



Guidance for applicants

Additional information about the Trust

It's the staff in our academies who drive improvement on a day-to-day basis, and we're looking for colleagues who want to make a real difference to the lives of the children they work with; who want to challenge the consequences of poverty and disadvantage through education; who are committed to their own professional development and who want to be outstanding teachers, classroom assistants, administrators, leaders, and support workers across a wide range of roles in our academies.

If you are applying to work in one of our academies, further information can be found on their website. This will include news and general information about the academy, often including an introduction from the Headteacher/Principal, and copies of local policies - such as their Child Protection Policy.
<https://www.coopacademies.co.uk/about-us/ouracademies/>

For more information about Co-op Academies Trust
<https://www.coopacademies.co.uk/>

What is it like to work for us?
<https://www.coopacademies.co.uk/working-co-op-academy/>

Benefits offered
<https://www.coopacademies.co.uk/colleagues/benefits/>

Career support
<https://www.coopacademies.co.uk/colleagues/career-support/>

Advice on completing the Application Form

You are advised to read the following notes carefully as the decision to shortlist you for interview will be based solely on the information you provide in the Application Form. This advice is designed to help you complete the Application Form as thoroughly as possible. Information you provide in the Application form will be treated as confidential.



Both parts of the Application Form must be completed

Our Application Form is in two parts - Part A and Part B. Both parts must be completed and returned for your application to be considered by us. Please ensure that you create a personal reference number as instructed on each part of the application form. As part of our commitment to Equality and Diversity, we separate your personal details (Part A) from the rest of your application form (Part B) before it is given to the shortlisting panel.

Examine the information pack

Make sure that you read all of the information that you have been provided with about the role, the academy and the application process.

Presentation

- Use a **black pen** or type your Application Form.
- Check the spelling and that you have answered every question.
- Remember to sign the Application Form to declare that the information you have provided is accurate.
- Always keep a copy of the Application Form for reference.
- Ensure that you send the form to the correct address.
- Ensure that your Application Form arrives before the closing date, it is not our policy to accept late applications (although exceptions may be allowed in the case of disabled applicants who receive information in a different format, or who have difficulty in completing an Application Form).

Completing the application form

- **General.** Ensure that you read the application form fully before you write anything. Write out your application form in rough first to help you organise your thoughts. Ensure the information you provide is accurate. Applicants who conceal or misrepresent relevant information at any stage during the recruitment process are liable to disqualification.
- **Employment Experience.** Complete this section as fully as possible giving exact dates. Where you cannot remember specific dates, provide as good an indication of the time involved as possible.
- **Qualifications.** Where specific qualifications are required for the position, this will be included in the Job Description and Person Specification. It is important that you demonstrate on the application form that you have the relevant examination results and grades asked for. If your application is successful you will be required to provide verification of these qualifications. Make sure you include any NVQ's which you are working towards or have obtained if you are applying for a non-teaching post.



- **References.** In line with Department for Education guidance “Keeping children safe in education” we will generally contact referees to seek references before interview. If you object to your references being sought at this stage you may indicate this on the application form, or by contacting the recruiting manager.
- **Additional pages.** If you run out of space on the form you may attach additional pages (**please ensure you clearly write your name and the job you are applying for on each additional sheet you submit**); but **in no circumstances should this exceed 1,500 words**. This restriction does not apply to those applicants who declare a disability and, provide additional information, in order that consideration may be given to a reasonable adjustment.
- **CV’s WILL NOT** be accepted, with the exception of disabled applicants who have difficulty completing the standard application form.

Information in support of application

This section of the form is your opportunity to tell us about yourself and why you are applying for a post with Co-op Academies Trust, and the particular Academy where the post is based. Please refer to the job description and person specification, and describe how your **experience, knowledge and skills** meet the requirements for this job.

Top tips:

- Please read the Job Description and Person Specification carefully, so you understand what the position involves.
- Ask yourself why you are interested in the position? For example, would it be a promotion or, alternatively, a good career move sideways to broaden your experience?
- Do not simply repeat your career history. Pick out skills, knowledge and experience required by the Job Description and Person Specification and provide evidence / examples to show you possess them.
- Be as concise as possible: any additional information included should relate specifically to the post applied for.
- **Please note that applicants will only be short listed if they demonstrate that they meet the essential requirements of the Person Specification that can be assessed from the application form.** You must therefore, give evidence which shows how you meet the specification. If the specification states “able to use initiative and work unsupervised” it will not be sufficient to say “I can work unsupervised and show initiative” you must quote examples of your work/life which demonstrate these attributes.
- Mention any relevant experience you have acquired outside work, such as community, voluntary or leisure interests.



- Above all, gear your application to this specific job.
- Internal applicants must not assume any prior knowledge by the shortlist and interview panel and must give full details.

Equal opportunities

Co-op Academies Trust is committed to offering equality of opportunity in employment regardless of race, sex, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability or age. To monitor effectiveness of Diversity & Inclusion policies you are therefore requested to provide this information on the Application Form.

Disabled applicants

A disability or health problem does not preclude prospective applicants from consideration for a job and applications are encouraged from disabled people. Disabled applicants whose impairment prevents them from carrying out any aspects of a post are still encouraged to apply since it may be possible to change the duties of a post, or to provide specialist equipment by way of a reasonable adjustment. You are asked to indicate in the 'Personal Information' section of the Application Form whether your disability may prevent you from undertaking any of the duties of the post and why.

If you have difficulty completing the Application Form due to your disability you may alternatively submit a CV. However, this should still follow the same format as the Application Form, and you should ensure that you demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria in the person specification. Disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria of a vacant post will usually be offered an interview. You are asked to indicate in the 'Personal Information' section of the Application Form any arrangements which may need to be made in order for you to attend an interview.

Canvassing

You must not canvass members of the Academy's Governing Body or Academy staff who are part of the recruitment and assessment process. This means you must not seek their support or attempt to ask them to influence the decision – if you do, you will be disqualified.

Criminal convictions

All posts involving direct contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (Exemptions) Order 1974. However, amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected'. These are not subject to disclosure to employers, and cannot be taken into account. Guidance and criteria on the filtering of these cautions and convictions is given below.



Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of all unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of the interview. You may be asked for further information about your criminal history during the recruitment process. If your application is successful, this self-disclosure information will be checked against information from the Disclosure & Barring Service before your appointment is confirmed. Where a role involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children, schools and colleges, it is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

Further information is contained in Co-op Academies Trust's policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders (see below).

Childcare disqualification regulations

These regulations apply to some posts within our academies. If this is the case, you will be asked to complete a separate declaration form if offered the post.

Other pre-employment checks

Co-op Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as its number one priority. It follows robust recruitment, selection and induction procedures, which includes pre-employment checks including, but not limited to, Teaching Regulation Agency checks; e.g. prohibited list, General Teaching Council for England sanctions, s128 prohibited from management, European Economic Area, and Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks.

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.

1. As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, The Trust 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. The Trust 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 the Trust 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 shortlisted 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) prior to interview. This is done using the disclosure at Annex 6 in our Safer Recruitment Policy.

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.

If the completed disclosure is not returned prior to interview, the Trust reserves the right to withdraw the offer of interview.

9. 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.
10. 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.



- 11. 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.
- 12. 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.

What will be filtered by the DBS?

Since May 2013, standard and enhanced checks no longer disclose ALL cautions and convictions. Following a Court of Appeal ruling, the Government introduced a process of ‘filtering’.

How it works

‘Filtering’ is similar in its concept to the rehabilitation periods under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, instead of establishing what is ‘spent’ and so what doesn’t get disclosed on a basic check, ‘filtering’ establishes what *doesn’t* get disclosed on a standard or enhanced DBS check. Information that is filtered will be removed from a DBS check automatically the next time you apply for one. But it doesn’t get ‘removed’ or ‘wiped’ from police records. In practice, it means that if you’re applying for a job or role that involves a DBS check, you are legally entitled to withhold the details of anything that would now be filtered.

What it applies to

Cautions – Multiple cautions can be filtered, so long as the offences are eligible, and the relevant time period has passed for each. Each caution is dealt with separately in terms of when it’s filtered.

Convictions – Only single convictions that didn’t lead to a suspended or custodial sentence can be filtered, so long as the offence is eligible, and the relevant time period has passed.

Types of offences

Eligible for filtering	Not eligible for filtering
Common assault	Offences involving violence
Drunk & disorderly	Safeguarding offences
Many motoring offences	Sexual offences
Drugs offences only involving possession	Drugs offences involving supply
Theft (where no violence is involved)	



Filtering periods

Age	Caution	Conviction
Under 18	2 years	5.5 years
Over 18	6 years	11 years

For more information

<http://hub.unlock.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/What-will-be-filtered-by-the-DBS.pdf>