

Policy for Criminal Record Checks via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

How the University will handle your DBS check during your application to Swansea

- Swansea University aims to promote equality of opportunity for all applicants with the right mix of talent, skills and potential. Swansea University welcomes applications from diverse candidates. Criminal records will be taken into account for recruitment purposes only when the conviction is relevant. Unless the nature of the work demands it, you will not be asked to disclose convictions which are 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Having an 'unspent' conviction will not necessarily bar you from a place on your chosen course. This will depend on the circumstances and background to your offence(s).
- As Swansea University meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, all applicants who are offered places on Social Work programmes, Graduate Entry Medicine, postgraduate courses in the Department of Childhood Studies and certain professional programmes in Health Sciences (e.g. Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Science) will be subject to a criminal record check from the Disclosure and Barring Service before the place is confirmed. This will include details of relevant cautions, reprimands or final warnings, as well as convictions.
- As an organisation using the DBS Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability, Swansea University complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
- All successful applicants will be informed of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and a copy will be made available on request.
- At interview, candidates will be asked to confirm whether they have received any convictions or cautions in general terms. Failure on the part of an applicant to reveal the presence of criminal record information at this stage could lead to the subsequent withdrawal of an offer of a place if criminal record details are revealed in the subsequent Disclosure.
- A Fitness to Practise Panel will be convened by the College to review applications from candidates with criminal records. Those involved in the Fitness to Practise Panels will be equipped to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. They will have received appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- The relevant admissions staff will undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing any offer of a place.
- The University undertakes to handle, store, retain and dispose of Disclosure and other information regarding criminal records in accordance with the DBS code of practice.
- Disclosure information is kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

- In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, once received, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.
- Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.
- Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.
- Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

(This Policy Statement on Criminal Records was updated and approved by the Recruitment and Admissions Committee of the University at its meeting on in November 2013).