

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

(Northern Ireland)



- Field Studies Council (FSC) complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by the Department of Justice, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons, their nominees and other recipients of information by AccessNI under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for the purposes of assessing Applicants' suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes. We undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
- We are committed to equality of opportunity, to following practices, and to providing a service which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. We ensure that no applicant or member of staff is subject to less favourable treatment on the grounds of offending background. We actively promote the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. The selection of candidates for interview will be based on skills, qualifications and experience.
- We will require an AccessNI Disclosure only where the FSC have assessed that one is proportionate and relevant to the particular position. Where an AccessNI Disclosure is deemed necessary for a position, this will be clearly identified in the recruitment documentation for the post, which will contain a statement that an application for an AccessNI Disclosure check will be submitted in the event of the individual being conditionally offered the position.
- In line with the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (as amended in 2014), FSC will only ask about convictions which are defined as "not protected" for the purposes of obtaining a Standard or Enhanced disclosure.
- Should any individual notify us they have a criminal record we will ask them to complete a criminal record self-declaration form and the information will be treated in the strictest confidence. We will stress to individuals that they should be honest in their response. We will ask that this form be returned under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within our organisation and we guarantee that this form will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the decision-making process.
- At interview, or under separate discussion, we undertake to ensure an open, measured and recorded discussion on the subject of any offences or other matters that might be considered relevant for the position concerned. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment.
- Should any individual notify us at interview they have a criminal record the interviewing staff will liaise with Human Resources in this regard. We ensure that Human Resources staff have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of disclosure information. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training about providing work for ex-offenders.
- FSC undertakes to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure Certificate with the subject of that Disclosure before considering withdrawing a conditional offer of employment*.

- We undertake to make every subject of an AccessNI Disclosure aware of the existence of the FSC Code of Conduct, and supply a copy to all candidates either before or at the interview. A copy can also be accessed via www.field-studies-council.org/vacancies
- * We are only able to discuss what is contained on a Disclosure Certificate and not what may have been sent under separate cover by the Police.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily debar you from working with Field Studies Council (FSC). This will depend on the nature of the position, together with the circumstances and background of your offences or other information contained on a disclosure certificate or provided directly to us by the police.

This policy is available to all via www.field-studies-council.org/vacancies

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