Module Descriptor

Title	Understanding Substance Use		
Session	2025/26	**Status**	
Code	CDAS11005	**SCQF Level**	11
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Education and Social Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	A Shaw		

Summary of Module

Understanding Substance Use explores fundamental issues and concepts in the field of drug and alcohol studies. This module introduces the subject area by exploring a broad historical perspective on the prevalence of substance use.

We will then offer definitions and effects of psychoactive substances and critically explore health and social consequences of use. Concepts of addiction and dependence are considered from a range of perspectives and disciplines.

The module examines patterns of substance use across local, national and international units of analysis. This develops to consider differentiated patterns and consequences of consumption across gender, age, class and ethnicity.

Students critically assess theoretical perspectives on substance use from a range of disciplines including biology, psychology, criminology and sociology using a range of data sources.

This module introduces students to key concepts and historical information that will facilitate a contemporary understanding of how substance use is understood.

This module provides subject specialist knowledge and is a required module for both the MSc and the Pg. Certificate.

Topics include:

• Historical understanding of substance use, and the emergence of the concepts of addiction and dependence

• Definitions and effects of psychoactive substances

• Socio demographic patterns of consumption within populations, from an international perspective

• Consequences of substance use for individuals, families, communities, and the state.

Multi-disciplinary understanding of how substance use is understood from a range of theoretical perspectives including, biology, psychology, criminology and sociology.

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☒	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☒	Work -Based Learning[4] ☒
Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☒ Paisley	☒ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☒	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of how substance use and problems are understood from a range of perspectives.
L2	Critical understanding of the prevalence of substance use
L3	Critical appreciation of the effects of substance use on individuals, families, communities and the State.
L4	Demonstrate a critical awareness of how theories of addiction and dependence impact on understanding substance use and problems.
L5	

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 11** Students completing this module will be able to demonstrate: Historical and contemporary understanding of models of addiction, related terminology and how this underpins interventions; A critical understanding of the principal theories that challenge contemporary models of addiction and policy and treatment interventions.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 11**

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 11** Apply critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis to demonstrate subject specialist knowledge of addiction. Identify, conceptualise and define new and abstract problems and issues.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 11** Take part in group discussions with academic supervisors both online and on campus.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 11** Working effectively, together with others in groups or teams, taking both a leadership and a team member role where appropriate. Systematically identifying and addressing their own learning needs both in current and in new areas as appropriate.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	24
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	12
Independent Study	98
Personal Development Plan	30
Asynchronous Class Activity	36
Please select	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources
The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes: Gage, Suzi (2020) Say why to drugs. London: Hodder & Stoughton Nutt, David (2020) Drugs without the hot air: Making sense of legal and illegal drugs. Cambridge:UIT

Boeri, Miriam (2018) Hurt: Chronicles of the Drug War Generation. University of California Press

Boeri, M. (2013). Women on Ice: Methamphetamine Use among Suburban Women. Rutgers University Press.

Bancroft, A. (2009). Drugs, intoxication and society. Cambridge: Policy Press

Coomber, R., McElrath, K., Measham F. and Moore, K.et.al. (2013). Key Concepts in Drugs and Society. London: Sage

Zinberg, N. (1984), 'Drug, Set, and Setting, The Basis for Controlled Intoxicant Use'. Yale University Press

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

All full-time students (part-time and distant learning students should check with their programme leader for any queries) are required to attend all scheduled classes and participate with all delivered elements of the module as part of their engagement with their programme of study. Consideration will be given to students who have protection under the appropriate equality law. Please refer to UWS Regulations, Chapter 1, 1.64 – 1.67, available at the following link: https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.

Aligned with the overall commitment to equality and diversity stated in the Programme Specifications, the module supports equality of opportunity for students from all backgrounds and with different learning needs. Using Aula, learning materials will be presented electronically in formats that allow flexible access and manipulation of content (part-time and distant learning students should check with their programme leader for any queries). The module complies with University regulations and guidance on inclusive learning and teaching practice. Specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS policy and regulations. The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.

(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Social Sciences**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to**

	programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.
School Assessment Board	PG Social Sciences
Moderator	A O'Gorman
External Examiner	L Williams
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	1.11 1. Updated reading list

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Assessment 1:Review/Article/Critique/Paper. Produce a critical annotated bibliography detailing four research papers related to the topic of understanding substance use. Length: 1,200 words (40%)
Assessment 2
Essay. Discuss the connections between models of addiction and risk environments for substance use problems. Length: 2,000 words (60%)
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Review	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐		

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Essay	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐		

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**

	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**
New template, indicative resources updated	Mar 25	A Shaw