

# Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy



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The Board of Management (or any person/group with delegated authority from the Board) reserves the right to amend this document at any time should the need arise following consultation with employee representatives. **This Policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment, which can be viewed on our website:**  
<https://www.glasgowkelvin.ac.uk/equality-diversity/>

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## 1. Introduction

Glasgow Kelvin College is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive working environment. This includes ensuring that all staff are fit to carry out their jobs safely and effectively in an environment which is free from the risks associated with alcohol, drugs and other substance misuse (including new psychoactive substances (NPS) or legal highs). All staff are expected to attend work fit to carry out their job and to be able to perform their duties safely without any limitations due to the use or after effects of alcohol, drugs or other substances (other than prescription or over the counter medication, as directed; see section 4, sub-section 4.4).

Where applicable, this policy covers all staff working for or on behalf of the College, e.g. all College employees, secondees, consultants, contractors, volunteers, interns, casual workers and agency workers. For those not directly employed by the College, e.g. if the worker's contract is with an agency through procurement or an APUC agreement, this policy will apply with any necessary modifications

The College recognise that some staff members may misuse drugs or alcohol or they may become dependent on alcohol or drugs. It is also recognised that such dependencies can be successfully treated. The College wish to promote a culture which understands and is sympathetic to the problems associated with alcohol and drug misuse or dependency in which staff are encouraged and supported to seek help.

This policy sets out the principles for managing issues around the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in order to ensure a fair, reasonable and consistent approach. Employees have a contractual obligation to report to work free of alcohol, drugs or other substances. Employee's behaviour which falls short of acceptable standards in this respect will be managed accordingly in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure; or where there are mitigating circumstances the College will apply a supportive approach in line with the procedure in this policy.

The policy aims to:

- set out the rules regarding the use of intoxicating substances and ensure employees are aware of the likely consequences to their employment if misusing them.
- create a climate that encourages employees who may be misusing substances to come forward, seek help and accept treatment.
- provide a framework to enable instances of misuse to be handled in an appropriate, confidential and consistent manner.
- promote a healthy and safe working environment.

This policy covers habitual alcohol or substance misuse where the employee is dependent on the effects of the substance, to the extent that the drinking or drug taking becomes a dominant concern in their lives and to the detriment to others.

In this instance appropriate support will be offered in line with this policy and applied with dignity and respect. It is the employee's responsibility to comply with rehabilitation recommendations or the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure will be invoked. The policy excludes indulgence in alcohol or substance misuse which affects health and safety in the workplace where there is not an underlying dependency. In this instance the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure will be invoked. Inappropriate use of alcohol or substances may be regarded as gross misconduct.

The College has a general duty under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others. Employees also have a duty to co-operate with and implement their employer's policies in this respect so there is shared ownership of health and safety. The organisation recognises that health and safety may be put at risk by employees who misuse alcohol, drugs or other substances to such an extent that their health, work performance, conduct and working relationships are adversely affected. A zero tolerance approach will therefore be taken with regards to abuse relating to this policy.

It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 for an employer to allow its premises to be used for the production, supply or possession of controlled drugs and reasonable action to prevent this should be taken. The organisation also has a legal duty to ensure that its workplace is smoke free; therefore smoking is banned on the organisations grounds and premises.

## **2. Purpose and Scope of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to increase awareness of the potential effects of alcohol and drug misuse and its potential impact on an employee's continued employment, and to ensure that:

- a) All staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding alcohol and drug misuse and related problems.
- b) Staff who have an alcohol or drug-related problem are encouraged to seek help, in confidence, at an early stage.
- c) Staff who have an alcohol or drug-related problem affecting their work are dealt with sympathetically, fairly and consistently.

The main focus of the Policy is not therefore on isolated incidents or offences caused by alcohol or drug misuse at or outside work where there is no evidence of an ongoing problem, which may constitute misconduct, may damage the College's reputation, and which may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

### 3. Health and Wellbeing

#### 3.1 Effects of Alcohol

Drinking more than the recommended daily amount of alcohol is harmful to health and wellbeing. Short term effects include short-term memory loss, impaired judgement, temporary impotence in men, nausea, headaches, loss of consciousness, and alcohol poisoning which can sometimes be fatal.

Regularly exceeding the recommended limits can lead to long term health problems, including liver disease, osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, fertility problems, brain damage, pancreatitis, and several types of cancer (including mouth, throat, bowel, liver and breast cancers).

It is important to be aware of how much you drink. Use an online calculator to find out how many units of alcohol are in your favourite drinks ([drinkwiseagewell.org.uk](http://drinkwiseagewell.org.uk))

You may find it useful to keep a record of your alcohol consumption by keeping a drink diary, or by using an electronic tracker. Drink Wise Age Well provides advice and tips on how to cut down on your alcohol intake or to support someone you care about.

#### 3.2 Effect of Drugs

The College prohibits the use of illegal drugs and the misuse of legal drugs on College premises.

Some of the most commonly used drugs in the UK today are:

- Cannabis: can cause anxiety, paranoia, lung disease, cancer, and can increase the risk of developing a psychotic illness
- Cocaine: highly addictive and can cause panic attacks, fits and heart attacks
- Ecstasy: can cause, liver, kidney and heart problems, and induce psychotic states
- Amyl Nitrate (also called 'poppers'): can cause extreme headaches and nausea
- Amphetamines: highly addictive and depressive. These drugs put strain on the heart and overdosing can be fatal
- Hallucinogens: such as LSD and magic mushrooms – hallucinations can be frightening and may include flashbacks of real events
- Ketamine: powerful anaesthetic which reduces sensations in the body. This means that people who have taken it can't feel pain properly, and can injure themselves without knowing it. Ketamine can also cause panic attacks and depression

For more information about particular drugs see the A to Z guide from FRANK <http://www.talktofrank.com>

### **3.3 New Psychoactive Substances ('Legal Highs')**

New Psychoactive substances (NPS), often known as 'Legal highs', are substances which replicate the effects of illegal drugs but are not controlled under the Misuse of Drugs Act. However, they are illegal to sell, supply or advertise for consumption. These "legal" drugs also carry health risks, particularly when mixed with alcohol and/or illegal substances, and with new drugs being constantly developed (and not necessarily tested), the long term physical and mental effects are unknown.

### **3.4 Getting Help**

If you are struggling with alcohol or drug misuse, there are a number of services which can help you.

- Speak to your GP - they may be able to treat you, or they can refer you to a local alcohol/drug specialist service.
- You may benefit from speaking to other people who have similar experiences to you. You can find support groups with organisations such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous
- For information about relevant services in your area, speak to your GP Alternatively you can search for addiction support services on website or search on <http://www.talktofrank.com>

## **4. Identifying a Problem**

Concerns about an individual's misuse of or dependency on drugs or alcohol might be raised in a number of ways either through personal disclosure of the problem by the member of staff or concerns raised by others about an individual's behaviour from observation. Examples are given below.

- a) The individual's work performance may have deteriorated or they may have difficulty concentrating or they make more errors. They may take longer to complete tasks or have problems remembering instructions.
- b) There may be increased absenteeism from work, repeated lateness, or a pattern of absence that gives cause for concern and might initially be raised as part of an attendance management process eg during an informal return to work discussion or formal Attendance Management Meeting under the College Attendance Management and Support Policy and Procedure.
- c) They may have more accidents, at home or at work or while driving.
- d) Their personality or behaviour may have changed or is erratic: they may be irritable or seem depressed.

It should be noted that the above indicators are not conclusive of any problem with drugs or alcohol and might be indicative of other health conditions or a

number of other factors. There may however be sufficient indicators to cause concern about the individual's welfare and to act as a prompt to try and initiate an open and honest dialogue with the individual about those concerns.

If staff notice a change in a colleague's pattern of behaviour they should encourage them to seek assistance through their manager or Human Resources. If they will not seek help you should draw the matter to the attention of your manager. You should not attempt to cover up for a colleague whose work or behaviour is suffering, or you reasonably suspect is suffering, as a result of an alcohol or drug-related problem.

If you believe that you have an alcohol or drug-related problem you should seek specialist advice and support as soon as possible. The College may refer you to the independent occupational health service who can assist you and will, where possible, do so in confidence.

Staff may also access the confidential Employee Assistance Provider [link] to seek advice on general medical and lifestyle issues including advice on alcohol intake. Details of how staff can access the service free are available on the intranet. See also appendix 1 for external support services.

## **5. Alcohol and Drugs at Work**

Misuse of alcohol and drugs can lead to reduced levels of attendance, reduced efficiency and performance, impaired judgement and decision making and increased health and safety risks for you and other people. Irresponsible behaviour or the commission of offences resulting from the misuse of alcohol or drugs may damage the College's reputation and, as a result, its ability to attract and retain high quality staff and learners.

All staff are expected to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work, work-related functions and work-related social events and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on the College's reputation. If you entertain clients or represent the College either on site or at external events where alcohol is served, you are considered to be "at work" regardless of whether you do so outside normal working hours. Consequently, the College expects you to remain professional during such events. In addition, managers should act to prevent excessive consumption of alcohol by any member of staff and should take steps to deal with any unacceptable conduct. Any such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action. See also the College's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

You must comply with drink-driving laws and drug-driving laws at all times, including the applicable local laws and cultures when travelling overseas. Conviction for a drink-driving or drug-driving offence may harm the College's reputation and, if your job requires you to drive, you may be unable to continue to do your job. Committing a drink-driving or drug-driving offence while carrying out work for the College is potential gross misconduct and could result in dismissal. See also the College's Policy and Procedure for Protection of

## Vulnerable Groups (PVG) and Criminal Record Checks.

If you are prescribed medication you must seek advice from your GP or pharmacist about the possible effect on your ability to carry out your job effectively and safely, and whether your duties should be modified or you should be temporarily reassigned to a different role. If so you must tell your line manager without delay. Any failure to do so which later comes to light may lead to action under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and could result in action up to and including dismissal. Your line manager may seek advice from Human Resources if required before deciding what action, if any, should be taken to minimise risks. A referral to Occupational Health may be required in such cases in order to obtain further advice about the impact of the prescription on your ability to perform your role for the College and any recommendations to mitigate that impact.

Staff should be aware that the misuse of alcohol or drugs in the workplace is likely to result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The College expressly prohibits the use of any illegal drugs or other substances of abuse such as solvents or 'legal highs'. It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute an illicit substance. If any such incidents take place on the College's premises, in College vehicles or at a College function, they will be regarded as serious, will be investigated by the College, and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal and possible reporting to the police.

## 6. Consumption of Alcohol on College Premises

The consumption of alcohol on College premises is not normally permitted. This restriction relates to all staff, learners and other personnel on College premises. However, the Principal may agree to the provision of alcohol at specific events. Such permission must be given in advance and in writing. Permission may be given after the evaluation of each request on its merits. Members of staff should not consume alcohol at such events if intending to return to work.

### Operation of Training Restaurant

Members of the public are permitted to provide their own wine for consumption with meals in the Training Restaurants. The College reserves the right not to permit the consumption of such wine in circumstances which it deems to be inappropriate.

### Programmes of Study

Where the provision of alcohol is **essential** to the teaching/learning activities for programmes of study such use will be permitted. The use of alcohol in these activities will be strictly controlled by appropriate members of staff. ***However consumption of alcohol will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.***



## **Sale of Alcohol on College Premises**

The sale of alcohol on College premises is not permitted.

## **Alcohol Consumption Before and During Working Hours**

The College requires that staff and learners arrive for work and study free from the effects of alcohol and forbids its consumption during working/study hours, including lunchtimes. The College considers it unacceptable for staff and learners to appear unfit for work/study through the misuse of alcohol.

## **Field Trips and Residential Visits**

### **a) Field Trips**

On field day trips the consumption of alcohol by both learners and staff is prohibited.

### **b) Residential Experiences**

- i. Before any residential experience is undertaken staff will discuss fully with learners the use of alcohol for social purposes. Learners will also be issued with written guidance on the use of alcohol for social purposes prior to any residential experience being undertaken.
- ii. When on a residential experience outwith Britain either UK laws or the laws of the country being visited will apply, whichever is more restrictive on the consumption of alcohol. This will apply to both staff and learners.

## **7. Managing Suspected Substance Misuse**

Where a manager considers that deterioration in work performance and/or changes in patterns of behaviour may be due to alcohol or drug misuse they should seek advice and assistance from Human Resources and/or Health and Safety.

In such cases your manager may invite you to a meeting to discuss the matter. The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- a) discuss their concerns and seek your views on, for example, the deterioration of your work performance and/or behaviour; and
- b) where appropriate, offer to refer you to Occupational Health for advice.

If you agree to be referred to Occupational Health Human Resources will request an urgent appointment and prepare a referral, a copy of which will be provided to you.

Occupational Health may ask for your consent to approach your GP for advice.

With your consent, a report will then be sent to your manager who will then decide on the way forward.

If, as a result of the meeting, your manager continues to believe that you are suffering the effects of alcohol or drugs misuse and you refuse an offer of referral to Occupational Health or other appropriate treatment providers the matter may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Where a manager has a reasonable belief that a staff member is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances while at work, they should seek immediate advice from Human Resources or Health and Safety to consider whether the individual is fit for work. If the individual is considered unfit for work and/or there is any potential danger to the health and safety of the individual or others, they may be asked to go home (they should not be allowed to drive home and where necessary the manager may arrange for a taxi to take them home) and, for employees, the absence will normally be recorded as sickness absence. Depending on the circumstances and the employee's role for the College, the matter may be considered as a misconduct matter under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

## **8. Providing Support**

Alcohol and drug dependency may develop for a variety of reasons and over a considerable period. The College is committed, in so far as possible, to treating dependency (eg alcoholism) or health problems as a result of drug or alcohol misuse in a similar way to other health issues. The College will provide support where possible with a view to a return to full duties. This may include:

- a) Referral to Occupational Health and appropriate treatment providers, where necessary in conjunction with your GP.
- b) Time off work to attend treatment and recognition of any periods of absence for such treatment in accordance with the College's policies eg time off for medical treatment and attendance management policies.
- c) Consideration being given to adjusting your duties or offering other support where reasonable and as recommended by a medical professional eg Occupational Health, your GP or specialist or as recommended in an agreed Fit For Work Plan, during treatment and for an agreed period thereafter, subject to operational requirements and feasibility.
- d) Reasonable time off for rehabilitation or counselling should will be discussed and regular contact made. The employee must take responsibility for following the treatment programme.

Where misuse is not eliminated or controlled sufficiently to allow resumption of normal working arrangements within a reasonable period of time or, if appropriate, using the appropriate support, and no suitable alternative employment can be found, where appropriate, the matter will be dealt with as an issue of capability on ill health grounds or, if appropriate, discipline.

Following successful treatment the employee should be supported as much as

possible back into the workplace with the advice of Occupational Health considering the risk of relapse. Continued awareness from the manager will be required in case of a relapse and continued support should be provided. Managers are expected to monitor performance and/or absenteeism during a period of rehabilitation. The manager should inform the employee of performance and/or attendance expectations and it should be emphasised appropriate policies will be followed if required.

## **9. Promotion of Policy**

For its own premises and staff the College will:

- a) provide all staff with information about the policy and ensure that they and all learners have ready access to information about sensible drinking;
- b) ensure that a copy of the policy is displayed on the College intranet;
- c) ensure that staff receive an educational input on substance misuse, alcohol and drugs, as part of the on-going commitment to its health and wellbeing agenda on an annual basis;
- d) make use of posters, videos and exhibitions throughout its various sites to reinforce the main messages on alcohol and drug abuse in the workplace; and
- e) provide managers and supervisors with training and guidance to assist in the effective implementation of this policy.

## **10. Drug and Alcohol Testing**

It is not the policy of the College to undertake drug or alcohol screening and /or testing on employees. If this felt to be required however this will be carried out with the consent of the employee. Testing and/or screening will be co-ordinated by the Human Resources Department and carried out independently by the Occupational Health provider or a suitable alternative provider.

## **11. Confidentiality**

The College aims to ensure that the confidentiality of any member of staff experiencing alcohol or drug-related problems is maintained appropriately. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting staff, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary.

If you seek help with an alcohol or drug-related problem directly from Human Resources or Health and Safety and you wish to keep matters confidential from your manager and colleagues, this will be respected unless there is reason to believe that this could put you, your colleagues, learners, or anyone else at risk or carries some other material risk for the College. In those circumstances you will be encouraged to inform your manager and you will be given sufficient time to do so before the matter is discussed with them.

## **12. Performance and Disciplinary Issues**

If you agree to undertake appropriate treatment and/or rehabilitation for an alcohol or drug- related problem, the College may decide to suspend any ongoing disciplinary action against you for related misconduct or poor performance, pending the outcome of the treatment.

The College's intention is to support all staff with alcohol or drug-related problems to regain good health. Depending on the progress made on the course of treatment, any disciplinary action may be suspended for a specified period, discontinued or restarted at any time as the College considers appropriate in the circumstances.

## **13. Relevant Legislation**

- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998 (Article 8)
- Road Traffic Act 1988
- Transport and Work Act 1992
- The Equality Act 2010

## **14. Supporting Policies**

This Policy should be read and used in conjunction with other relevant documents:

- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- Attendance Management and Support Policy and Procedures
- Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure
- Family Friendly and Flexible Working Policy and Procedures
- Health and Safety Policy

## Appendix 1: Glossary<sup>1</sup>

Misuse:

**Misuse** refers to the use of a substance not consistent with legal or medical guidelines.

Dependency:

**Dependency** on a substance can be physical or psychological. Some substance can make you both physically and psychologically dependent.

**Physical dependency** means that the body has become so used to a substance that there are physical withdrawal symptoms if you stop taking it. You have to keep taking the substance to stop yourself feeling ill.

**Psychological dependency** means taking the substance has become a large part of your life and you take it to make yourself feel good. You may feel you cannot stop taking the substance even though you are not physically dependent.

Addiction:

**Addiction** describes continuous substance use despite the harm it is causing.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: WHO, Nursing Times, British Pain Society

## Appendix 2: External Support Services

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### **MCL Medics (Employee Assistance Programme)**

Download the App accessed through:

**URL:** <https://www.mcl-medics.com/glasgow-kelvin/>

**Password:** Welcome\_Glasgow\_Kelvin

Access Code: 593925

**Email:** [eap@mcl-medics.com](mailto:eap@mcl-medics.com)

**Freephone:** 0800 196 1441

What is the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)?

EAP is a free benefits service that is provided to all staff and is fully funded by the College. The EAP offers additional professional support and guidance for when things get a bit tough at work or at home. When things become difficult to manage, you can turn to the EAP to support you through life challenges that may affect your work performance, mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Ultimately, EAP is here to help you build better coping techniques with the help of the short term counselling solutions and lifestyle guides, and is available for you to use however you feel most comfortable.

What services are offered through the EAP?

There are three main services available through the EAP. Online portal and App which offers a library of health and wellbeing articles. In addition to this, there are resources on nutrition and fitness, including yoga videos and a range of lifestyle information. This includes debt management, parenting and family guides and how to achieve a good work/life balance.

Counselling Service that gives you the opportunity to benefit from one of our specialised dedicated counsellors who are on hand to help you over the telephone, via video and face to face. Access to our legal and financial helpline which supplies information and financial advice on a range of issues you may need help with.

The EAP service is completely confidential and only statistical information relating to the usage of the service is passed to the College. All consultants providing the service are bound by strict ethical codes of conduct and confidentiality. If you wish, you may remain anonymous when using the service.

### **Drink Wise**

If you would like to speak to someone about your own or a loved one's drinking, Drink Wise, Age Well offers advice and support for people over 50. Contact your local office on 0800 304 7690 or alternatively, visit the website at [drinkwiseagewell.org.uk](http://drinkwiseagewell.org.uk)

### **Release**

Telephone: 020 7324 2989

Email: [ask@release.org.uk](mailto:ask@release.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.release.org.uk>

A national centre of expertise on drugs and drugs law providing free, specialist advice and information to the public and professionals on issues related to drug use and drug laws.

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**Council for Information on Tranquillisers, Antidepressants, and Painkillers (CITAp)**

Telephone: 0151 932 0102 (Monday to Friday 10am-1pm, Weekends and Bank Holidays)

Email: [cita@citap.org.uk](mailto:cita@citap.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.citawithdrawal.org.uk>

Provides support and information for individuals, families, friends and professional advisors dealing with prescribed tranquillisers, sleeping tablets, and antidepressants.

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**Families Anonymous**

Telephone: 0845 1200 660

Email: [office@famanon.org.uk](mailto:office@famanon.org.uk)

Web: <http://famanon.org.uk>

Families Anonymous is a world-wide fellowship of family members and friends affected by another's abuse of mind-altering substances, or related behavioural problems.

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**Cocaine Anonymous**

Telephone: 0300 111 2285 (mobile friendly) or 0800 612 0225 (free from UK landlines)

Email: [helpline@cauk.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cauk.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.cauk.org.uk>

Cocaine Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from their addiction.

**Alcohol Concern**

Telephone: 0207 566 9800

Email: [contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk](mailto:contact@alcoholconcern.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk>

Support service to help people understand the dangers of drinking too much. They run the national drink helpline (Drinkline) on 0300 123 1110.

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

Telephone: 0845 769 7555

Email: [help@alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](mailto:help@alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

A help-line service for people who want help or advice about alcohol. Alcoholics Anonymous also run many local self-help groups to help recovering alcoholics. Contact them for further details of local meetings.

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**Al-Anon Family Groups**

Confidential Helpline: 020 7403 0888

Email: [enquiries@al-anonuk.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@al-anonuk.org.uk)

Web: <http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk>

Provides support to anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking, regardless of whether that person is still drinking or not.

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**Narcotics Anonymous**

Telephone: 0300 999 1212

Web: [www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

A self-help group and help-line that deals with all aspects of opiate abuse.

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**FRANK**

(National drugs information service)

Telephone: 0300 123 6600

Email: [frank@talktofrank.com](mailto:frank@talktofrank.com)

Web: <http://www.talktofrank.com>