



Drugs Testing and Identification Procedure

Supporting Documents

[Expert Evidence Guidance](#)

[Criminal Procedure Rules 2020](#)

Policy

Drugs Policy

Procedure

1.1 This procedure is provided for all officers and staff with regards to providing guidance on drug testing and identification procedures.

1.2 It provides instructions and advice regarding:

Levels of testing

- EDIT tests
- Screening tests
- Cannabis plant identifications
- Remand tests and statements
- Accreditation of testers
- Testing methods

1.3 To save time and money the force allows for suitably trained testers to identify certain drugs in possession only cases, in house using the Evidential Drug Identification Testing procedures as approved by the [College of Policing](#) and the [Home Office](#).

2. Levels of testing

- 2.1 If an officer is dealing with a drugs offence they need to identify the potential charge at the earliest possibility. This will then allow a decision to be made regarding the level of testing required for any drugs seized in the case.
- 2.2 For possession only offences, the drugs will not be sent to the lab for forensic identification. If the drugs are, following interview, suspected to be Cannabis, Opiates (Heroin), Cocaine, Amphetamine, MDMA (Ecstasy), Mephedrone or Ketamine the drugs will be tested in house under the EDIT procedure, by an EDIT trained officer/staff member.
- 2.3 In possession only cases but where the substance is unknown or is thought to be any other than those listed in 2.2, the officer must contact a Drug Liaison Officer for a drug screening test to be completed. Only after this screening test, may any possession only case substances be sent for forensic testing at the laboratory, upon recommendation of the Drug Liaison Officer.
- 2.4 Cannabis plants: For small level cultivation offences the plants will be identified by a Drugs Liaison Officer. For larger scale production offences however, the plants must be sent to the laboratory for forensic identification.
- 2.5 For supply, importation or exportation cases, the drugs must be sent to the laboratory for full forensic identification.
- 2.6 Identification for remand purposes can be conducted in house, provided that the substance is one of the approved substances listed in 2.2. Remand identifications can only be performed by those who have completed Remand Level training as shown on the Surrey Drugs SharePoint page.

3. EDIT Tests

- 3.1 In line with Home Office Guidance and the College of Policing, all EDIT tests must be performed in line with EDIT rules.
- 3.2 All tests must be conducted by an approved EDIT tester who has completed the Surrey Police EDIT course and who is listed on the force EDIT testers register.
- 3.3 All tests must be completed in an approved EDIT Room. These can be found at each base station.
- 3.4 All tests must be completed using only Home Office Approved testing kits and devices. These include:

- Drug ID Immunoassay Kits for Cocaine
- MMC, NIK and BDH Marquis Reagent Kits for MDMA, Heroin (diamorphine) and Amphetamines
- Rapiscan Itemiser Machine Gold Traps for Ketamine and MDMA
- Bruker Alpha FT-IR Device for Mephedrone and Ketamine
- TruNarc Device for Mephedrone and Ketamine

3.5 The EDIT tests must be fully recorded in the EDIT register with contemporaneous notes completed for all tests.

3.6 Cannabis identification falls under EDIT. Trained personnel may in possession only cases identify cannabis however, they cannot specify the type of cannabis with regards to Herbal or Skunk / Flower / Bud due to the level of expertise and knowledge required. Cannabis in house can only be identified as 'Cannabis' or 'Cannabis resin'. All other cases where further cannabis specifications are required should be referred to the Drug Liaison Officers for consideration.

3.7 The Disputed Test Procedure must be provided to the suspect by the officer in case.

3.8 Only if an EDIT test result is disputed at court will the exhibit be sent for forensic identification at the laboratory.

4. Screening Tests

4.1 For all Possession only tests which do not fall under section 3, screening tests will be performed on the substance by a Drug Liaison Officer, using the range of Drug Testing Devices available to them.

4.2 The Drug Liaison Officer will advise the OIC of the potential identification of the substance and future action including whether a forensic referral is required. If this is required, the OIC may at this point complete a request to the Forensic Hub for forensic testing.

5. Cannabis Plant Identification

5.1 For small cultivation offences plants will be identified in house by a Drug Liaison Officer.

- 5.2 In these cases, the plants will only be identified as “Cannabis plants” potentially with heights given. No reference will be made as to the strain of plant, the type, or any potential yields or values.
- 5.3 In production cases where detailed identification and potential yields are required with subsequent valuations, the cannabis plants must be sent to the forensic provider for full examination.
- 6 For production cases in line with further Surrey guidance, officers should also submit all photographs taken of the scene, including set up, measurements and descriptions of the location, including the number of lights, room measurements, timer settings, number of fans, ventilation and irrigation systems, number of plants present and any other available details available.
- 7 Plants should be submitted in paper bags.

6. Remand Tests and Statements

- 6.1 Remand identifications for supply cases can be conducted by a small number of Remand Level testers which includes the Drug Liaison Officers.
- 6.2 Only the substances listed in 2.2 can be identified for a remand statement. All other substances must be fast tracked to the forensic provider for forensic analysis.
- 6.3 All remand tests conducted in house must conform to the Scientific Working Group minimum standards recommendations available from SWGDrug with regards to analytical corroboration:
- When a validated category A test is used at least 1 other technique from category A, B or C must be used.
 - When Category A is not used, at least 3 different validated test techniques must be employed. This must include a Category B test.
 - With regards to Cannabis macroscopic and microscopic examinations count as uncorrelated Category B techniques,
- 6.4 Surrey Police best practice is that in all cases a Category A test should be completed where possible for corroboration purposes.

- 6.5 Where possible remand level testing should not be performed by the OIC or arresting officer. The tests can however be performed by an independent member of the same team.
- 6.6 All exhibits must be sent to the forensic provider for full testing at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.7 The remand test will not be used as evidence of substance identification or as a basis for valuation at trial.

7. Training

- 7.1 Any Surrey Police personnel conducting drug identification tests should have completed the following training:
- Basic Cannabis Identification testers must be trained in Cannabis Identification and EDIT procedures by the Drug Liaison Officers
 - Basic Class A EDIT testers must have completed the Class A EDIT course provided by the Drug Liaison Officers
 - Remand identification experts must have completed the Surrey Expert Remand Identification course provided by the Drug Liaison Officers.
- 7.2 All trained testers are listed on the EDIT Testers Register available for all Surrey Police personnel to view.
- 7.3 Anyone with training queries should contact a Drug Liaison Officer directly.

8. Health and Safety

- 8.1 In line with the Drugs Policy all testing at any level (EDIT, Screening, Remand) should be conducted wearing full PPE, as per the relevant training package.
- 8.2 Due to the ongoing presence in the UK of hazardous substances including nitazenes, fentanyl's, and similar, which have been found in several commodities, not just opiates, all tests on powder substances, pills or capsules should only be completed where a second person is available to monitor the testing / tester. This second person should be conducting regular checks on the tester to ensure that all is well and allow for medical intervention to occur, if required.
- 8.3 Naloxone (Nyxoid) kits must be kept on the wall in the Drug Examination Rooms, and these should be clearly posted with guidance on how and when to utilise

them. Where possible the second person should be naloxone trained however if this is not possible, this person should be made aware of the placement of the Naloxone (Nyxoid) kits and how to use them prior to the start of any testing. For further detail refer to the Surrey Police Naloxone (Naloxone (Nyxoid) Pebble Kits) Procedure.docx.

- 8.4 Panic Alarms are fitted within all Drug Examination Rooms. These should be regularly tested in line with force procedures. Should an emergency occur during the testing process, the second person should sound the panic alarm, prior to providing first aid and administering Naloxone (Nyxoid), if required.
- 8.5 Should an emergency occur during the testing of a drug, and a tester lose consciousness, any responding person must undertake a dynamic risk assessment prior to intervention and should ensure that they are wearing an FFP3 mask, gloves and goggles before intervening, in case of airborne particles.
- 8.6 Due to the unknown nature of any drug or substance, all drugs when seized should be double bagged. If an exhibit is taken for testing and it is only single bagged, the tester should ensure that it is double bagged at the end of the test in accordance with the training.
- 8.7 Where possible drugs should always be kept within the original packaging with weights being given as 'inclusive of packaging' to avoid the need to decant the content, therefore reducing risk to the tester. Should the original packaging not be suitable for weighing purposes all decanting of powders should ideally occur within a powder cabinet in the Drug Examination Rooms or all parties present must be wearing FFP3 masks and full PPE including arm covers, aprons and goggles, with the room being well ventilated.
- 8.8 Should there be any concern regarding potential hazardous substances linked to an exhibit (intelligence, linked to overdose or illness, biohazard seizure from internal cavity etc) the exhibit will not be opened and tested in house by any level of trained tester. Such exhibits must be marked up as a biohazard and sent to the Forensic Provider for testing.