

FSC Code of Conduct:
Checking criminal records during recruitment and employment

Our Policy

The activities of the FSC are regulated by the Protection of Children Act. All new employees are required to undergo a Disclosure check with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) prior to appointment and at regular intervals during employment with the FSC as defined in its Code of Conduct. In addition, overseas appointments are required to produce a police check statement from their own country. The FSC complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice (a copy of which is available on request) and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. FSC has policy statements on the 'Recruitment of Ex-Offenders' and the 'Safe Storage and Handling of Disclosure Information', which we would encourage you to view at www.field-studies-council/appointments.

A person with a criminal record will be deemed to be acceptable for consideration for employment, unless they fail to meet the criteria laid down for the Class of post for which they are applying.

Our Process

All Disclosure searches will be initiated at Head Office, by either the FSC Chief Executive or Director of Operations, or other approved Counter-Signatory. The Chief Executive will be the Lead Counter-Signatory. Disclosure information will be disposed of as soon as practicable by shredding. A system will be in place to note the Disclosure number, class of post, name of applicant and date and a note for the file as 'appointed', 'conditional' or 'references unacceptable' and be signed by two of the above Counter-Signatories prior to shredding the Disclosure document. The final information, and information being processed will be stored in a secure place which has access restricted only to CRB authorised personnel. 'Appointed' in this context means meeting our criteria for acceptance. If an applicant is rejected on the basis of the Disclosure it will be on the grounds of 'references unacceptable' and the Unit Manager will be informed of this (one of the Counter-Signatories will discuss the situation with the applicant). If 'conditional', then brief details should be included with the file note. Only the Unit Manager at the Unit concerned will be made aware of a 'conditional' acceptance. Unit Managers must use their utmost discretion in making other key management staff aware of any 'conditional' acceptance. The system should produce a minimum number of 'conditional' acceptances.

As FSC is categorised as a 'Regulated Provider', an Enhanced level of search must be undertaken for all posts.

Post Classification

Class A posts:

- Key Management Positions as defined by the FSC procedures for appointment/promotions.
- Members of Teaching Staff (including Trainee and Associate Tutors) but excluding Tutors who do not teach unaccompanied children.
- Regular members of Duty/On Call teams.

- Members of Staff with a designated or assumed pastoral role for children, eg. the person who normally looks after sick/ill children if they remain at the Centre while the group goes out into the field.

Class B posts:

- All other full and part-time FSC staff.

Class C posts:

- Associate Tutors and temporary or occasional staff working in FSC Centres who may have occasional contact with unaccompanied children.
- Members of the FSC Executive Committee

The following criteria for acceptance will apply, dependent upon the class of post:

Acceptance Criteria

Class A - all convictions/cautions/warnings/reprimands are acceptable except:

- any offence resulting in the individual being barred through the ISA 'Children's List' or 'Vulnerable Adults' List'
- any offence resulting in a custodial sentence of more than 12 months
- any conviction in the last 10 years (or caution in the last 5 years) relating to theft/financial irregularities
- any conviction in the last 10 years resulting in a custodial or suspended sentence relating to supplying or offering to supply a controlled drug
- any conviction relating to supplying or offering to supply a controlled drug in the last 5 years
- any conviction resulting in a custodial or suspended sentence relating to possession of a controlled drug in the last 5 years
- any disqualification from driving, due to dangerous/reckless driving or driving whilst under the influence of alcohol/drugs, in the last 5 years (where driving is a specified part of the role)
- any conviction in the last 10 years (or caution in the last 5 years) relating to falsification of qualifications.

Class B - all convictions/cautions/warnings/reprimands are acceptable except:

- any offence resulting in the individual being barred through the ISA 'Children's List' or 'Vulnerable Adults' List'
- any offence resulting in a custodial sentence of more than 12 months within the last 10 years
- any conviction in the last 5 years relating to theft/financial irregularities
- any conviction in the last 10 years resulting in a custodial or suspended sentence relating to supplying or offering to supply a controlled drug
- any conviction relating to supplying or offering to supply a controlled drug in the last 5 years
- any conviction resulting in a custodial or suspended sentence relating to possession of a controlled drug in the last 5 years
- any disqualification from driving, due to dangerous/reckless driving or driving whilst under the influence of alcohol/drugs, in the last 5 years (where driving is a specified part of the role)
- any conviction in the last 10 years (or caution in the last 5 years) relating to falsification of qualifications.

Class C - all convictions/cautions/warnings/reprimands are acceptable except:

- any offence resulting in the individual being barred through the ISA 'Children's List' or 'Vulnerable Adults' List'

Any conviction/caution/reprimand which is identified above as an exclusion and which is conditional upon a period of time elapsing since the offence will result in the offence being identified as 'Conditional'. 'Conditional' offences, once the identified time has elapsed, will not be a reason to decline an offer of employment but may result in the Unit Manager being informed of the circumstances regarding the offence.

The FSC will request candidates to provide at interview one piece of photographic evidence, eg. passport, photo driving licence, and two other pieces of written evidence linking them to their current address, eg. bank statement, rent book, utility bill. The FSC will also require the successful candidate to complete a Disclosure Application Form which will be countersigned and processed at FSC Head Office by the designated individuals. Where photographic evidence is not available additional identification material will be required.

Candidates are able to take up their post prior to FSC receiving a CRB Disclosure, but until such time as CRB clearance has been received the individual concerned should not be the person in sole charge of children, either in the field or in the capacity of duty officer.

The FSC will take up two references for Class A roles as defined under the FSC procedures for appointment/promotion and at least one reference for Class B and C roles, except for members of FSC Executive Committee. The proposal and seconding of such members would constitute a reference appropriate for a Class C role.

The FSC will carry out a Disclosure check at the appropriate level for all staff on appointment (or reappointment), and may carry out further checks at 5 yearly intervals from the time of last check or at such other times that the FSC believes a check is necessary for the continued safe and effective operation of its Units.

The FSC will not appoint, or continue to employ, any staff who fail to declare a conviction or caution during the appointment process or whilst employed by FSC or who fail to meet the criteria set out for the post to which they have applied or been appointed. Whilst failure at any time to meet the criteria for their current role will be considered adequate grounds for dismissal, FSC will attempt, where practical, to redeploy staff to less sensitive roles or duties and to allow reasonable time for any appeals to be considered.

Any concerns regarding an individual's conduct whilst in post will be dealt with by reference to the FSC's policies on 'Child Welfare' and "Disciplinary Procedures".

This document is available to all current staff, and to potential staff prior to appointment, via FSC's website at: www.field-studies-council.org/appointments

The FSC will identify the main measure of success for this process as there being no individual offered a post that has to be retracted as a result of Disclosure information.