

The College of North East London

Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

1) Background

All individuals or organisations using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust and who are recipients of Disclosure information must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice. Amongst other things, this requires them to treat all applicants for positions who have a criminal record fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. It also obliges them to have a written Policy on the recruitment of such individuals, which can be given to all applicants for positions where a Disclosure is requested and to ensure that a body or individual at whose request applications are countersigned has such a written Policy. The College has used this model for this purpose. Adherence to this Policy will ensure compliance with the CRB Code of Practice in this respect.

2) Policy Statement

- As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the College of North East London (CoNEL) complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
- CoNEL is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sex, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- We have a written Policy on recruitment which does not discriminate against ex-offenders, and is available to all Disclosure applicants of the recruitment process upon request.
- We actively promote equality of opportunity and diversity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcome applicants from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

- Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. This information may be sent under separate, confidential cover, to a Personnel Officer and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- Unless the nature of the position allows CoNEL to ask questions about your entire criminal record, we only ask about 'unspent' convictions as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- We ensure that all those in CoNEL who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offenders. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.