



Institute for
Education

Policy Against Smoking and Other Substance Abuse

[Version 2.0]

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Policy Approver	Health & Safety Committee	Effective Date	18/02/2019		

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The IfE is committed to provide a healthy environment for course participants, employees, visitors and contractors.
- 1.2 Thus this policy aims to prevent and address the possession, use, sale, distribution, and/or being under the influence of any prohibited substances on IfE premises and/or during IfE activities, on and off IfE premises.
- 1.3 Smoking is not permitted in any part of the IfE premises. The ban on smoking extends to the areas immediately outside the IfE premises, where tobacco smoke could cause a nuisance to occupants. Anyone wishing to smoke is asked to respect the rights of others to enjoy a smoke-free environment.
- 1.4 This policy also applies to electronic cigarettes, which are prohibited wherever smoking is prohibited. It is pertinent to note that the same regulations as tobacco smoking apply to e-cigarette smoking.
- 1.5 Substance abuse is prohibited across all IfE premises. This policy extends to the prohibition of possession, use, distribution, and/or influence of any illegal or harmful substance around IfE, within the immediate surrounding area, and during any activities held at IfE and/or off-site.
- 1.6 This policy applies to all individuals, including staff, course participants, visitors and contractors, while on IfE premises and/or while involved in IfE related activities, including off-IfE premises events.
- 1.7 The IfE prioritises education, prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation over punishment, in line with Malta's harm-reduction approach, which also aims to reduce harm, minimise stigma and supports early intervention and treatment options.

2 Definitions

- Substance: Any chemical or material that can affect the body or mind when consumed. This includes legal substances (such as alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and prescription or over-the-counter medications), illegal substances (such as, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, or other controlled drugs) and inhalants and synthetic drugs (such as glue, aerosols, or synthetic cannabinoids).
- Dependence: as applied to alcohol and other drugs, a need for repeated dose of the drug to be able to function more or less properly.
- Principal framework of Maltese legislation relating to substance use and abuse: This consists of the [Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance](#) (Cap. 31 of the

Laws of Malta) and the [Dangerous Drugs Ordinance](#) (Cap. 101 of the Laws of Malta).

- Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes): Battery-operated devices that deliver nicotine or other substances in a vapor form. Treated under this policy as equivalent to tobacco smoking.
- Substance abuse: The improper, excessive, or illegal use of a substance in a way that causes harm to the user or others. This includes using substances to alter mood, perception, or behaviour in a harmful or risky way; taking prescription drugs without a prescription, or in a manner not intended by the prescribing doctor; using illegal drugs or consuming alcohol/tobacco underage or in prohibited areas; using any substance in a way that impairs judgment, learning, and/or behaviour.
- Prohibited Areas: All areas within the IfE building and the immediate external areas where smoking and/or substance abuse could affect nearby individuals.
- No Smoking Areas: Any part of the IfE building and surrounding premises, including personal offices and restrooms, as well as outdoor areas near entrances.
- Substance-related litter: this includes cigarette butts, batteries, alcohol containers, wrappers or drug paraphernalia across IfE premises and immediate external areas.

3 Aims

The Policy seeks to:

- Provide and maintain a safe, healthy, supportive working environment which is free from any illicit substances, and protect the health of current and future IfE employees, course participants, visitors and contractors.
- Acknowledge the right of non-smokers to breathe in air which is free from any kind of smoke.
- Prevent, identify and respond to substance abuse within the IfE environment.
- Ensure compliance with Malta's harm-reduction approach, and legislation, including the [Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance](#) (Cap. 31 of the Laws of Malta), the [Dangerous Drugs Ordinance](#) (Cap. 101 of the Laws of Malta), the [Drug Dependence \(Treatment not Imprisonment\) Act 2015](#) and subsequent [National Drugs Policy 2023-33](#), the [National Alcohol Policy 2018-2023](#), and the [Occupational Health and Safety Authority Act XXVII\(2000\)](#) and subsequent amendments and the [Smoking in Public Places Regulations](#). These legal

provisions and any further subsidiary legislation provide for various aspects related to substance abuse and smoking.

- Raise awareness of the dangers associated with substance abuse, smoking and vaping, and exposure to these substances and their biproducts, including smoke.

4 Signage

- 4.1 'No Smoking' signs are fitted in circulation spaces and offices within the IfE building.

5 Enforcement

- 5.1 The use, possession, distribution, or sale of legal and illegal substances on IfE premises or during IfE-related activities is strictly prohibited.
- 5.2 The [Drug Dependence \(Treatment Not Imprisonment\) Act 2015](#) provides that personal possession of small quantities of certain controlled substances for personal use is decriminalised in Malta and addressed through treatment and rehabilitation measures, not criminal prosecution. This policy reflects that approach while maintaining a zero-tolerance standard on IfE premises and activities.
- 5.3 It is prohibited for employees, course participants, visitors, and contractors to be under the influence of illegal drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol while on IfE premises or during IfE activities both on and off IfE Premises.
- 5.4 Any employee, course participant, visitor, and/or contractor suspected of being under the influence, should be reported to Security, who is to escalate such cases to the Human Resources Department (in cases involving staff, visitors, and/or contractors) or the Course Co-ordination Section (in cases involving course participants) immediately, for the situation to be assessed and appropriate action be taken. A report is to be immediately sent to Human Resources or the Course Co-ordination Section, depending on the seriousness and severity of the incident. Course participants are to specifically be reported to the Course Co-ordination Section who will follow up with the Admissions department.
- 5.5 Refusal to comply with substance abuse provisions will result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or termination of employment/contract/enrolment.
- 5.6 Support and assistance will be offered to employees and course participants seeking help with substance abuse problems, in line with relevant employee assistance programs or counselling services.

- 5.7 Persons smoking tobacco products in prohibited areas should be politely asked to stop. Refusal to stop is unacceptable and should be reported to the security in charge immediately.
- 5.8 For employees and course participants, refusal to stop will entail a disciplinary offence. For a first breach of the policy, employees and course participants will be reminded of the requirements of the policy and advised that any further violations may result in formal disciplinary action.
- 5.9 Visitors and contractors who refuse to stop smoking will be politely asked to leave the premises.
- 5.10 Employees and course participants should refer any concerns about non-compliance with this policy to the Human Resources Department or the Course Co-ordination Section. Where non-compliance continues following such a reference, staff should refer their concerns to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 5.11 No tobacco or e-cigarette advertising, promotion, or sponsorship is permitted on IfE premises or in any IfE publications.
- 5.12 All reported incidents shall be addressed in accordance with their level of severity. Refer to Annex A for the classification of incident categories.
- 5.13 All electronic vape batteries are to be disposed of accordingly in the battery bins available. These are not to be disposed of in any other bins.

6 Support for Substance Abuse Prevention, Rehabilitation and Smoking Cessation

- 6.1 Support for drug abuse, including prevention and rehabilitation is provided free of charge by various Support Services Agencies. Such agencies include Sedqa Malta, Caritas Malta, and Aġenzija Appoġġ.
- 6.2 Support for smoking cessation is provided free of charge and is available at Floriana Mosta and Paola Health Centres. Further information on how to access this service and the days and times when this service is provided, can be found on the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate website or by calling on Tobacco Quitline freephone 80073333. Support could also be sought from your personal GP, pharmacy or local hospital.

7 Relevant documents

- [Accident Report Procedure](#)
- [Criminal Code \(Chapter 9\)](#)

- [Dangerous Drugs Ordinance \(Chapter 101\)](#)
- [Drug Dependence \(Treatment not Imprisonment\) Act 2015 \(Chapter 537\)](#)
- [Education Act \(Chapter 327\)](#)
- [Employment and Industrial Relations Act \(Cap. 452\)](#)
- [First Aid Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Manual](#)
- Health and Safety Plan
- [Health and Safety Policy for Course Participants](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy for Employees, Persons on a Contract for Service & Visitors](#)
- [Medical and Kindred Professions Ordinance \(Chapter 31\)](#)
- [National Drugs Policy 2023-33](#)
- [National Alcohol Policy 2018-2023](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Authority Act XXVII \(2000\)](#)
- [Smoking in Public Places Regulations](#)

8 Version history

Originator	Version	Date	Changes Done
QA Dept.	1.0	18/02/2019	Initial Release
QA Dept.	1.1	03/05/2024	Updated links
QA Dept.	1.2	25/01/2025	Updated in line with re-branding guidelines
Admin Dept	1.3	25/04/2025	Updated to include, Definitions Article, and updated content regarding e-cigarettes parity of regulations to tobacco smoking, and info regarding support for smoking cessation
Admin Dept	2.0	16/09/2025	Renaming of Policy Updated to include definitions and content regarding substance abuse and info related to support for substance abuse cessation Updated to include Annex B - IfE Report Form for Breach of Smoking and Substance Abuse Policy Investigation & Action Report Template

Annex A – Classification of Incidents

Category	Description / Examples	Management / Response
Minor Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signs of substance use without impairment (i.e., alcohol odour, slight behavioural changes) - First-time minor breaches like smoking in prohibited areas, minor intoxication without impact on duties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verbal reminder of this policy and education - Referral to support services - No formal disciplinary action unless repeated
Moderate Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observable impairment affecting work performance (i.e., slurred speech, slight coordination issues) - Repeated or wilful violations - Substance use during working hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Verbal Warning is issued - Medical/professional assessment may be required - Support and treatment referral (i.e. Sedqa)
Major Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant safety risks or harm (i.e., accidents, near misses caused by impairment) - Repeated violations or refusal to seek treatment - Serious misconduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suspension considered - Possible reassignment to safer duties during treatment - Strict confidentiality but safety prioritised
Critical Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Severe incidents such as workplace accidents, injuries, or fatalities linked to substance abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal and regulatory reporting required - Emergency response activated - Immediate reporting to authorities - Full investigation - Disciplinary/legal action taken

Any previous related incidents (for office use)

Minor Moderate Major Critical

Related Report Reference Number: _____

Category of Incident (Refer to Annex A for guidance)

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Accident investigated by :

Name:	Position:
Signature:	Date:

Confidentiality Statement

All information contained in this report is confidential and will only be accessible to authorised personnel in accordance with data protection legislation.