

Levels of Observation

Level 1

General Observation

This is the **minimum** acceptable level for all detainees. It requires the following:

- Detainees are checked **at least every hour**;
- Checks are carried out sensitively in order to cause as little intrusion as possible;
- If no reasonable foreseeable risk is identified, staff need not wake a sleeping detainee;
- If the detainee is awake, the officer should engage with the detainee;
- Visits and observations, including the detainee's behaviour/condition, are recorded in the custody record;
- Any changes in behaviour/condition must be reported to the custody officer immediately.

The use of technology does not negate the need for physical checks and visits.

Level 2

Intermittent Observation

This is, subject to clinical direction, the **minimum** acceptable level for those suspected of being intoxicated through drink or drugs or having swallowed drugs, or whose level of consciousness causes concern. It requires the following:

- The detainee is visited and roused **at least every 30 minutes**;
- Physical visits and checks must be carried out. CCTV and other technologies can be used in addition;
- In response to clinical direction, a person detained in relation to drugs swallowing need not be roused;
- The detainee is positively engaged at frequent and irregular intervals;
- Visits to the detainee are conducted in accordance with Codes of Practice, Code C, Annex H;
- Visits and observations, including the detainee's behaviour/condition, are recorded in the custody record;
- Any changes in behaviour/condition must be reported to the custody officer immediately.

Level 3

Constant Observation

If the detainee's risk assessment indicates the likelihood of self-harm they should be observed at this level. It requires the following:

- The detainee is under constant observation and accessible **at all times**;
- Physical checks and visits must be carried out;
- Constantly monitored CCTV and other technologies can be used;
- Issues of privacy, dignity and gender are taken into consideration;
- Any possible ligatures are removed;
- The detainee is positively engaged at frequent and irregular intervals;
- Visits and observations, including the detainee's behaviour/condition, are recorded in the custody record;
- Any changes in behaviour/condition must be reported to the custody officer immediately;
- Review by the healthcare professional.

Level 4

Close Proximity

Detainees at the highest risk of self-harm should be observed at this level. It requires the following:

- The detainee is **physically supervised in close proximity**;
- CCTV and other technologies do not meet the criteria of close proximity but may complement this level of observation;
- Issues of privacy, dignity and gender are taken into consideration;
- Any possible ligatures are removed;
- The detainee is positively engaged at frequent and irregular intervals;
- Observations, including the detainee's behaviour/condition, are recorded in the custody record;
- Any changes in behaviour/condition must be reported to the custody officer immediately;
- Review by the healthcare professional.

