

NEWS WIRE

Drone gang jailed for drugs drops

MEMBERS of a crime gang that used drones to drop drugs into Merseyside prisons have been jailed.

The 15-strong gang dropped over half-a-million pounds worth of drugs into prisons in Liverpool, Warrington, Lancashire, and the Midlands.

Drones would be flown over the prison walls carrying drugs like skunk and synthetic cannabis, amphetamines, crack cocaine and heroin – along with steroids, mobile phones, SIM cards and memory sticks.

Over 14 months, the gang, which included serving prisoners, managed to fly almost 1kg of cannabis and 1.5kg of Spice or Mamba over prison walls.

Police recovered 11 drones, including one carrying a package with £10,000-worth of drugs.

When police searched ringleader Lee Anslow's cell, in HMP Hewell, they found drugs worth £20,000 and phones hidden in fake food cans.

West Midlands Police caught the gang after what is believed to be the biggest-ever operation of its kind in the UK.

At Birmingham Crown Court yesterday, Anslow, from Birmingham, was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Six of his underlings were jailed for between seven and four years.

The other gang members, all from the Midlands, received suspended sentences or community orders.



University students hard at work sitting an exam
Picture: PRESS ASSOCIATION (picture posed by models)

How the city's university students cheat in exams

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PHONES, NOTES AND CLOTHING ALL PART OF PLAN AS MORE THAN 200 PEOPLE ARE INVESTIGATED

MORE than 200 students at the University of Liverpool have been investigated for cheating in exams since 2013, according to new figures.

The ECHO has examined the last five years of figures, obtained through a Freedom of Information request.

They reveal various examples of students finding inventive ways to smuggle notes into their exams.

It is not suggested that figures for cheating at the University of Liverpool are particularly different from other universities – with such incidents being fairly common across the country.

Out of 150 who were caught with notes since 2013, one student tried to cheat by writing hints on the inside of their calculator cover.

Another sneakily tried to use labels hidden inside their clothing to smuggle in written help. Both students were handed a mark of 0 and a delay in graduation for their efforts.

Two others tried writing on an

eraser, but officials spotted the attempts. One student was let off with a warning, but the other was given a mark of 0 and a suspension for the next academic year.

Some 28 alleged incidents of cheating were discovered in the 2017/18 academic year. Many of those caught with notes were suspended or forced to delay their graduation.

Meanwhile, 65 students have been caught with phones in the exam room in the same period, with 15 found this year. Most were handed an immediate mark of 0, regardless of intent.

In response, the university suspended 84 students – with 11 in 2017/18 – for having phones or notes.

Eight students have been thrown out of the university in the same period, with it last affecting two cheats during 2016/17.

Seven had been caught trying to use notes, including one in 2014/15 having them written on their arm.

The other, in 2013/14, tried to copy

from a colleague. Speaking to the ECHO outside university buildings in Liverpool, students had mixed feelings about others being thrown out or suspended.

Jack Perry, 19, a first-year radiotherapy student at the university, said: "I think a lot of it depends on what kind of cheating it is.

"If you've got your phone in your pocket and it starts going off in an exam, and you've completely forgotten that it was there, and there is no malicious intent, then it probably isn't fair.

"But it does make me angry when people are genuinely trying to cheat."

When asked if cheating students made her angry, biology student Annie Massa, 24, said: "No, not really, I think it is quite rare."

Five incidents from this year which are still being investigated also involve the use of phones or notes, with

one student suspected of trying to write maths clues on their hand.

Other punishments handed down by university officials included a delay in graduation and a reduction in students' degree grade.

Overall, 281 cases of academic misconduct were investigated by officials. Of these, 233 serious cases were dealt with by the university's disciplinary board. Other examples include 13 students in 2016/17 who were

found in the exam with a booklet containing answers to exam questions. They were handed a mark of 0 and a 17-month graduation delay. Two other students were given a 0 for trying to use smart

watches.

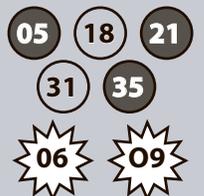
A University of Liverpool spokesman said: "We take cases of examination misconduct very seriously and take action against students who breach the regulations."

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