Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders

It is a legal requirement that all registered bodies and prospective employers must treat DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed. Registered Bodies and 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 DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

Policy Statement

1. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants’ suitability for positions of trust, Co-op Academies Trust (CAT) complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
2. CAT is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of gender, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity, culture, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief, marital and civil partnership status, education, learning styles, caring responsibilities or offending background.
3. A summary of this policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is available to all DBS applicants on request.
4. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, knowledge and experience.
5. As a Regulated Activity Provider (RAP) most paid employees of CAT are in regulated activity with children and therefore subject to checks of the DBS children’s barred list in addition to enhanced DBS certificate.
6. In relation to volunteers and contractors, we only request a DBS check after a risk assessment had indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned.
7. For those positions where a DBS check is required, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
8. We expect all applicants to provide details of any criminal record history that is not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 (as amended in 2013) at an early stage in the application process.

Applicants should disclose details of any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, bind-overs and final warnings you may have in addition to any criminal proceedings pending against you. You should not disclose any criminal history that would be protected or filtered.

A statement of these details should be sent with your application under separate cover in an envelope marked ‘Private and Confidential - for the addressee only’ in the top left hand corner with ‘The Headteacher/Principal’ (or ‘Director of the Trust’ for central Trust posts) in the centre of the envelope and with the words ‘Conviction Information’ in the bottom left hand corner. Please forward these details prior to the date of your interview.

1. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process. Disclosed information will only be considered for shortlisted applicants. Disclosures for applicants that are not shortlisted will be confidentially destroyed and will not be considered during the recruitment process.
2. We ensure that everyone within the Academy who is involved in the recruitment process has been suitably briefed to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and its amendments and know how to access advice and support.
3. At interview, or on a separate occasion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any relevant offences or other matter that may 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.
4. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before considering withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. This discussion and any subsequent risk assessment may be undertaken by our HR team or another trained member of our Senior Leadership Team.