

# Alcohol Consumption Within On-Campus Contexts: A UK Pilot Study

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## RATIONALE

Alcohol misuse is a pressing public health concern, particularly for young adults who remain most at risk of alcohol-related harm.<sup>1,2</sup>

More than half of young people now attend university and a key part of this life transition for many students involves alcohol-related activities and events. This is an important time to target alcohol-related problems, as these individuals are more likely to engage in risky behaviours, such as excessive alcohol consumption.<sup>3</sup>

Universities are dedicated to improving the student experience by running enjoyable and sustainable events, but have an ongoing duty of care for their students.

In the UK, on-campus alcogenic environments (e.g. shops, Student's Union venues, residential halls) are some of the main locations in which alcohol is accessed and consumed. While these contexts provide young adults with important physical and social action opportunities, certain features of these contexts can be associated with problematic alcohol-related behaviour.<sup>4,5,6,7,8</sup>

The current pilot study aimed to use an integrative, mixed method design in order to understand on-campus consumption.

## DISCUSSION AND IMPACT

This pilot study aims to provide an insight into on-campus consumption, while promoting opportunities for safe and sensible drinking.

By taking an integrative, multi-level approach, this research could influence the development of University policies and sustainable events which do not rely on alcohol as a facilitator.

While on-campus contexts are important, student consumption must not be considered separately from local communities<sup>10</sup>. Researchers must aim to strengthen the relationship between Universities, Student's Unions and community organisations.

Future focus group work aims to involve students as co-creators of future alcohol impact policies and related events.

## METHODS

Attendance data, anonymous incident data (archival/ current)

On-premise sales data (as baseline purchasing behaviour and indirect measure of consumption)

Off-premise food and beverage sales data

Environmental audit: observation of events, premise photography and visual maps

## FINDINGS

Preliminary data insights include:

**Price:** Low cost preference and promotions

**Outlet Type:** Purchasing trends (see Table 1 below:)

Table 1: On and Off-Premise Purchasing Behaviour

Off-Premise Purchases	On-Premise Purchases
Soft Drinks (71%)	Spirits (56%) (vodka, Jagerbomb, rum)
Beer and Cider (20%)	Mixers (35%) (lemonade, cola, energy)
Spirits (8%)	Bottled alcopops (3%)
Wine (0.7%)	Draught (3.5%) or Bottled Beer (2%)
Bottled beer (0.3%)	Soft drinks (1%) or Wine (0.5%)

**Context:** Consumption patterns and function (e.g. sports, entertainment, promotions, serving practices etc.)

**Other:** Student halls as primary drinking spaces<sup>9</sup>, off-campus consumption/ purchasing important

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