

POLICY NAME: Rehabilitation of Offenders Policy

APPROVAL BODY: Trust Board

APPROVAL DATE: 16th July 2025

REVIEW DATE: July 2027

It is a legal requirement that all registered bodies and prospective employers must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and so not discriminate because of a conviction or other information disclosed. Employers who are regulated activity providers (including schools) are obliged to have a written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, which is available to applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines Altus Education Partnerships' approach to the recruitment of individuals with criminal convictions, ensuring compliance with:

- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance
- The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Code of Practice

This policy applies to all job applicants, employees, volunteers, and contractors engaged in roles involving work with children and young people.

Commitment to Fair and Safe Recruitment

Altus Education Partnership is committed to fair and safe recruitment practices that:

- Allow individuals with criminal records to access employment where appropriate.
- Prioritise the safety and welfare of children by ensuring safeguarding is at the heart of recruitment decisions.
- Comply with all relevant legislation, including the DBS Code of Practice regarding the fair treatment and handling of disclosure information.

Disclosure of Criminal Records

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974:

- Spent convictions do not need to be disclosed unless the role is exempt under the Exceptions Order (e.g., roles involving regulated activity with children).
- Unspent convictions must be disclosed where required.
- For positions where a Disclosure is required, the recruitment information will contain a statement that a disclosure will be requested for the successful applicant only.

To support fair recruitment and safeguarding processes:

- All applicants invited to interview will be requested to complete a self-disclosure form regarding any relevant criminal convictions.
- This self-disclosure should be brought to the interview in a sealed envelope marked '*For the attention of the Academy PA*'.
- The information provided will be handled confidentially and only considered in relation to the role applied for.

All posts within the Trust are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Therefore, all applicants must declare all previous convictions, including those which would normally be considered spent. Failure to disclose a previous conviction may lead to an application being rejected or, if discovered after employment has started, summary dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct.

A criminal record does not automatically disqualify a candidate; relevance, nature, and recency of the offence will be considered.

DBS Code of Practice

In accordance with the DBS Code of Practice, Altus Education Partnership will:

- Handle all DBS certificates and disclosure information confidentially and fairly.
- Use disclosure information only for the purpose for which it was requested, retained only for as long as necessary, and disposed of in line with the DBS Code of Practice.
- Not unfairly discriminate against individuals with criminal records
- Ensure all disclosure information is stored securely and accessed only by those authorised to do so.
- Comply with data protection laws when handling DBS certificates and related information.
- If an applicant disputes the content of their DBS certificate, they will be given the opportunity to provide clarification.

Safeguarding and Keeping Children Safe in Education

To align with Keeping Children Safe in Education:

- All recruitment decisions will prioritise child safeguarding.
- Any disclosed information will be assessed in line with KCSIE safeguarding guidance.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an objective discussion takes place about any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- The Headteacher/HR will conduct risk assessments for roles where applicants have criminal records, ensuring appropriate safeguarding measures are in place.
- Where necessary, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be consulted regarding any concerns.

Ongoing Monitoring and Disclosure During Employment

Employees must inform the school of any criminal convictions that occur during their employment if relevant to their role. Failure to disclose relevant convictions may result in disciplinary action.

Appeals and Complaints

Applicants who believe they have been unfairly treated due to a past conviction may appeal through the trust complaints procedure.

Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated to reflect changes in legislation, safeguarding guidance, and DBS Code of Practice requirements.