

# University set to ask students to sign a 'no drugs' contract

A UNIVERSITY is to ask students to sign contracts agreeing not to take drugs in a bid to become Britain's first 'drug-free campus'.

Students at Buckingham University are being asked to start a 'revolution' in making drug-taking 'socially unacceptable' in higher education.

But it will still expel those who flaunt the rules.

Vice-chancellor Sir Anthony Seldon says it is 'insane' to allow drug-taking in universities to continue 'with half and more students taking them'.

And he warns that education bosses are in danger of 'colluding in the mass consumption of illegal drugs on our premises'.

It comes as a top university was criticised last week for giving detailed advice on how to take

## EXCLUSIVE

By Inderdeep Bains

drugs 'safely' on its website. Sheffield University, where a student died last year after taking ecstasy, offers a step-by-step guide online on taking specific substances through its student union.

It tells students who take drugs with a needle not to 'inject alone' and gives instructions about crushing MDMA and how long to wait before 'considering redosing'.

Writing for the Daily Mail on this page, Sir Anthony said: 'I asked myself what kind of moral leadership university leaders were providing in colluding in the mass consumption of illegal drugs on our premises?'

'Where was the compassion, and care for vulnerable and often still young students living away from

home for the first time?' He added that Buckingham would not focus on expulsion, but would adopt a 'compassionate policy' to deter drug-taking on campus.

Sir Anthony said students who were struggling would be supported, but those who 'don't respect our policy, repeatedly use

### 'Where was the compassion?'

drugs or who deal drugs, will be asked to leave'.

Buckingham University already allows the police and sniffer-dogs on campus to deter use, but the university hopes its support for those who want to stop using will lead to a culture change.

A report this year revealed that the number of UK students disciplined for drug use had risen by 42

per cent since 2015 to more than 1,300. Most involved smoking cannabis, but a growing number involved hard drugs or dealing.

This year the National Union of Students urged universities to stop reporting students found in possession of drugs to the police.

A report showed that in 2016-2017, of the 2,067 cases of student drug possession recorded across the country, 531 were reported to police and 21 were permanently excluded from university.

It urged universities to be more supportive, arguing that mental health could play a part in some students' decision to take drugs.

Hospital admissions of those aged 18 to 25 for mental illness involving cocaine are up by 74 per cent since 2014, with more than 2,200 cases last year. Admissions linked to cannabis-based drugs rose 11 per cent to almost 8,000.

