

## **UCAS Guidance – Relevant criminal convictions**

### **Criminal convictions**

To help the universities and colleges reduce the risk of harm or injury to their students and staff caused by the criminal behaviour of other students, they must know about any relevant criminal convictions that an applicant has. Please read the following carefully.

### **Criminal convictions**

If you have a relevant criminal conviction that is not spent, please tick the box; otherwise leave it blank.

If you tick the box you will not be automatically excluded from the application process. You do not need to provide any details of your conviction now. However, the university or college may ask you to provide further information at a later stage.

### **What is a relevant criminal conviction?**

Relevant criminal convictions are only those convictions for offences against the person, whether of a violent or sexual nature, and convictions for offences involving unlawfully supplying controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking. Convictions that are spent (as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) are not considered to be relevant and you should not reveal them.

### **What is the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974?**

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 aims to help people who have been convicted of certain criminal offences and have not re-offended since being convicted. If the person does not re-offend during their rehabilitation period their conviction becomes 'spent'.

### **Convictions after you have applied**

If you are convicted of a relevant criminal offence after you have applied, you must tell us and any university or college that you have applied to, or may apply to, during the application cycle. Do not send details of the offence; simply tell us and the universities and colleges that you now have a relevant criminal conviction. The universities and colleges may then ask you for more details.

**Additional notes:** for applicants to courses in teaching, medicine, dentistry, health, social work, veterinary medicine, veterinary science and courses involving work with children or vulnerable adults, including the elderly or sick people.

If you have a relevant unspent criminal conviction (see guidance above) you must tick the box. However, you should be aware that courses in teaching, medicine, dentistry, health, social work, veterinary medicine, veterinary science and courses involving work with children or vulnerable adults, including the elderly or sick people, are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and different rules apply with regard to criminal convictions.

You should also be aware that for these courses:

1. The university or college may ask you to agree to have a check, called an enhanced disclosure or criminal record check, and if they do so, you must comply
2. The university or college will send you the appropriate documents to fill in. Where this document comes from will depend on the location of the college or university you are applying to; see the table below
3. The information that will be revealed by the check will vary depending on the type of check required, however, it is likely that, for these courses, the university or college will require either a 'Standard' or

an 'Enhanced' disclosure check and either of these checks will reveal spent convictions as well as unspent convictions, cautions (including verbal cautions), reprimands, final warnings and bind-over orders, irrespective of when these occurred

4. This means that if you have a criminal conviction, spent or unspent, this information will be made known to the university or college (but not UCAS) as part of the check

5. If the check reveals that you have had a conviction, caution, reprimand, final warning or bind over, the university or college will need to assess your fitness to practise in the profession to which you are applying. Applicants to medicine, for instance, need to be aware that the General Medical Council will not permit students deemed unfit to practise to be entered on the Medical Register and so they will not be able to practise as doctors. Similar restrictions might be imposed by other professional bodies such as, but not limited to, those connected with law, teaching, accountancy, social work, banking and the armed forces

6. You may also be subject to further checks (before and/or after you complete your course) by any prospective employers who will make their own assessments regarding your fitness to practice in the relevant profession

7. If these issues are in any way relevant to you, you should obtain further advice from appropriate bodies. UCAS will not be able to assist you in this respect

8. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland you may also be required to complete documentation and maintain a registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) which will become operational from the autumn 2010. The ISA scheme is designed to allow universities and colleges to identify any individual that is barred from working with children and vulnerable adults, including elderly or sick people.