

POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON ALCOHOL AND DRUG SCREENS FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROGRAMS

Policy and Procedures on Alcohol and Drug Screens for Health Professions Programs in the Quinnipiac University School of Health Sciences (SHS), School of Medicine (SOM) and School of Nursing (SON)
- Revised 4.30.2019 - Revised 5.28.2020 - Revised 8.6.2020 - Revised 4.29.2021 - Revised 5.10.2022 - Revised 4.3.2024 - Revised 4.8.2025

Purpose

The School of Nursing (SON), School of Medicine (SOM) and School of Health Sciences (SHS) recognize that substance abuse is a significant public health problem in the United States, and that drug overdose is now the leading cause of death among Americans under 50 years of age. Unfortunately, the health risks and criminal matters that affect so many individuals include healthcare providers. Substance abuse may affect the ability of a healthcare provider to deliver safe, high-quality care. All providers have the legal and ethical responsibility to uphold the law that protects society from drug abuse.

This policy influences and augments the student's ability to maintain personal and professional integrity and facilitates the student's success both clinically and didactically. It promotes a healthy learning environment for the student. In the clinical setting, this policy enhances patient safety. It also fosters the development of professional healthcare providers who are well educated about the prevalence, adverse outcomes and responsibilities related to substance abuse.

For all items in this policy, the primary dean's representative is as follows (but alternative designees may be named, as appropriate):

The appropriate dean's representative for SON is the assistant dean for clinical education.

The appropriate dean's representative for SOM is the associate dean for student affairs.

The appropriate dean's representative for SHS is the associate dean for clinical education and partnerships.

Incoming students from all programs must read this policy as a condition of acceptance into the professional component in their program, whether or not their school/program requires a drug screen prior to matriculation. Addenda may be drafted by any or all of the three schools that modify this policy and its procedures. Please see the Appendix tab for the School of Nursing Appendix (p. 4).

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all students who have matriculated in the Schools of Nursing, Medicine and Health Sciences.

No student may consume or be under the influence of, or in possession of, alcohol or drugs, which may impair the student's ability to function safely while engaged in academic activities, regardless of venue. Students taking prescription drugs or over-the-counter medication are personally responsible for ensuring that, while taking such drugs or medications, they are not a safety risk to themselves or others while engaged in academic activities, regardless of venue. Improper use of

alcohol or other unauthorized substances in the academic or clinical setting will result in immediate removal from that setting and may result in dismissal from the program. Students also must comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations, as well as Quinnipiac University policies, regarding the possession, manufacture, use or distribution of controlled or *illegal* substances and alcohol.

In programs that require a negative drug screen prior to matriculation, final program acceptance is contingent upon drug screening clearance as listed in Figure 1 (p. 1). If a student does not complete their drug screen prior to program's deadline, that student risks delaying their start and may lose their seat in the program and forfeit their deposit.

A student who has a break in enrollment (e.g., academic leave of absence, other leave of absence, suspension, etc.) must repeat a drug screen prior to beginning classes using the guideline in Figure 1 (p. 1).

A drug screen or repeat drug screen may be required as a condition of clinical or fieldwork if requested by that facility. Timelines for completion of this screening are solely at the discretion of each contracted facility and are subject to change without notice. Students are required to comply with the requirements of their assigned clinical sites. A student may be required to have multiple drug screens during their enrollment in clinical and/or fieldwork. Costs associated with these screenings are the responsibility of the student. Students who are employed at an agency where they may also be doing clinical or fieldwork as part of the curriculum must comply with this drug screening policy regardless of whether a drug screen was completed as part of the employment process.

In either instance listed above, a negative dilute result is not an acceptable result; any student who has a negative dilute result on a drug screen is required to repeat the drug screen at their expense within five business days of receiving notification from the dean's office.

Any matriculated student found guilty of an alcohol or drug-related offense, including a Quinnipiac Code of Student Conduct violation, or other conviction that may affect the student's ability to deliver safe, high-quality care, will face sanctions up to and including dismissal from the school. If the confirmed offense involves unlawful possession, use, manufacture, distribution, diversion or improper use of any substances, the sanction is immediate dismissal from the program.

Procedures

Figure 1: Timing of Drug Screen Requirements

School	Timing of Drug Screen Requirements
School of Medicine	All students – Year 3 before clerkship
School of Nursing	Full-time undergraduate students – Prior to the junior year and then annually in July and as required by the clinical site Accelerated students – Prior to program orientation and then annually and as required by the clinical site Graduate Program: MSN Nurse Practitioner – Prior to program orientation and then annually and as required by the clinical site

	Online Nursing Programs – August 24 prior to beginning fall semester and then annually and as required by the clinical site
	Students matriculating in spring/summer – Prior to beginning spring/summer semester classes and then annually and required by the clinical site
School of Health Sciences	New Careers in Nursing - Prior to program orientation and as required by the clinical site
	Exercise Science – As required by assigned clinical site
	Cardiovascular Perfusion – On entry, recheck prior to start of clinical assignment
	Diagnostic Medical Sonography – Prior to professional component
	Occupational Therapy – As required by assigned clinical site
	Pathologists' Assistant – As required by assigned clinical site
	Physician Assistant – Between May 13-31 prior to the start of clinical rotations
	Physical Therapy – As required by assigned clinical site
	Radiologist Assistant – Prior to professional component
	Radiologic Sciences – Required
	Social Work – As required by assigned clinical site

Testing Procedure

The university will designate the approved vendor to conduct drug screens; students are responsible for payment of any fees charged by the vendor. All issues will be reported from the vendor(s) directly to the designee for the dean of the appropriate school. Results from vendors other than those designated by the university to conduct drug screens are not accepted. Incoming and current students must contact the designated vendor(s) and comply with instructions in obtaining a drug screen. Be advised that students should not drink coffee or too many fluids prior to their lab visit as these may cause a negative dilute result. As stated above, a negative dilute result is not acceptable; students with a negative dilute result are required to repeat the drug screen at their own expense.

Laboratory testing includes collection of the sample, transport to the laboratory, EMIT analysis, GC/MS confirmation by a SAM HSA-certified laboratory, and a test review by a medical review officer (MRO), if required. Students need to plan accordingly so that results are available by the deadline set by each school's dean or dean's designate. If results are not available prior to the deadline, the student will risk being dismissed after classes have begun. If results are not available prior to the start of a scheduled clinical experience, the start will be delayed, which may result in forfeiture of the clinical assignment.

Incoming and current students have the right to review the information contained in any drug screen required by the university for accuracy and

completeness. A student may request verification of the accuracy of these reports from the designated vendor(s). The designated vendor(s) will advise the student of their rights and assist with verifying the accuracy of the report. It is the responsibility of the incoming or current student to ensure that any misinformation in the initial drug screening report is corrected with the vendor and that a written statement with supporting documentation indicating the correction is submitted to the appropriate dean or dean's designate. The designated vendor(s) are not involved in any decision made by the university.

Drug screening reports and other submitted information are confidential and may only be reviewed by university officials and affiliated clinical or fieldwork facilities with a legitimate educational interest in the material in accordance with the *Family Educational Records and Privacy Act (FERPA)*.

Drug screening reports and other submitted information of incoming and current students are maintained in the designated office in accordance with the university's record retention schedule for student records. Drug screening reports and other submitted information of applicants denied admission into the program are maintained in accordance with the university's record retention policy.

Drug testing required by the Schools of Nursing, Medicine and Health Sciences is conducted utilizing the following measures:

1. The student must be tested at a facility of the approved vendor as directed by the program of study.
2. The student must comply with the testing facility's methods and procedures for collecting samples.
3. A Fourteen Panel Drug Screen is required, and drug screen cutoffs are consistent with industry standards as determined by the vendor. See Appendix 1. (p. 4)
4. Urine testing is the primary method for drug screening.
 - a. Serum, hair and saliva analysis or a combination of these may be tested to further validate or clarify urine results.
 - b. Students may, with their program's permission, bypass the urine screen and proceed directly to alternative testing.
5. The student will disclose any prescribed and over-the-counter medications, as well as any dietary habits that could modify the testing results, to the MRO.
6. If there is a positive result for a prescribed medication(s), a medical review officer will contact the student and ask for documentation of the student's prescription. If the MRO determines that the student provided appropriate documentation, the university will recognize the result as a pass. Quinnipiac will not receive a copy of the documentation.
7. A student who is required to and submits to a drug or alcohol screening will be expected to authorize the release of the results to the school, other relevant university offices and clinical agencies, if requested. If the clinical site requests that the student send a copy of their drug screen report to that site, the student is responsible for doing so. The clinical site has the right to deny the student the clinical assignment based on the results. If the student refuses to send their results to the site or does not give the school permission to release the results to the site, then the clinical assignment will be forfeited, and the program's policies will apply.
8. As per university policy, Connecticut state law permits the use of medical and recreational marijuana; however, in accordance with federal law and as a recipient of federal funding, the university does not permit the possession, use or distribution of marijuana. As such, students in possession of medical marijuana (issued in

Connecticut or any other state) are not permitted to use or possess marijuana in any form on university owned or leased property, or at any university-sponsored programs, internships, externships or clinical assignments.

9. If the accuracy of a positive test is disputed by the student, the student may request a retesting of samples by the facility, the cost of which to be borne by the student. Testing done outside the appropriate window of time will not be considered valid.
10. Substance abuse is verified if either: a) the positive test result is not disputed or b) if the student-requested retest is positive.
11. If the test is inconclusive (please see Drug Screen Non-Clearance (p. 3) section for examples of inconclusive test results) or a retest is requested by the agency or by the faculty for cause, the student will not be permitted to conduct fieldwork or clinical until a conclusive negative result is received. The student may be allowed to attend classes while a result is pending, upon the approval of the dean's office.
12. Students with samples yielding an invalid result must be re-tested within five business days of receiving notification from the dean's office. The student will be required to complete an alternative method other than urine testing if a second urine dilute result is found.
13. The testing facility will make a final report of the test results (positive, negative or inconclusive) to the appropriate dean's office.

Testing for Cause

A student will be required to undergo drug or alcohol testing for cause when a faculty member, in consultation with program chair and the dean's office, determines there is reasonable suspicion that the student is impaired due to illegal drug or alcohol use, or the use or misuse of prescribed or over-the-counter medications based upon, but not limited to the following examples: unusual or aberrant behavior or patterns of abnormal or erratic behavior; physical symptoms of impairment; arrest or conviction for a drug or alcohol related offense; evidence of drug tampering, drug diversion, or misappropriation; direct observation of drug use or discrepant drug counts; alterations in student clinical, laboratory, fieldwork, and/or didactic performance that may not be attributed to other causes following a work-related injury or illness, with evidence that it may have been related to use of a controlled substance; observation of poor judgment or careless acts which caused or had the potential to cause patient injury, jeopardize the safety of self or others, or resulted in damage to equipment.

In drug and alcohol testing for cause cases, the cost of any required drug or alcohol testing will be borne by the School at a facility chosen by the School. A student who refuses to submit to testing will be regarded as having voluntarily relinquished their fieldwork or clinical responsibilities. Any attempt to delay, hinder, or tamper with any testing or to alter the results of testing will be considered a refusal to submit to testing and will be considered in violation of this policy and cause for dismissal from the program.

Falsification or omission of information or any attempt to delay, hinder, falsify or tamper with any testing, re-testing or results will be considered a refusal to comply with this policy. Failure or refusal to comply with the Alcohol and Drug Screen Policy will be grounds for disciplinary action including filing a violation report to the university's Academic Integrity Board, notification of the Office of Student Conduct and/or dismissal from the program.

Drug Screening Clearance

The names and test results of all students will be available to appropriate program personnel.

Drug Screening Non-Clearance

Any student who does not receive drug screen clearance will receive an email notification from the dean's office notifying the student that they have not been cleared.

Any student who does not have a negative result after a drug screen will receive an email notification from the dean's office notifying the student that they have not been cleared.

A student who has failed a drug and/or alcohol screening must meet with the dean/dean's designee within five business days of receiving notification from the dean's office to determine a time frame for re-testing.

A student who has received an inconclusive test result will be required to repeat the screening within five business days of receiving notification from the dean's office. An inconclusive test result is based upon, but not limited to the following examples: a negative dilute urine screening, a test deemed invalid by the vendor MRO and inability of the student to provide a sample. If a second invalid/inconclusive result is found, the student is required to complete an alternative method other than urine testing. The student will not be permitted to attend clinical training but may be permitted to attend classes while a result is pending, upon approval of the dean's office. If the student does not have a negative result after a third drug screen, the student will not be permitted to continue with their clinical experience or didactic coursework and will be dismissed from their program, pending the outcome of an appeal.

Students will be responsible for payment of any fees charged by the vendor(s) for any repeat or alternative testing.

Appeal Process

Any student who does not have a negative result after a third drug screen will receive notification by email from the dean's office within five business days. Students are required within five business days of the emailed notification to schedule a time to discuss the findings with the appropriate dean/designee. Following that meeting, the student will be notified of the dean's decision within five business days regarding whether the student may begin or continue their program or be dismissed from the program in which they are enrolled.

Any student who is not admitted or who receives a letter of dismissal for a positive drug screen may elect to proceed to the appeals process.

The appeal must be made by the student in writing within five business days of the emailed notification of dismissal by the dean's office. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the appeal process by emailing a written appeal to the dean. The dean's office will schedule a meeting of the Drug Screen Review Committee within 14 business days of receipt of the appeal request and will notify the student of the meeting date. Students currently enrolled and attending classes will be permitted to attend classes but will not be permitted to begin or continue clinical or fieldwork experiences until the Drug Screen Review Committee has made a final decision.

Once a final decision is made regarding the student's appeal, the Drug Screen Review Committee will notify the student by email. The dean's

office will copy all related correspondence to the chair and/or program director.

The decision of the Drug Screen Review Committee regarding the ability of an incoming student or current student to enter or continue in the program is final and cannot be appealed. The Office of Admissions and appropriate programs will be notified of the decision.

Drug Screen Review Committee

A Drug Screen Review Committee will be convened with the assistance of a representative of the dean's office. Members of the Drug Screen Review Committee will include representation from, but not limited to, the following offices:

- Dean of the school in which the student is enrolled
- Admissions
- Student Affairs
- Academic Affairs
- Finance (if applicable)

A careful review of the self-reported information in the applicant/current student's file will occur. This review will include:

- Information in the drug screen report/s
- Relevant supplementary materials obtained from the applicant/current student and from other sources including medical records provided by the applicant/current student
- Institutional policies and procedures

Factors considered in reviewing an individual case may include, but are not limited to:

- The accuracy of the information provided by the student in their application materials
- The relationship between the duties to be performed as part of the educational program and the offense committed
- Relevant medical history

Any incoming or current student who is referred to the Drug Screen Review Committee has the right to appear before that committee to contest or explain the findings from the drug screens.

A student appearing before the Drug Screen Review Committee will not be permitted to have legal representation, parents, family members, or students or faculty from the Quinnipiac University School of Law at the appeal hearing. A student may request, in writing, to have an adviser assigned by the dean. If a student requests an assigned adviser and then refuses this adviser, no further advisers will be assigned. An adviser may assist the student in preparing for the appeal but may not attend the appeal.

Maintenance of Records and Confidentiality

Information obtained for the purpose of conducting a drug screen or obtained during the drug screen will be retained by the Office of Student Affairs, separate from other student educational and academic records. Confidentiality will be maintained consistent with FERPA guidelines.

In the event a clinical site requires a copy of any report, students must either email a copy of their report themselves to the requesting facility or sign a release form for the vendor(s) who will submit the report to the email address of the person authorized to receive it.

Appendix 1: Drug Screen Cutoffs

Urine Drug Screen	Screen Cutoff	GC/MS Cutoff
Amphetamines	1000	500
Barbiturates	300	200
Benzodiazepines	300	300
Cocaine	300	150
Methadone	300	300
Methaqualone	300	300
Opiates	300	300
Oxycodone	100	100
Phencyclidine	25	25
Propoxyphene	300	200
Buprenorphine	10	10
Fentanyl	2000	500
Cannabinoids	50	15
MDMA	500	250

Universal

Urine Drug Screen	Screen Cutoff	GC/MS Cutoff
Amphetamines	1000	500
MDMA/MDA, Urine	500	250
Barbiturates	300	200
Benzodiazepines	300	300
Cannabinoid	50	15
Cocaine	300	150
Methaqualone	300	300
Opiates	300	300
Oxycodone/ Oxymorphone, Urine	100	100
Phencyclidine	25	25
Methadone Screen, Urine	300	300
Propoxyphene, Urine	300	200
Fentanyl, Urine	0.5	0.5
Buprenorphine, Urine	5	2
Creatinine, Urine	range 20.0-300.0	n/a
Nitrate, Urine	200	n/a
pH, Urine	range 4.5 -8.9	n/a

Appendix 2: School of Nursing Appendix

Revised - 7.20.2018 Revised - 9.6.2019 Revised - 8.6.2020

Refers to Policy Statement – paragraph two (p. 1)

Improper use of alcohol or other unauthorized substances will result in immediate removal from clinical or fieldwork and is cause for termination from the program.

Refers to Testing Procedure number 12 (p. 3)

If a student's drug screen is reported as "inconclusive," the student needs to repeat the test at their own expense. If a student is unable to produce a sample, or fails to comply with all posted and verbal instructions at the lab site, the student is required to retest at their own expense.

Refers to Testing Procedure number 13 (p. 3)

Any student who does not receive drug screen clearance will receive an email notification from the dean's office within seven business days of receiving that report notifying the student that they have not been cleared. The student is required to complete an alternative method other than urine testing if a second urine dilute result is found. This testing must be completed within five business days of receiving notification from the dean's office. The SON has determined that the alternative method of testing for the student in this situation will be a 10 panel serum drug screen test (noted below) in conjunction with a repeat 14 panel urine test. The student is responsible for payment of any fees charged by the vendor(s) for such testing. Should either test yield a positive result, which would include another negative dilute urine drug screen, the student will be dismissed from the program. The student may appeal this decision to the dean of the School of Nursing (see Appeal Process (p. 3) in the policy).

10 Panel Serum Drug Screen

Drug	Screen Cutoff	GC/MS Cutoff
Amphetamines	1000	500
Barbiturates	200	200
Benzodiazepines	200	200
Cannabinoids	50	15
Cocaine	300	100
Methadone	300	300
Opiates	300	200
Oxycodone	300	150
Phencyclidine	25	25
Propoxyphene	300	200