

POLICY STATEMENT ON STUDENT ADMISSIONS WHERE APPLICANTS ARE EX-OFFENDERS

1.0 Introduction

This policy statement outlines the University's approach to student admissions where applicants have previous criminal convictions. The University recognises the importance of promoting access to education for all individuals, including those who have offended in the past, while also ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the university community. The University is committed to fair, transparent, and inclusive admissions practices that support rehabilitation, reduce reoffending, and uphold public confidence in the admissions process.

2.0 Purpose and Context

The purpose of this policy statement is to provide a consistent framework for assessing applications from individuals with criminal convictions. It aims to ensure that all such applications are considered fairly and individually, considering the nature and relevance of the conviction, the time that has passed, and any evidence of rehabilitation. This policy is grounded in principles of equality, social responsibility, and safeguarding. It also supports compliance with relevant legal obligations, including the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and data protection legislation.

3.0 Scope

This policy statement applies to all applicants across all undergraduate and postgraduate taught, postgraduate research, and apprenticeship programmes, who disclose unspent criminal convictions during the admissions process. It outlines how disclosures are managed, assessed, and acted upon, including the roles and responsibilities of relevant University staff. This policy does not apply to spent convictions except where required by law (e.g., for regulated professions), nor does it govern student conduct or disciplinary issues post-enrolment, which are covered under separate University policies.

4.0 General Principles

Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from studying at the University. Each case is considered on its own merits. Factors considered include, but are not limited to:

- The nature and seriousness of the offence(s)
- The time elapsed since the offence(s)
- The circumstances surrounding the offence(s)
- Any pattern of offending behaviour

- Evidence of rehabilitation and personal development

Relevant statements from both the Taught and Research Admissions Policies affirm this principle of individual assessment.

5.0 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

As a registered user of the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) the University complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and commits to fair treatment of all applicants, regardless of conviction history.

A Disclosure will only be required where the course applied for includes elements that fall under the statutory requirements of a Professional, Statutory, or Regulatory Body (PSRB).

Course entry requirements available on the University website will indicate that applicants to such courses are subject to a satisfactory DBS Disclosure being obtained.

Key points:

- Applicants required to complete a DBS check must declare all convictions, cautions, charges, or conditional discharges once offered a place that are not covered by the DBS filtering rules.
- This information is managed in strict confidence by designated staff within the University.
- DBS disclosures from other organisations may be accepted only if the applicant is subscribed to the DBS Update Service and consents to a status check.
- Applicants will be consulted about any issues revealed before an offer is withdrawn.
- Applicants are made aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and a copy of the Code is available on request.

6.0 Commitment to fairness, transparency, and consistency

The University is committed to the fair treatment of all individuals, irrespective of background or personal history, including offending background. Applications are assessed based on academic qualifications, experience, and potential, and not solely on criminal history.

This policy is publicly available on the University's website at <https://www.hud.ac.uk/policies> and is made accessible to all relevant applicants at an appropriate stage in the application process.

7.0 Admissions Procedures

University staff involved in admissions receive training and guidance on how to assess criminal conviction disclosures in line with:

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Relevant internal procedures and confidentiality standards

Unless the nature of the course allows the University to ask questions about an individual's entire criminal record, for example those involving contact with children or vulnerable adults, we only ask about convictions that are not “protected” as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013). For all applications, certain old and minor convictions, cautions, reprimands, and warnings are subject to filtering rules and where the filtering rules apply these will not appear on DBS certificates and will not be taken into consideration. The filtering rules are available on the [DBS website](#).

Failure to disclose relevant, unspent convictions when required may result in withdrawal of an offer or of a place on a course.

8.0. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosures Containing Offences

If an applicant's DBS certificate includes relevant information, the case is referred to the University's DBS Panel. The applicant may submit supporting documentation, including:

- A written supporting statement outlining their case
- The DBS certificate
- References or supporting evidence
- Any mitigating information

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all supporting documentation is complete and submitted prior to the Panel meeting.

All documentation is anonymised before review. The Panel will determine whether the offer stands or is withdrawn. Applicants will receive a written decision with information on how to appeal if applicable.

POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS

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REVISION HISTORY

| Version | Date | Revision description/Summary of changes | Author |
|----------------|----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| V1.0 | 30 August 2022 | First redraft following disaggregation of Policy Statement on Staff Recruitment and Student Admissions Where Applicants are Ex-Offenders | Student Recruitment Manager |
| V2.0 | 29 May 2025 | Major Review Section 1, 2 and 3 New sections added. Section 4, 6 and 7: Text changed to improve clarity and understanding. Section 5: Text has been updated to | Student Recruitment Manager |

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| | | ensure policy aligns with DBS procedure and text changed to improve clarity and understanding Section 8: Additional section added to clarify what happens when an offence is disclosed. | |
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