

# Policy: Admission of Students with Criminal Convictions

## 1. Policy Overview

### 1.1 Commitment to Diversity and Safety

The University is dedicated to providing opportunities in higher education for individuals who meet academic requirements and can benefit from its programmes. Criminal records are considered only if relevant, including in particular in the following circumstances:

- Courses requiring professional registration, e.g., teacher education or health-related courses.
- Situations where criminal convictions may affect course-related activities.
- Cases where a conviction could hinder employment opportunities in vocational or professional fields.
- Instances where the safety of the University community or property is at risk.

References in this policy to “unspent convictions” and “serious unspent convictions” shall have the meanings ascribed in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act.

### 1.2 Disclosure Requirements

Prospective students must disclose any serious, unspent or pending convictions (listed in section 1.4) to facilitate an informed admissions decision. Depending on the nature of the conviction, the University may grant admission, impose conditions, or deny entry.

### 1.3 Courses Requiring Enhanced DBS Checks

Courses necessitating a full enhanced DBS disclosure will clearly indicate this in promotional materials. A satisfactory DBS disclosure will be a condition of entry at the offer stage.

### 1.4 Declaration of Criminal Convictions

Applicants for courses not requiring a DBS check must declare any serious unspent or pending convictions (in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act) including for offences relating to:

- Violence, including grievous bodily harm (GBH), aggravated bodily harm (ABH), and other offences under the Offences Against the Person Act.
- Possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons.
- Terrorism-related offences.
- Arson.
- Hate crimes, including offences aggravated by race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- Sexual offences.
- Sexual or other forms of harassment.
- Stalking.
- Domestic abuse.
- Coercive control.
- Illegal supply of drugs.

### **1.5 Failure to Disclose**

Failure to disclose relevant could constitute a disciplinary offence and may result in termination of registration.

### **1.6 Notification of New Convictions**

Students who acquire convictions listed above, post-enrolment must immediately disclose this in writing to the Academic Registrar. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and/or termination of their contract.

If such a disclosure is notified the University Disciplinary Officer, Academic Registrar and Associate Head will consider whether any action should be taken in the light of the disclosure and in line with the [Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#) and the [Student Dignity and Respect Policy](#)

## **2. Process**

### **2.1 Applicants to Non-DBS Courses**

When an applicant declares a conviction, the Admissions Manager will request additional information for confidential review by the Academic Registrar, Admissions Manager, and Subject Leader/Associate Head.

Admissions decisions will prioritise the safety and requirements of the University community. In assessing the application, the following factors will also be considered:

- Seriousness and relevance of the offence.
- Time elapsed since the offence.
- Circumstances of the offence.

- Country of occurrence.
- Decriminalization status.
- Repeat offending history.
- Impact on vocational opportunities.
- Compatibility with the course's requirements.

## **2.2 Applicants to DBS Courses**

For courses requiring DBS checks:

- Notification of disclosure requirements will be made at the offer stage.
- Offers will be conditional on satisfactory DBS disclosure.
- Initial assessments will follow the principles in 2.1 if convictions are voluntarily disclosed.
- Any discrepancies between disclosed and DBS-revealed information will prompt further review.
- Students on DBS-required courses must annually self-declare any changes in their criminal record.

## **2.3 Decision-Making and Confirmation**

All relevant information will be reviewed by the Admissions Manager, Academic Registrar, and Subject Leader/Associate Head. Admissions decisions will prioritise the safety and requirements of the University community, alongside the applicant's academic qualifications and programme requirements

## **2.9 Admissions Decisions, ongoing notifications and Student Obligations**

The University makes admissions decisions in good faith based on the information supplied on application forms and safeguarding forms (for professional courses), which are signed off as accurate and truthful by an applicant.

The University reserves the right to terminate a student's enrolment on a course of study if it becomes apparent while they are enrolled on their programme that:

- They have deliberately withheld or falsified information on criminal convictions requested in the application process; or
- They have failed to notify the University of any serious conviction that has arisen post enrollment; or
- They have failed to notify the University of any serious unspent criminal conviction (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act) received following their enrolment on their course of study.

Such a dismissal would only be enforced after investigations under [Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#) as this would be considered a breach of the [Student Dignity and Respect Policy](#).

## **3. Data Security**

### **3.1 Confidentiality**

No information regarding criminal convictions or disclosure will be released to any individual or organisation not authorised to receive it under Section 124 of the Police Act Part V 1977.

Head of Admissions/Manager of Admissions will ensure that information supplied will only be released to the Registrar, Admissions Manager, Subject Leader and Lead Partner (for PGCE School Centred courses), who are empowered to make the admissions decision. The information will also be seen by the designated member of the Admissions team who will handle the disclosure process.

### **3.2 Data Handling and Retention**

All disclosure information will be stored securely under the direct supervision of the Head of Admissions/Manager of Admissions

Disclosure will be held for a period of six months after the date of the recruitment decision. After this time the information will be shredded under the direct supervision of Head of Admissions/Manager of Admissions

No copy or other image of a disclosure will be retained.

A record that a satisfactory disclosure has been obtained will be retained in the student file. This will include

- i. Name
- i. Date of disclosure
- i. Unique DBS certificate number of the disclosure

These files will be stored securely within Registry but it is recognised that the files will be consulted by registry staff in connection with their duties.

Annual self-declarations relating to criminal convictions provided by returning students on designated courses will also be retained on file.

Where information concerning a criminal conviction has been supplied voluntarily in connection with an admission and outside the disclosure scheme, the information will be subject to the same treatment as information supplied under disclosure. The information supplied will be stored securely and separately and will be destroyed 6 months after the admissions decision has been taken. No record will be retained unless the programme of study is also covered by the requirement for disclosure.

## **4. Appeals and Complaints**

### **4.1 Appeals Process**

If an applicant considers that the University has reached an unreasonable decision in connection with admission in the context of a disclosure of criminal record, they may submit a complaint in line with the procedure set out in the [Applicant Appeals and Complaints Policy](#). There is no right of appeal against an Admissions decision regarding an applicant's failure to satisfy non-academic requirements specified by external agencies for a particular programme (ie for a programme of study requiring an enhanced DBS check)

Decisions on convictions that are taken after enrolment will be taken in line with the [Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#). The appeals process is set out in this policy.

### **4.2 Reporting Errors**

Applicants disputing the accuracy of DBS disclosures may appeal directly to the Disclosure and Barring Service (<https://www.gov.uk/report-problem-criminal-record-certificate>).