

Alcohol Free Space

It is estimated that around 15% of students at university don't drink. One of the key priorities of the Alcohol Impact project is ensuring campuses are becoming more inclusive to account for this. One way to do this is to create a space on campus where students can socialise without alcohol being present.

Providing alternative social spaces allows students choice and embeds the social norm of this being readily available.

Many students unions have committed to providing an alternative social space for students, the majority of which are based in cafes and coffee shops. These spaces open late into the evenings and can be used to host events such as live music and poetry jams. Non-alcoholic drinks and food are often available to purchase. The Union MMU reported a significant year-on-year increase in takings from the coffee shop since extending the opening hours. This not only demonstrates the demand for such a space but is also profitable for the organisation rather than relying on sales of alcohol. At the University of Bradford Union of Students (UBU) there is a large screen in their alcohol free space in their SU and so the space can be used for film screenings and sports events. Bucks Students' Union created an 'Alcohol-Free Zone' poster to highlight areas on campus that are alcohol-free, and similar signage can be found around Keele Students' Union.

Another space made available to students in a number of students' unions is bookable meeting rooms. Clubs or societies can hold private socials in these spaces away from the bar/club areas. Through the day these spaces are used as study spaces or meeting rooms but in the evening can be hired out to hold events. UBU held a Mad Hatters Tea Party during Fresher's Week in a bookable meeting room and Bucks SU used their spaces for regular movie nights.

Challenges you may face

- Lack of appropriate physical space
- There may be drunk people present in the space i.e. accessing the bars through the coffee shop
- Students may not be aware what alternative spaces are available for them to make use of
- Coffee shops/cafes may only have restricted opening hours and may not open late into the evening

What opportunities could the project create?

- Inclusive spaces for all students
- Increased food and soft drink sales

Examples

Bucks SU Alcohol Free Zone Posters:



Keele SU Posters:

