

POLICY**Bars and Venues**Ref No: **BaV-10***Customer Search Policy*

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Introduction

The **searching** of customers and their belongings is often **necessary for the safety and security of our premises**. This policy deals with our approach to such.

We are committed to ensuring that our venues provide a welcoming environment for our customers and colleagues alike. All those who enter should be treated fairly, with compassion, respect and in a non-discriminatory manner.

Expected Standards

There are 4 licensing objectives of equal importance:

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm

When to Implement the Policy

Bag searches should be conducted on **every event night**; Sports Night, Karaoke etc, for example. These are our busiest student nights and have been known in the past to bring external drinks and drugs with them.

Where **body searches** are concerned, they should **only be carried out** on the **reasonable belief** that the person or persons is **in possession** of drugs, offensive weapons, or alcoholic beverages from external venues.

The implementation of the **Customer Search Policy** should be **instigated by the duty manager** on site. If the **duty manager** is in fact a **Bar Supervisor**, this **should be approved** by a Deputy Venues **Manager** or the Venues and Entertainment Manager – **as the overriding principle**.

Upon implementation, the following points should be observed:

- Search posters should be displayed on entry points.
- Customers should be instructed clearly as to the expectations of the search – see 'how to perform a search below.'
- Door staff, or any staff responding to entry points to be briefed that the search policy has been implemented.
- Every guest carrying a bag – of any size – to be searched.
- Every 5th customer to be body searched – if that part of the search policy has been enacted.
- Customers noted by police, duty management, CCTV, UCL (University College London) Security to be searched beyond the selective search procedures highlighted above.
- Two staff to be present when body searching and when bag searching, it can be solo, but under the watchful eye of your nearest CCTV camera.

What to Search for

You should be searching primarily for:

- Illegal or recreational drugs
- Offensive weapons: whether an obvious choice or concealed (for example, blades secreted within bank cards, pens, or wallets).
- Sharps (drug needles, scissors, glass, or anything that could be sharpened with intent).
- Alcohol – this is most common at our bars. Alcohol can be concealed within soft drinks for example, for this reason we do not permit any externally purchased drinks into our venues.
- Noxious/corrosive liquids (can be concealed within perfume bottles, or soft drinks bottles).
- Stolen goods – hard to determine, but when bag searching you would find theft prevention measures, such as garment security tags.
- Explosives – look for wires, digital displays.
- Other unauthorised objects such as laser pens, fireworks, paint (of any form), items that frankly do not belong in a licensed premises, let alone a students' union venue.

How to Perform a Bag or Other Possession Search

You must abide by the following principles:

- Bag searches must be performed by a member of the event security or management team.
- Customers **must give their consent** prior to the search being conducted. Where customers refuse, they should be automatically denied entry/ejected from the venue.
- Customers should open their own bags, wallets, or phone cases. This puts the onus on them to acknowledge any prohibitions, prior to your search.
- Customers should also empty their own pockets upon request, for the same reasons.
- All searches should take place with a witness, preferably in a well-lit, CCTV covered area.

How to Perform a Body Search?

You must abide by the following principles:

- Body searches must be performed by a member of event security. An element of presumption should be applied when assigning gendered security to that of a similar gender of the customer.
 - » For example, female orientated customers should be assigned a female event security for their search, a male for a male, and so on.
- Customers **must give their consent prior** to the search being conducted. Where customers refuse, they should be automatically denied entry/ejected from the venue.
- Body searches should be combined with pocket, wallet etc searches, as this is the most thorough search we can perform and will only be instigated on the reasonable knowledge of misdoings – for example, a spate of bag searches turn up drugs.

How to Stay Safe When Searching

You should consider the following statements:

- Are you in a safe area, well covered by CCTV, if not, or as a bonus, with witnesses in proximity.

- Ask the subject: *“do you have anything on you that you shouldn’t have,” “do you have anything to declare?”*
- Ask the subject: *“do you have anything on your that could perhaps harm me, yourself or others?”*
- Do not put your hands in their pockets, ask the subject to empty them out.
- Be conscious that if the subject is concealing something and you get close to finding it, they may react untoward.
- Be particularly careful when searching waist bands or belts – sharps can be concealed more easily there.
- It is best practice to wear gloves when searching, particularly bags and belongings.

Further Information

- Students’ Union UCL Bars operate a **zero-tolerance policy on drugs**. Anyone found with illegal drugs will be reported to the police and banned from all our bars. Anyone found to be asking for drugs or offering drugs may also face a significant ban.
- If you believe the drugs to be for the purpose of supply, the police should be informed immediately and an attempt should be made to detain the subject, or if they do leave the venue, to at least monitor their movements and keep the police informed until and following their arrival.
- Anyone found to be in **possession of a weapon will be banned** from the venue and the **police will be called**.
- **Contraband should be confiscated** in accordance with our **drugs and weapons policy**.

Any confiscated items should be sealed and recorded within a grey takings bag – labelled with the following: date, time, location found, name of who conducted the search, description of the contraband. An incident report should be completed by anyone involved whereby the bag number should be written as evidence on such a report. The bag must then be locked in the local bar safe, where management will further the case and arrange for a police collection.