

## Guidance for Members of Staff and Volunteers

### Using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

#### **What is the Disclosure and Barring Service?**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an executive agency of the Home Office government department. Its purpose is to help many different organisations in England and Wales make more informed recruitment decisions. The DBS does this by providing a service called Disclosure. This is a carefully regulated 'one-stop shop' service that enables organisations to gain access to important criminal and other information for recruitment and licensing purposes. The DBS helps organisations to screen out candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, helping to ensure that these groups are properly protected. It also provides guidance to its registered users to enable them to handle sensitive information appropriately and legally.

The University is registered with the DBS so that it can use the Disclosure service to carry out checks on those applying for jobs which involve working with children and vulnerable adults and other professional work. Some student volunteers may also need to obtain a Disclosure.

#### **What is a Disclosure?**

The Disclosure service is the core business of the DBS. There are two different types of Disclosure: *Standard* and *Enhanced*.

**Standard Disclosure** provides details of a person's criminal record including all convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer (PNC). If the position involves working with children, Disclosures will also contain details from lists held by the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), POCAL and List 99, of those considered unsuitable for this type of work.

**Enhanced Disclosure** includes all of the information contained in a Standard Disclosure but will also contain information held by local police forces. It indicates whether a person is banned from working or volunteering with children or vulnerable adults.

The Human Resources Department (HR) can advise candidates on the level of Disclosure (if required) and how this fits into the recruitment and selection process.

#### **How do I apply for a Disclosure?**

Staff will normally be provided with or can collect a form for completion from HR on appointment. Volunteers can obtain a form from your College or the department organising the volunteering e.g. Marketing. You should complete it using the notes of guidance available on the web

(<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/>).

Once you have done this, the nominated person in HR (or your College or Department) will go through identity checks with you, using documentation such as passport, driving license, birth certificate. Once your Disclosure Application is received by HR, a Countersignatory in HR or the College will countersign it. They are authorised to request and to receive Disclosure information from the DBS.

#### **What will happen next?**

The University will submit your completed Disclosure application to the DBS and you will then receive your Disclosure in the post. You should receive your Disclosure within three weeks of the completed application form being sent off. The University will NOT receive a copy of the Disclosure. You should take the certificate to HR or your College office or to the

Department coordinating the voluntary work when you receive it. A note of the reference number will be kept by HR, or your College or the Department coordinating the voluntary work..

### **Can I refuse to apply for a Disclosure?**

You can refuse to apply for a Disclosure but, if you do so, we may not be able to consider your application for certain positions or may not be able to offer you work in certain areas of the University.

### **How much will a Disclosure cost?**

Payment will be made by the University; you do not need to pay this charge yourself. There is no cost for disclosures for Voluntary positions.

### **How do I know that the information contained on my Disclosure will be kept confidential?**

Organisations using the Disclosure service must comply with the DBS Code of Practice which is there to make sure the whole process works fairly. Under the provisions of the Code, sensitive personal information must be handled and stored appropriately and must be kept for only as long as it is necessary. The Code of Practice is published on the DBS website:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/>.

### **What if I already have a Disclosure?**

You may already have a Disclosure because you have previously been asked to apply for one for another application or for a job you have undertaken. **Irrespective of this fact, where Disclosure is a requirement of the position we will consider existing disclosures on a case by case basis.**

### **What if I live or have lived overseas?**

In addition to making an application for a Disclosure to the DBS, the University may wish to ask you for an equivalent document from the relevant overseas authorities, if you live or have lived overseas for a substantial period of time.

### **What if I have a criminal record that may not be relevant to the position for which I am applying?**

Having a criminal conviction will not necessarily prevent you from working or volunteering for Swansea University. We will investigate the nature of any declared or disclosed convictions in order to:

- Ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and students
- Ensure the security of University property
- Protect the University's reputation and public standing
- Carry out our legal responsibilities and duties

Any selection decision will be taken in the light of a risk assessment against these criteria. Further details can be found in our ***Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders***.

In addition to the University's approach, the government maintains safeguards and guidelines to ensure that conviction information is not misused and that ex-offenders are not treated unfairly.

Ex-offenders will retain the protection afforded by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; the DBS maintains a Code of Practice for Registered Bodies and the Data Protection Act works to protect your personal information.

**Where can I find out more about Disclosure?**

You can also find out more from the DBS information line on 0870 9090811 or from <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs/>.

