

OAMK

INTERVENTION IS CARING

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY FOR STUDENTS



INTRODUCTION

The aim of Oulu University of Applied Sciences' (Oamk) substance abuse policy for students is to

- Promote students' capacity for study and well-being
- Prevent harm from substance use by increasing, for example, intoxicant-related discussion in the higher education community
- Encourage students to talk about their worries
- Describe procedures for intervening in a student's substance abuse problem and referral for treatment

By substance and intoxicants, we refer to alcohol, narcotics, and drugs used for the purpose of intoxication as well as cigarettes, snuff, and e-cigarettes

Oamk's substance abuse policy emphasises preventive measures, as well as supporting students and helping them in cases of substance use. Oamk wants to ensure a safe study and work environment for everyone, and it is prohibited to be intoxicated on Oamk's premises (Rules and Regulations of Oamk, Intoxicants and smoking). The substance abuse policy also describes the possible consequences of intoxication or other inappropriate behaviour. The substance abuse policy is also applied to other addictions that hinder learning and studying.

This policy contains written instructions drawn up in cooperation with the student welfare officials for preventing the use of narcotics by students and for intervening in drug problems, as required in section 36 of the Universities for Applied Sciences Act (932/2014). The instructions enable Oamk to require a student to present a drug test certificate in

the situations specified in the Universities of Applied Sciences Act.

The substance abuse contact person at Oamk is the campus study counsellor responsible for addiction-related guidance and, if necessary, other campus study counsellors. The substance abuse contact person is responsible for implementing the substance abuse policy's practical measures related to bringing up matters and referring a student to treatment. The main responsibility for preventive measures lies with student well-being groups.

This substance abuse policy applies to students of degree studies, vocational teacher education, open university of applied sciences, specialist education, and continuing education as well as to exchange students, where applicable.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

At Oamk, preventive measures mean measures that promote students' well-being and involvement. Even though the reasons behind substance use are always personal, the community plays an important role as well. A student community that values all of its members as they are and offers low-threshold support when students need it prevents harmful substance abuse.

The role of Oamk

Oamk promotes students' capacity for study and a responsible attitude towards intoxicants. Oamk has **student well-being groups** that include representatives of Oamk's staff, student organisations and study psychologists, as well as the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS) and the church. Their purpose is to improve student well-being, including preventing harmful substance abuse. The student well-being groups organise well-being days and other events where substance abuse issues are discussed. From the perspective of student well-being, tutor teachers, campus study counsellors, study psychologists, and peer tutors

are important actors. Counselling is described in Oamk's [Study Counselling Plan](#).

At Oamk each student group has a **tutor teacher**. In the early stages of studies, the tutor teacher works with the peer tutors to ensure that students form and find a group. The tutor teacher introduces students to what it is like to study at Oamk. The substance abuse policy is presented on Moodle, under Orientation to Studies. Topics discussed with the tutor teacher include the student's study progress, as well as the student's well-being, capacity for study and life situation. Some degree programmes organise a "talking rally" to discuss students' well-being. Intoxicant use is one of the themes of these events.

Students can make an appointment with the **campus study counsellor** for a confidential discussion about their studies, coping, and well-being. A student can also express their concern over a fellow student during the conversation. Campus study counsellors prepare the meetings of student well-being groups. They cooperate with teachers and other staff in matters related to student well-being, including the substance abuse policy for students and bringing up matters. Oamk has a campus study counsellor responsible for guidance related to mental well-being, addictions and crises, who is also **Oamk's [substance abuse contact person](#)**.

Degree students may visit a **study psychologist**. Students can have confidential discussions with them on topics such as challenges related to studying and learning, motivation or coping.

Unimove – Sports services of the University of Oulu and Oamk offers students opportunities to maintain their physical well-being through physical exercise. At its best, exercise can improve the sense of community among students and their social relationships, as well as reduce loneliness and stress.

The role of peer tutors, OSAKO and study field organisations

Each new student group has named **peer tutors**, whose task is to help the students with study-related matters. The tutors help students learn about the campus principles, studies, and Oamk. Among other things, peer tutors organise informal parties or events where students can get to know each other and form groups also outside of school. The peer tutors have passed the selection process and have participated in tutor training organised by **OSAKO**, the student union of Oulu University of Applied Sciences. One of the topics in OSAKO's tutor training is the ground rules of working in a group as well as the role of responsible use of intoxicants in a group. Peer tutoring events take into consideration that only some students drink alcohol and that icebreaker games help students get to know each other, rather than getting drunk. We recommend making such events intoxicant-free.



In addition, OSAKO trains well-being tutors and harassment contact persons. OSAKO harassment contact persons are ready to listen, help and support anyone who has been harassed or has experienced or seen inappropriate behaviour. Intoxicants are often involved in cases of inappropriate behaviour.

Oamk has the student union OSAKO and several study field organisations that represent the students of their respective fields. The representatives

of student organisations take part in student well-being groups and discuss the use of intoxicants in Oamk's student activities together. Practices that promote a responsible alcohol culture suitable for the environment of a university of applied sciences are decided together by student organisations and Oamk. Discussions concern, for example, the welcoming of new students and the student events of their first autumn term.

The role of student health care (FSHS)

The Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS) offers students a health survey or examination that takes a comprehensive approach to students' health and well-being, including the use of intoxicants. The aim is to help students manage stress and prevent other situations that may trigger the use of intoxicants. The FSHS supports students' abstinence from intoxicants and the prevention of risky substance use. It highlights topics promoting health and abstinence from substance abuse at student well-being events and on its website.

RECOGNISING SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS AND INTERVENTION

The role of Oamk

There is usually no single indicator of harmful substance abuse. The harmful use of intoxicants may underlie various symptoms and problems with life management and functional capacity, such as repeated short absences, tardiness, or a decline in study performance. There may also be other reasons behind the symptoms and problems.

You can trust your gut. You do not need proof to be concerned of someone else. Talk about your worries without judging or blaming anyone. Talking is always for the student's benefit.

Talking is caring

A staff member should talk about any observations that have caused concern with the student in question. Their concern may be based on a suspicion, which must be verified, or facts concerning a student's behaviour. The goal is to motivate the student to look after themselves, their health, and to take responsibility of their life.

People may be hesitant about bringing up matters because they are afraid of making a mistake, are unsure of their own or others' reactions, or fear making the situation worse. The person bringing up the concern may also worry that their knowledge and abilities concerning harmful substance use are lacking, or that talking will have no impact. Listening, supporting, and helping the student move forward when necessary are more important than any knowledge of intoxicants.

When talking about a problem it is important to do it in a friendly yet firm manner, avoiding a moralising tone and getting personal. The student needs time to understand and change. For its part, the degree programme should be ready to support the student, who, in the end, is responsible for the situation. The main point is to make the student aware of their situation, which will motivate them to change their use of intoxicants. The use of intoxicants should be discussed whenever concerns arise over a student.

Students are encouraged to seek help. Staff help the student contact [the substance abuse contact person](#) or student health care.

The role of student healthcare (FSHS)

The use of intoxicants is brought up during a health examination. The AUDIT test is used to assess health risks related to drinking alcohol, and there are more specified questions regarding abuse of narcotics and drugs. If the test reveals that the risks have become greater, the nurse will think of ways to reduce the risks together with the student and discuss whether there are underlying mental or somatic problems, or social challenges, that have led to the use of intoxicants. If the risks are significant, or the nurse or other health care professional is otherwise worried about the student, they will schedule a follow-up or refer the student for treatment. If the student is having problems with their studies, the nurse will instruct them to contact the campus study counsellor or tutor teacher and if required, the nurse will organise a health meeting.

The role of students

When it comes to recognising a student's possible substance abuse problem, other students are in a vital position. Fellow students may detect problems related to substance abuse earlier than others. They often know better than teaching staff if the use of intoxicants has a significant impact on the user's study performance and the well-being of the user or those close to them.

If a fellow student's use of intoxicants is worrying, a peer tutor or fellow student should tell the student that their use of intoxicants is causing concern. However, please remember that it is not your responsibility to fix another person's substance abuse problem or situation in life. You can ask the student union for support without revealing the identity of your fellow student. You should also inform the [substance abuse contact person](#) of the situation, as they can contact the student to support and encourage them to seek help from health care and substance abuse treatment services.

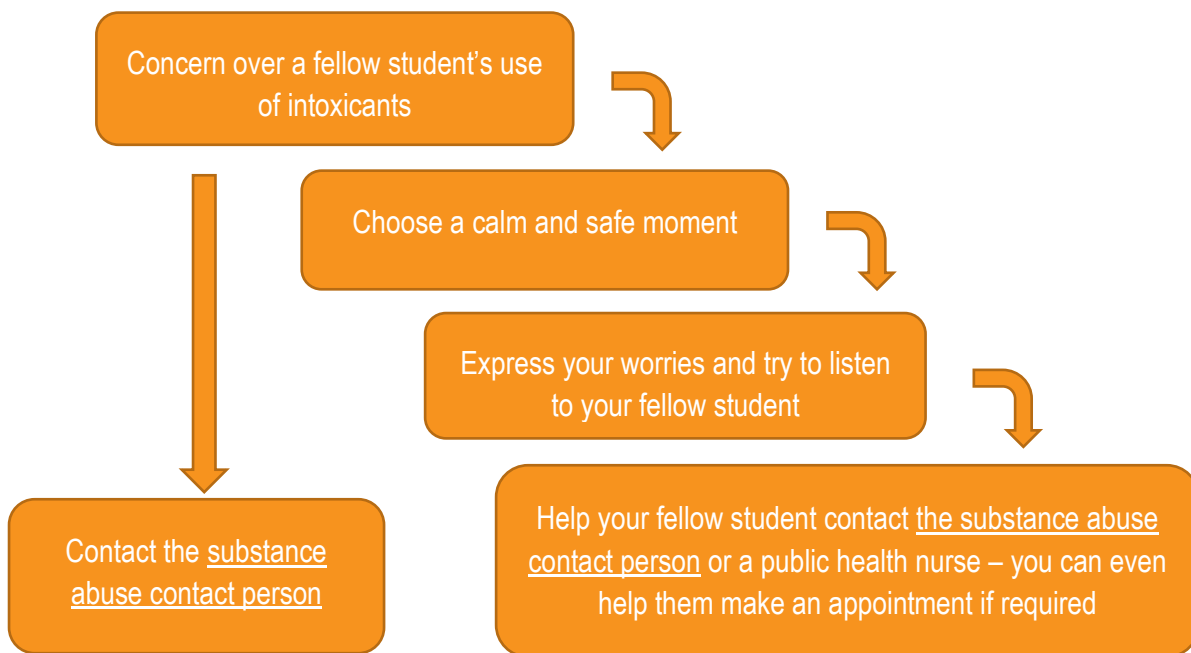


Figure 1. Instructions for students on bringing up a matter.

Drug testing

Every UAS student may be required to present a drug test certificate.

In accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, section 36), a university of applied sciences may require a student to present a drug test certificate if they have reason to suspect that the student has been under the influence of narcotics when performing practical tasks or training included in their studies, or that the student may be addicted to narcotics. Testing must be necessary for establishing the functional capacity of the student and the student should be involved in operations that require special accuracy, reliability, independent judgement, or good response speed that would, when performed under the influence of narcotics or by someone with a narcotics addiction, severely

- 1) endanger the life or health of the student or someone else
- 2) compromise traffic safety
- 3) risk the security or integrity of information protected under confidentiality regulations
- 4) increase the risk of illegal trafficking and spread of intoxicants in possession of the university of applied sciences, its administrator, or a training place

Instructions for referring a student to drug testing are shown in Figure 2 (cf. Rector's decision 12 January 2021 section 3 Solutions to deal with unsuitability for studies (SORA)). A student is referred to drug testing using the data transfer form (Appendix 1).



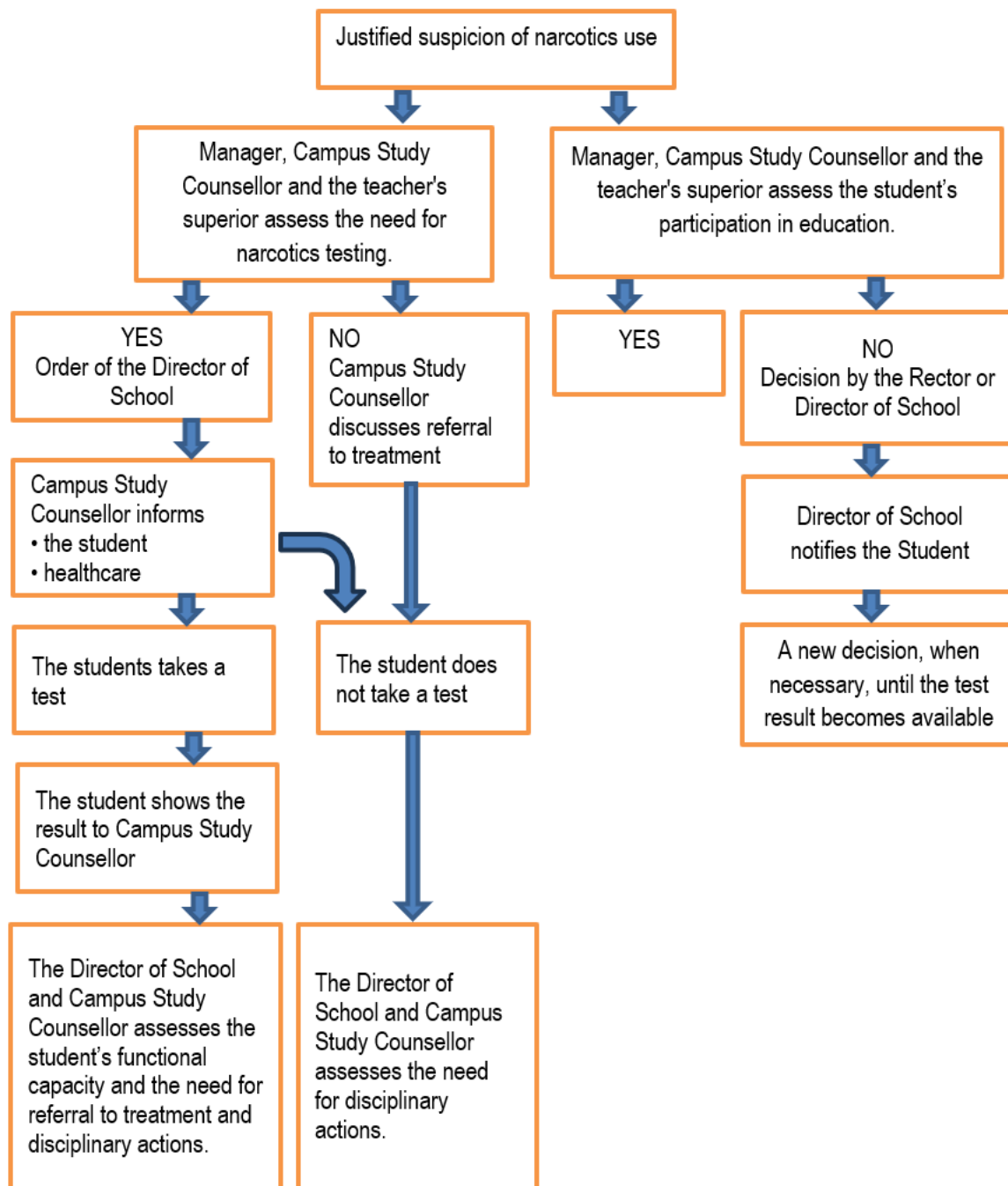


Figure 2. Drug testing for a student and the handling process

The operating model for detected or suspected cases of narcotic sales and trafficking on campus is presented in Appendix 2.

Intoxicated student

Oamk wants to provide a safe and comfortable study environment for all of its students. Therefore, appearing on campus under the influence of an intoxicant is not allowed. We use the following operating model if a student is under the influence of an intoxicant during in-person teaching, at an event or on Oamk's premises.

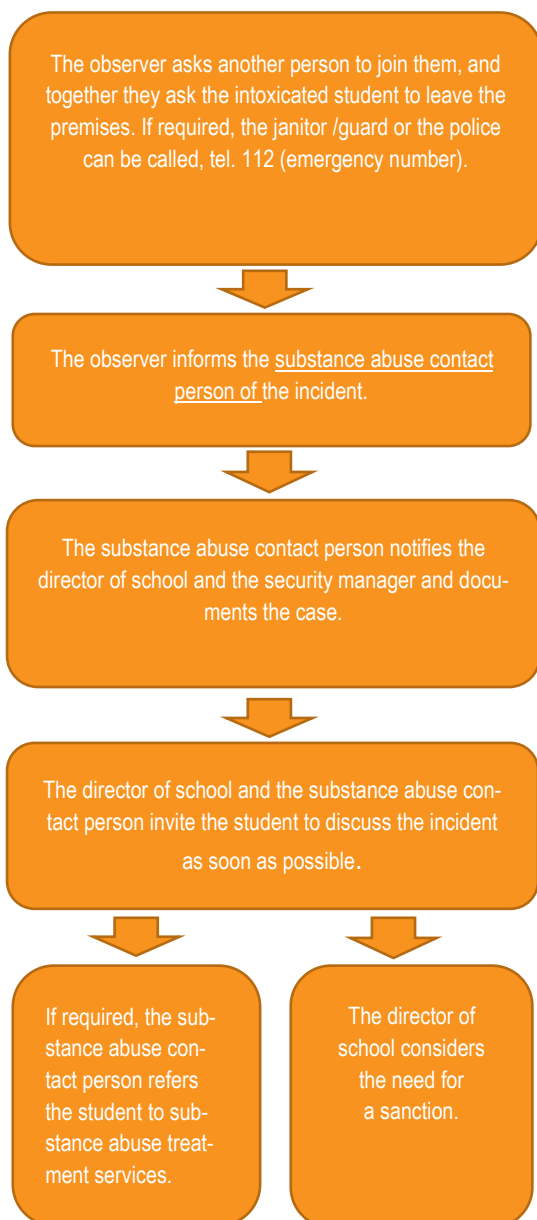


Figure 3. The operating model in case a student attends lessons or events, or enters the premises, under the influence of intoxicants.

REFERRAL FOR TREATMENT AND NETWORK MEETING

If a staff member or fellow student becomes concerned about a student's possible substance abuse, they should notify the substance abuse contact person. They will contact the student to discuss the observations that have raised concern and to hear the student's perspective. The discussion is conducted in an open and appreciative tone. The goal is to jointly determine what kind of support the student needs and where and how to get it. If substance abuse or addiction that interferes with studies or training is detected, the substance abuse contact person refers the student for treatment to substance abuse services, the emergency care of the student's well-being centre or to student health care services (FSHS). The care provider is contacted by phone or electronically during the discussion. If required, the student and substance abuse contact person jointly draw up a treatment referral agreement (Appendix 3), which the student will present to the care provider.

The student's capacity for study and the care and support provided are monitored in network meetings, which are attended by the student and care provider as well as the substance abuse contact person or campus study counsellor and, at the student's request, a teacher tutor, social counsellor or support person. During the meetings, the participants agree on the forms of support, the roles of different parties and the follow-up of substance use, which in addition to the student's own responsibility enable the student to return to and continue their studies, as well as the treatment and studies to be coordinated. Issues related to the possible interruption of studies and livelihood are also addressed at the meetings.

The substance abuse contact person or campus study counsellor is the contact person between Oamk and the care provider. The measures

related to the referral for treatment and any private information are confidential. Persons involved in the referral for treatment are not allowed to disclose information about the treatment to third parties without the permission of the student concerned. The process of referral for treatment is depicted in Figure 4.

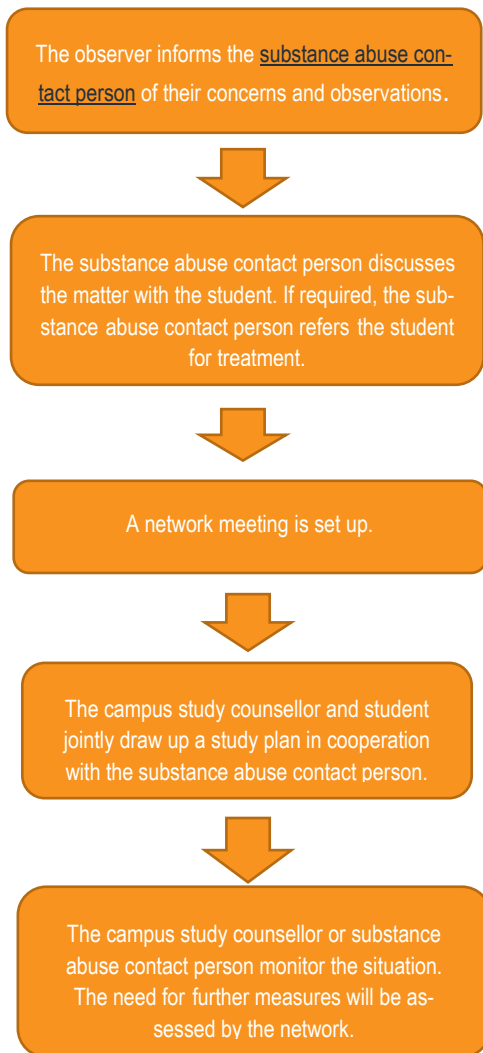


Figure 4. Operating model in case concern over a student's harmful substance abuse arises.

Return to the study community after studies have been suspended

Substance abuse problems may slow down the progress of studies or lead to suspension. After suspension, the student is encouraged to return to the study community even after difficult circumstances. Returning to studies requires an active and responsible approach from the student and often also support from the tutor teacher, campus study counsellor, substance abuse contact person or study psychologist.

When the student returns to studies, they draw up a practical plan for their study progress jointly with the campus study counsellor. The plan should also include the guidance and support needed by the student to make progress in their studies and ensure a successful return.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PARTNERS

A student's substance abuse problem may have various underlying factors, and no single service sector can prevent substance abuse and provide the best possible care to users without cooperation. The person providing guidance to the student is required provide information about care providers.

OULU:

FSHS, services also for non-residents, Mon–Thu 8 a.m.–3 p.m., Fri 8 a.m.–2 p.m., Yliopistokatu 1 A, 90570 Oulu. Booking of appointments and assessment of treatment need on weekdays, tel. 046 710 1073 or in Self-Chat.

Substance abuse services in the Oulu region:

- **Substance abuse emergency services, helpline**, Mon–Thu 8 a.m.–3.30 p.m. and Fri 8 a.m.–3 p.m., substance abuse treatment is sought through substance abuse emergency services or the emergency care of the student's well-being centre, tel. 044 703 6160
- **Telephone service for mental health and substance abuse services**, Mon–Thu 8 a.m.–3.30 p.m., Fri 8 a.m.–2.30 p.m., assessment of treatment need, guidance and counselling, tel. 044 703 5940
- **Situations requiring on-call care**, Emergency care of the well-being centre or health centre; outside office hours, Oulu region joint on-call service, tel. 116 117
- **Clinic for young people's substance abuse** (under 30 years of age), without appointment Tue 12 noon–1 p.m., and with appointment 1 p.m.–3.45 p.m., financial counselling Wed 1 p.m.–3.30 p.m. at Byström Youth Services, Hallituskatu 5A, tel. 050 599 2293
- **Health care guidance** Oulun Vinkki, Kontinkangas well-being centre, Kajaanintie 46, ground floor. tel. 044 703 6160 and 044 703 6257. Oulun Vinkki helps intravenous drug users and their families.

OULAINEN:

Student health care, Terveystalo Oulainen. Appointments through FSHS weekdays tel. 046 710 1073.

A-clinic, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of an addiction to alcohol, narcotics, drugs, and games. The A-clinic also offers preventive substance abuse treatment. Street address: Reservikomppaniantkatu 7–9. Contact person: Nurse tel. 044 4793 477 or 044 4793 493. Phone appointments Mon–Fri 8 a.m.–8.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.–12 noon

Crisis team of the Town of Oulainen

Health centre tel. 08 479 3401, Mon–Fri 8 a.m.–4 p.m.

Parish priest on call 044 579 7404

Mental Health Unit Tuuma tel. 044 4793 470, Mon–Fri 8.15 a.m.–9.30 a.m. and 1 p.m.–2 p.m., Reservikomppaniantkatu 7-9, 86300 Oulainen

Jokilaakso social and emergency services tel. 044 4793 644 around the clock

SANCTIONS

In accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, section 38), a university of applied sciences may take the following disciplinary measures:

- Remove a student from a teaching situation or from an event organised by the university of applied sciences
- Suspend the right to attend teaching for three days
- Issue a written caution
- Suspend a student for a fixed term

In accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, section 38), a student who disrupts teaching, behaves threateningly or violently or endangers the life or health of another person may be ordered **to leave the premises** where teaching takes place or from an event organised by the university of applied sciences. If a student is ordered to leave due to a suspected case of intoxicant use, the matter must be brought up as soon as possible after the incident and the substance abuse contact person is notified.

In accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, section 38), a student may be **suspended from attending tuition** for a maximum of three days where there is a risk that the safety of another student or a person working in the university of applied sciences or some other teaching facility is threatened as a result of the student's threatening or violent behaviour or where the disruptive conduct of the student makes teaching and associated activities unduly difficult.

In accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, section 39), the rector, teacher and practical training instructor may work together or separately to remove a student from a teaching situation or to suspend a student from attending teaching. They must record the disciplinary measures.

In accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, section 38), a student may be issued a **written caution** if they disrupt teaching, behave threateningly or violently, act under false pretences or otherwise cause disorder at the university of applied sciences, refuse to present the drug test certificate, or have used narcotics for purposes other than medical treatment in a way which undermines their functional capacity. If the student's deed or negligence is serious in nature or if the student continues to behave inappropriately after having been cautioned, they may be **suspended** from the university of applied sciences for a fixed period of one year at most. The decision to give a student a written warning is made by the president of the university of applied sciences and the decision on suspension by the board of the university of applied sciences (Act 932/2014, section 39).

Suspension or revocation of a right to study (SORA subjects)

If a student refuses to undergo the examinations for ascertaining their state of health, they may be **banned from studies** until they consent to undergo the examinations. If a student refuses to provide an extract of entries on themselves in the criminal records, they may be banned from studies until they consent to present the extract. (Act 932/2014, section 38). The decision to suspend the right to study is made by the board of the university of applied sciences (Act 932/2014, section 39).

As the last resort to intervene in situations that endanger safety, **the right to study may be revoked** when the field of study relates to the safety of minors or requirements concerning patient or customer safety. At Oamk, the revocation of a right to study applies to education leading to a University of Applied Sciences degree in health and social care and vocational teacher studies. (Solutions to

deal with unsuitability for studies (SORA). Guidelines for the application of SORA legislation. Rector's decision, 12 January 2021 section 3)

The primary approach to a student's substance abuse is to treat it. The right to study can be revoked if the student's substance abuse problem continues to interfere with their studies or those of others. If the student's use of intoxicants has repeatedly or seriously endangered the health or safety of another person, or if the circumstances otherwise give grounds for it, the revocation process may have to be initiated immediately.

A university of applied sciences may revoke a student's right to study in accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014, section 33) if

- 1) the student, by repeatedly or seriously endangering the health or safety of another person, has proven to be manifestly unsuitable to perform practical assignments or practical training relating to studies;
- 2) it is evident that the student does not fulfil the prerequisites for admission referred to in section 26(1) in regard of their state of health or functional capacity;
- 3) at the application stage, the student has concealed a decision to revoke the right to study referred to in section 26(2) which could have prevented their admission as a student; or
- 4) the student has been sentenced for a crime specified in the Act, and if the studies or practical training relating to studies substantially require work with minors and the revocation is necessary in order to protect minors.

Before revoking the right to study, the university of applied sciences, together with the student, must explore the student's possibilities to apply for some other form of education. With the student's

consent, they may be transferred to other studies in the university of applied sciences where they fulfil the admission prerequisites. (Act 932/2014 section 33.)

Notwithstanding secrecy provisions, the university of applied sciences is obligated to provide the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health with information on any pending process related to revocation of the right to study and other decisions related to revocation of the right to study or to the transfer of the student to other studies and its justifications, when such information is necessary for the execution of the Authority's statutory duties (Act 932/2014, section 34).

The decision to revoke the right to study is made by the board of the university of applied sciences (Act 932/2014, section 39).

The right to study may be reinstated if the conditions laid down in the Act are met (see Act 932/2014, section 35). In case a student's right to study has been revoked due a substance abuse problem, they may apply for the reinstatement of the right to study if they no longer have a substance abuse problem and a doctor assesses that the student fulfils the field-specific health requirements.



PROCESSING OF SENSITIVE DATA AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Discussions and negotiations related to handling the student's substance abuse problem are confidential. Their content must not be disclosed to third parties.

Section 65 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014) provides for exceptions to confidentiality. It limits the disclosure of information to information regarding a student's state of health and functional capacity or information necessary for the execution of duties. Information may be disclosed to the following persons for the given purposes:

- 1) the president of a university of applied sciences and those responsible for the security of the university of applied sciences for the purpose of ensuring the safety to pursue studies;
- 2) a person responsible for study counselling for the purpose of guiding the student to other studies or support services;
- 3) a person responsible for student healthcare for the purpose of ensuring the student's health and safety and guiding the student to the necessary support measures;
- 4) a person responsible for practical training for the purpose of ensuring the safety of the student and the safety of staff and customers at the place of training;
- 5) the police and a representative of the university of applied sciences who is primarily responsible for investigating threats to security for the purpose of assessing if there is an immediate threat to safety

or if the student's state of health endangers the safety of others involved in the assessment.

Notwithstanding secrecy provisions, those responsible for executing the duties referred to in the Act have the right to inform the police of essential details for the purpose of assessing an immediate threat to life or health and to prevent a threatening act, if they, in performing their duties, have obtained information about circumstances that leads them to believe that someone may be in danger of becoming the target of violence (Amendment 279/2015, section 65).

REFERENCES

Act on Universities of Applied Sciences 14 November 2014/932

Act Amending section 65 of the Act on Universities of Applied Sciences 20 March 2015/279.

Oamk rules of procedure, 15 April 2015

Rector's decision, 12 January 2021, section 3 Solutions to deal with unsuitability for studies (SORA) Guidelines for the application of SORA legislation

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Data transfer form for health care

Appendix 2 Operating model for detected or suspected sales and trafficking of narcotics

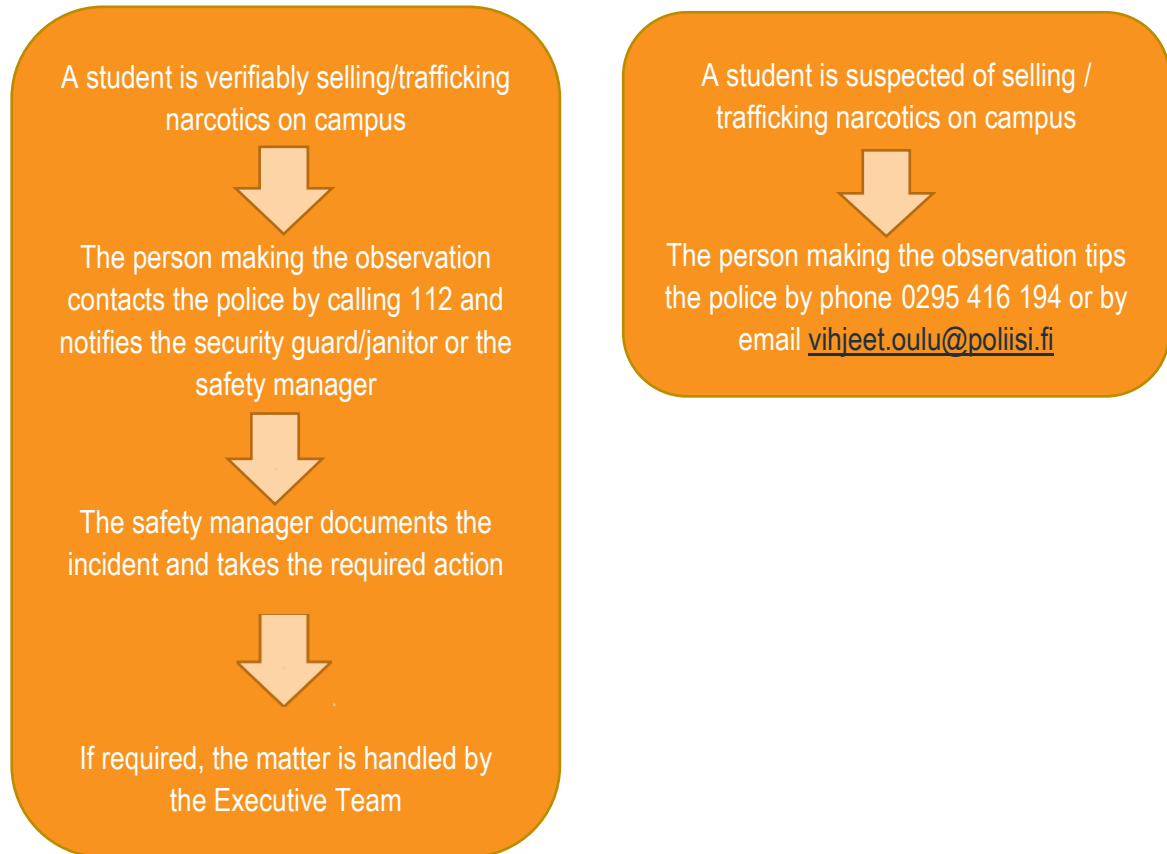
Appendix 3 Agreement of referral for treatment

APPENDIX 1 DATA TRANSFER FORM FOR HEALTH CARE –
The student is required to present a drug test certificate.

Personal data	Name of student █	Personal identity code █
Grounds for the requirement to present a drug test certificate	Suspicion of <input type="checkbox"/> being under the influence of intoxicants <input type="checkbox"/> drug addiction	Place, date and time of suspected intoxication █
Assessment of state of intoxication	Name and phone number of the assessor of the state of intoxication (representative of Oamk or training place) █	
	Observations Speech <input type="checkbox"/> clear <input type="checkbox"/> unclear Response to speech <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> impaired Sense of time and place <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> impaired Walk <input type="checkbox"/> steady <input type="checkbox"/> unsteady Reactions <input type="checkbox"/> normal <input type="checkbox"/> slow Scent of alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> yes Appearance <input type="checkbox"/> calm/under control <input type="checkbox"/> euphoric/excited <input type="checkbox"/> anxious <input type="checkbox"/> drowsy <input type="checkbox"/> defiant <input type="checkbox"/> weepy Physical symptoms <input type="checkbox"/> none <input type="checkbox"/> restlessness <input type="checkbox"/> perspiring <input type="checkbox"/> tremor <input type="checkbox"/> vomiting Description of functional impairment █	
Student's opinion	<input type="checkbox"/> I admit drug use/addiction. <input type="checkbox"/> I deny drug use/addiction.	
	Date █	Signature
Assessor of the state of intoxication	Date █	Signature
Referral for drug testing	Name and phone number of the Oamk representative who required the student to present a drug test certificate █	
	The student has been referred to health care for drug testing. Date and time █ Name of health care unit █ Name of escort (if any) █ The student must present a photo ID at the time of the test.	

The original copy of the document will be kept at Oamk. Copies have been supplied to the student and the health care unit.

APPENDIX 2 OPERATING MODEL FOR DETECTED SALES/TRAFFICKING OF NARCOTICS ON CAMPUS



APPENDIX 3 AGREEMENT ON REFERRAL FOR TREATMENT

AGREEMENT ON REFERRAL FOR TREATMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

Student's name _____

Social security number _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Degree programme _____

Reason of referral for treatment _____

Campus study counsellor _____

The counsellor's contact details _____

I agree to seek treatment due to harmful substance abuse. I accept the treatment plan the care provider has recommended and devised together with me. I will start the treatment immediately.

The campus study counsellor has my approval to receive information concerning my state of health and working capacity to the extent that is necessary for study counselling.

I have the right to cancel the right to my information at any time.

I seek treatment voluntarily and am obligated to adhere to this agreement of referral for treatment after signing it.

Oulu __/__/20__

Student's signature

Oamk representative's signature

OAMK

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