected by drug abuse.

Scope of the Policy

The policy shall be applicable to all members of Montfort College and to all events or activities which are organised, conducted or sponsored by the college, whether they occur in the premises or outside. The policy shall primarily be applicable to the student community and employees of Montfort College. Visitors to the premises shall abide by the norms of behaviour outlined in the policy.

Drugs:

The use of drugs is incompatible with the ethos of the college. The manufacture, produce, use, possession, sale, advertisement, promotion, or distribution of non-medicinal mood-altering chemicals or herbs such as (but not limited to) stimulants, suppressants, marijuana, hashish, cocaine, LSD, amphetamines, barbiturates, hallucinogenic drugs or other narcotic substances or drug paraphernalia on college grounds, trips, or at any college sponsored activities or while representing the college and at any time is prohibited. Any member of the community involved with illegal drugs in any way will be required to leave the college.

Prescription Medication:

The transfer of legal prescription medicines between or among students, or their use by students other than those for whom they have been prescribed, is prohibited. Appropriate action shall be taken against any member of the college community who violates this policy.

Alcohol:

The use, possession, sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages on campus or at any college-sponsored activities is prohibited. The college shall reserve the right to conduct random and ad hoc screening and detection measures at any time including when outsiders visit the premises for fests, competitions and celebrations organised by the college.

Smoking:

Montfort College shall be a tobacco-free campus. Sale, advertisement, promotion, distribution and use of any tobacco products by students, employees or visitors in the college campus, on trips, or at any college-sponsored activities is prohibited.

Support and Intervention

1. Students shall be informed of the code of conduct on the campus during the orientation process and are advised of the risks and concerns with respect to alcohol, drugs and smoking.
2. The NSS activities include workshops on drugs, alcohol and smoking in order to educate and sensitise the students about the ill effects of substance abuse.
3. Students shall be encouraged to talk about their perceptions, doubts, queries etc. with their class teachers, mentors, and the college counsellors, who are trained to deal with student concerns.

4. On suspicion of substance abuse the college reserves the right to ask security personnel to check the belongings and vehicles of any members of the community or visitors entering or leaving the premises.
5. The college shall take all possible measures including the assistance and help from the law enforcement agencies to ensure that its campus is kept safe and 'substance abuse' free.

Early Identification and Access to Assistance

Following are some of the indicators that may be considered for any suspected use of a 'substance' by a student:

1. Rapid decline in academic performance.
2. Poor attendance record.
3. Any behavioural disturbances, indiscipline or violent behaviour that raises concerns by fellow students, faculty or staff.
4. Being habitually late.

If a student/employee is suspected of use, possession, or sale of any 'substance' this must be brought to the notice of the Principal immediately. All such persons shall be referred for medical and/or counselling services.

If a student/employee him/herself voluntarily come forward seeking assistance in a situation involving use or abuse of substance, he/she would be directed to internal or external sources of support.

Confidentiality in these circumstances shall be protected, and the college shall make all efforts to rehabilitate them.

Disciplinary procedures

The College shall draw clear distinctions between the possession, use/abuse and the distribution or supply of 'substance' and will take more severe action, in the case of the latter. A student violating the Montfort College policy on substance abuse will face the following consequences:

- A. Parent/legal guardian shall be informed immediately and shall be expected to meet the Principal at the earliest.
- B. The Disciplinary committee of the college shall conduct an enquiry and submit the report to the Principal who shall initiate further action in consultation with the Director.
- C. The College shall take appropriate disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, probation, suspension or expulsion.