

**POLICY****Bars and Venues**Ref No: **BaV-13***Customer Service Policy*

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**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

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V01-JB	10Apr23	Reformatting	Update
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## Introduction

First impressions are crucial. Make a great impression and we're more likely to have returning customers. Returning customers, means retaining staff members. One pays for the other.

## 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

First impressions are crucial. Make a great impression and we're more likely to have returning customers. Returning customers, means retaining staff members. One pays for the other.

### B.E.S.T. Customer Service

You should stay alert when working at the bar, even on a quiet night, where you're more likely to be doing a cleaning task or working away from the service area. Customers should be met at the bar; they should not have to get *your* attention for service.

We employ the **B.E.S.T customer service acronym at the Union bars**, here's how you can make the most of it:

- **B – Body Language:** it's important that you arrive to serve shoulders back, ready to jump into anything, the same way you would an interview. Customers need to be confident you're going to serve them their best drink/food ever.
- **E – Eye Contact:** often, it's awkward to make eye contact, but meeting a customer with your eyes, like body language, shows you're ready to serve them and they have your full attention.
- **S – Smile:** greet your customer with a smile. Everyone loves a smile, though not everyone likes being told to smile.
- **T – Talk First:** be sure to talk first when serving a customer. After all, they're not the ones offering a service, we are. Being the first to speak is crucial to taking charge of the interaction in a welcoming way and will result in far fewer difficult customers.

### General Customer Service Points

- **Be a helpful signpost.** It might sound strange, but **if somebody asks for a hot drink at The Huntley, but you tell them "We don't sell them", that's not very useful to the customer.** Perhaps, inform them that we have Union Cafes, or give them directions to Euston Station, Tottenham Court Road, Russell Square, our locale. Help them out. They're likely to return or at a minimum, have a great single experience.
- **The same should apply for our bar offering.** "Please, could I get a double Bombay Sapphire and Tonic", "Sorry, we've sold out of Bombay, but we do have [...] which is very similar in both taste and price!", "Okay, great, I'll take that then!". See, helpful! Offer them something else, there's always something more you could do. One should walk customers through our promotions in the same way too! Great promotions often equal great customer retention!
- **Customers must be told the total cost of their transaction** before they're able to pay. Let them know what it comes to on the way to passing them the card machine, for example.

- If a customer cannot pay, citing lack of funds for example, then payment should be requested from a member of their group, or the drinks placed on the back bar to be sold on to another customer ordering the same products. Please notify your team and supervisor what the drinks are and why they're on the back bar. There's nothing worse than having closed the bar and then finding out the team had been selling Carling all night, but there's been one sitting there for two hours.
- You must know the drinks we sell. Take the time to familiarise yourself with all the drinks on offer and how to serve them. If in doubt, it is much better to ask a colleague or supervisor than to make a mistake. Knowing our product range will form part of your annual appraisal (performance review).
- Keep customers up to speed on the daily promotions, especially if they're unsure what they want to drink.
- The bar must be always staffed. If you are working alone, you should still go out to clean tables etc., but try to keep an eye on the bar when you do so. **Do not leave the room.**
- **Music/Sport etc. is for customer entertainment, not yours.** Unless otherwise instructed, only supervisors may adjust the entertainment systems. The volume should be appropriate for the time of day and the number/type of customers present.
- Service should be prompt and efficient. Try to serve people in the order they arrived at the bar – if in doubt as to who is next, you can always ask the customers (politely).
- You are expected to be able to inform customers about Students' Union UCL. At a bare minimum, you should be able to refer customers to the website for further information on services ([studentsunionucl.org](http://studentsunionucl.org)), or to a reception desk or the Front Lodge for further directions.
- If the phone rings, please answer it. Stating the name of the bar and your name too. Please remember to write down/ pass the message onto the appropriate seniority. For example, "Students' Union UCL [name of bar], [your name] speaking. How can I help?".
- Try to be always friendly and courteous. If this approach doesn't work, for example with a difficult complaint, refer the customer to your supervisor or manager.

## Complaints

You should take responsibility for insuring complaints are resolved, but this doesn't mean you shoulder the entire burden:

1. Listen to what the customers' complaint is. Avoid interrupting, this can often turn up the heat and lessen the likelihood that this will be resolved quickly.
2. Apologise and inform the customer that you will pass the complaint onto your supervisor/manager. If your supervisor/manager is close by, you should direct them to the customer in question, give them an overview of the complaint and then return to your initial duty.
3. The complaint may be about a product, if that's the case, question it.
  - a. What's the immediate issue with the product? Does it taste bad, is the glass dirty, perhaps there's a hair in/on it?
  - b. If the product is visibly tainted, then you can replace it, but you must tell your supervisor as soon as possible, so the old product can be recorded as wastage. It is super important for our stock levels that products are both recorded in a correct and timely manner.
  - c. If the complaint is about a draught beer, take a fresh cold glass and pour a little of the same beer into it. Get the customer to taste this and ask if it is better. If they believe it is, then replace the full pint.
4. **Cask ale:** cask ale undergoes secondary fermentation in the cask, which makes it a little more temperamental. When you have poured a pint of ale, it should gradually "settle" and turn clear

(although this isn't always the case, sometimes they're unfiltered. If it stays cloudy, do not serve it – inform your supervisor as it may be the end of the barrel. Ask your customer if they wouldn't mind waiting for a little while whilst your supervisor attends to the problem. Similarly, if a customer comes back with a cloudy ale, apologise, and replace it with something else (a refund would have to take place here, ask your supervisor). (See the ale guide below.)

5. If necessary, inform the customer that they can submit a written complaint online, via the Students' Union UCL website at [studentsunionucl.org/complaints](https://studentsunionucl.org/complaints)
6. **A genuine apology goes a long way!**

## Legal Obligations and ID

### Licensing Objectives and the Law

There are **four licensing objectives that make up the Licensing Act, 2003**. They should be **always upheld and abide by**. They are:

- The Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- Public Safety
- The Prevention of Public Nuisance
- The Protection of Children from Harm

**It is illegal to serve alcohol to anyone under the age of 18. Ignorance is not an excuse.** If caught you will be fined £90, and Student's Union UCL can be fined £5,000. Our premises licence may also be reviewed at that point, which can result in the bar being shut down and everyone losing their jobs.

To this end, you are **obliged to refuse service to customers considered drunk or disorderly** (or people buying drinks on their behalf), and to generally maintain a hazard-free environment by clearing and tidying up the glass, rubbish, and furniture.

It is **illegal to serve someone deemed as 'drunk'**, a person's intoxication is determined by someone's perception, so it's always best to assess a customer prior to service. Signs to look out for are slurred speech, swaying body, overconfidence, dilated pupils, possible aggression and more. You'll learn these traits over time.

All **license points also apply to drugs**, if you suspect a customer of taking, dealing or being in conjunction with either of the previous, report this to your supervisor/security/manager immediately and security will then deal with it.

You **must ask for proof of age if you suspect anybody of being under 18, regardless of ID checks undertaken on the door**. Acceptable forms of ID can be found within our [Entry Policy, which is publicly available on the Union website](#).

- *Fact: the only circumstance in which it is legal for an under-18 to attempt to purchase alcohol on our premises is when they are employed by the authorities for the purpose of finding out if we serve under-age people.*

## The Union – Being an ambassador.

Staff are expected to be ambassadors of the Union and to inform customers about Students' Union UCL.

At a bare minimum, you should be able to refer customers to the website for further information on services ([www.studentsunionucl.org](http://www.studentsunionucl.org)), or to a reception desk or the Front Lodge for further directions.

Services provided by Students' Union UCL include:

- Advice Service
- Policy, Governance, and Insight
- Volunteering Services
- HR and JobShop
- Clubs & Societies
- Commercial
  - Bloomsbury Fitness (Gym)
  - Catering (Cafés)
    - Gordon Street Café
    - Print Room Café
    - Bloomsbury Café
    - George Farha Café
    - Lewis Building Grab-and-Go.
  - Retail
    - The Hanger
    - Convenience Shop Bloomsbury
    - Convenience Shop Pool Street (UCL East)
  - Bars
    - Phineas
    - The Huntley
    - Richard Mully's Basement Bar
    - The Institute Bar and Kitchen