

Staff Search Policy

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Introduction

UECS reserves the right to carry out personal searches of its employees in the workplace to ensure a safe work environment and to prevent theft and illegal activities.

If an employee is subject to a search request, this does not automatically indicate suspicion towards the employee. These searches may form part of a random search or may be targeted to specific employees or services based on information received by UECS.

Employees are referred to their terms and conditions of employment, which allow UECS to carry out personal searches.

The employee must allow the search to proceed voluntarily. If an employee refuses without reasonable justification, this may be treated as a disciplinary matter and action may be taken in accordance with the [UECS Disciplinary Policy](#).

Personal searches will be carried out in support of UECS and University of Essex policies, such as the Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy, and to generally protect UECS assets and interests.

Staff searches will not be undertaken based on an employee's protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. All forms of discrimination are strictly prohibited during searches.

Section 1: Searches

1.1 Procedure for staff searches

Where an employee is asked to be searched, the following procedure will be used:

Searches will only be carried out by a senior member of staff, for example a service manager or a Head of Service. Searches will be conducted by a person of the same sex or the same gender identity as the employee, to respect their privacy and dignity.

The search will be supported by a senior member of staff from another UECS service area. This member of staff will witness the search to verify that it is conducted in accordance with this policy.

The employee may be accompanied by a work colleague or Union representative who is available at that time.

The search will be conducted in a private room where the employee will be asked to empty their pockets and show the contents of any bags they may have. There will be no physical contact from those carrying out the search.

The employee's property, including vehicles on university premises, may be searched.

A written record will be made of each search, including:

- The time and date of the search.
- The reason for the search.
- The names of those present.
- The outcome of the search.

All parties present during the search will sign the record.

Section 2: Outcomes

2.1 Possible actions arising from a search

Failure to consent to a search without reasonable justification may be treated as a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with in accordance with the [UECS Disciplinary Policy](#).

Where an employee is found to be in possession of prohibited substances or there is evidence to suggest that they have committed a criminal offence, formal action will be taken in accordance with the UECS Disciplinary Policy.

UECS reserves the right to inform the police of any suspicion it may have about the use of controlled drugs by any of its employees on UECS or University premises, or regarding any other criminal offence.

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