

## **Department of Integrated Care/ School of Health and Social Care**

### **DECLARATION OF SUITABILITY FOR SOCIAL WORK 2016/2017**

#### **1. Introduction**

It is important that social work programme providers ensure that those who embark upon professional training are those most suitable to do so. To this effect, applicants will need to undergo the following checks:

- a) Enhanced checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and its successors; and
- b) Confirmation that any health condition they experience is not likely to impact upon their ability to practice safely.

In addition to these statutory requirements, universities may seek other relevant information to help them make a well-informed judgment about an applicant's suitability to enter social work training so long as this is done in a fair and transparent way.

This programme wishes to preserve entry to a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds and does not wish to automatically exclude students who have a criminal or disciplinary record, or have previously experienced poor health, or have had contact with social service departments. We recognise that in many instances, there is no simple criterion of suitability and thus, each case will be assessed individually.

You will be informed if your declaration is thought to require further consideration, and in the event that this results in your offer being withdrawn, you will be informed of the general reason (subject to any restrictions on passing on confidential information contained within the Data Protection Act 1998).

The arrangements for DBS, vetting and barring checks will be discussed during the selection day. Candidates who accept a place on the programme will be expected to pay for their DBS check. Please read and complete the following sections carefully. If you are unsure how to proceed or have any queries, contact the Admissions Tutor who will advise you. The information that you provide will be treated as confidential within the organisational boundaries of the BA and MA Social Work programme.

**In the interests of confidentiality, if you are not offered a place or conditional place, your envelope will be destroyed and your declaration will remain unread. Otherwise your form will be kept securely by the university and placed on your student file if you enroll here. Similarly, if you do not accept our offer your form will be destroyed.**

Please note; if you refuse to provide additional relevant information or otherwise assist in this process, the offer of a place on the programme may be withdrawn. Failure to disclose relevant information which is subsequently discovered could lead to a suitability investigation and your exclusion from training. While the University is making a prospective judgment as to your suitability to train as a social worker on its programme, the Health and Care Professions Council ultimately makes the decision whether you are suitable for entry on the register upon application at the end of your studies.

## 2. Declaration of Criminal Convictions, Cautions, Reprimands or Warnings

Posts entailing contact with vulnerable adults and children are exempt from the provisions of Section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Applicants are therefore not entitled to withhold information about **any** convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings, including those relating to juvenile offences, that are not "protected" as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013) – see guidance sheet attached

Please answer all of the following questions, If you answer yes to any of the questions, please provide full details in the space indicated at the end of the form. Please also use this space to provide any other information that may have a bearing on your suitability for the programme for which you are now applying, (Note that you do not need to tell us about parking offences)

In reviewing the information you give, the Panel will take into consideration a range of factors such as the age at which the offence was committed, the nature and seriousness of the offence and also whether it is likely the applicant could be placed with a stakeholder agency. Sourcing placements is very competitive and some stakeholder agencies will not consider students with a criminal record. If you do not provide this information, it is likely that your application will be automatically rejected.

### **1. Has a Court or Court Martial in the United Kingdom, or in any other country, ever convicted you of any offence or are you currently bound over?**

YES                      NO

If **YES**, please include details of the nature of the offence, the penalty, sentence or order of the Court, and the date and place of the Court hearing and/or the order binding you over.

### **2. Have you ever received a police caution, reprimand or warning?**

YES                      NO

If **YES**, please include details of the caution, reprimand or warning, including the date and reason administered.

### **3. Have you been charged with any offence in the United Kingdom or in any other country that has not yet been disposed of?**

YES                      NO

If **YES**, please include details of the nature of the offence with which you are charged, date on which you were charged, and details of any on-going proceedings by a prosecuting body.

### **4. Are you aware, of any current police investigation in the United Kingdom or in any other country following allegations made against you?**

YES                      NO

If **YES**, please include details of the nature of the allegations made against you, and if known to you, any action to be taken against you by the police.

**5. Have you ever been dismissed due to misconduct from any employment, office or other position previously held by you?**

YES            NO

If **YES**, please include details of the employment, office or position held, the date that you were dismissed and the nature of allegations of misconduct made against you.

**6. Have you ever been disqualified for the practice of a profession?**

YES            NO

If **YES**, please include details of the nature of the disqualification, limitation or restriction, the date, and the name and address of the licensing or regulatory body concerned.

**7. Have you ever been required to practice subject to specified limitations following fitness to practice proceedings by a regulatory or licensing body in the United Kingdom or in any other country?**

YES            NO

If **YES**, please include details of the reason given for the investigation and/or proceedings undertaken, the date, details of any limitation or restriction to which you are currently subject, and the name and address of the licensing or regulatory body concerned.

**8. Are you currently the subject of any investigation or fitness to practice proceedings by any licensing or regulatory body in the United Kingdom or in any other country?**

YES            NO

If **YES**, please include details of the reason given for the investigation and/or proceedings undertaken, the date, details of any limitation or restriction to which you are currently subject, and the name and address of the licensing or regulatory body concerned.

**9. Are you subject to any other prohibition, limitation, or restriction that means we are unable to consider you for the position for which you are applying?**

YES            NO

If **YES**, please include details of the nature of the prohibition, restriction, or limitation, when and by whom it was made.

**If you have answered "yes" to any of the questions above, please use this space to provide full details. Where appropriate provide details of the nature of any offence, date(s) of convictions/cautions/reprimands/warning, length of sentence/amount of fine and a summary of events leading to the offence (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):**

In line with legal principles regarding equality and proportionality, we do not require applicants or students to disclose details of any short or long term physical or mental health difficulties. However, social work is a demanding and sometimes stressful occupation and the practice of social work is often undertaken with people who are vulnerable, at risk, or whose capacity to manage their own affairs is temporarily or permanently impaired.

**Accordingly, the programme seeks to ensure that all students are willing and able to identify and manage their own needs in a way that avoids any risk to the safety of service users, or to themselves.**

**Please ensure you read this section carefully.** If you answer '**NO**' to any of the questions, you will be contacted by the Programme Director who will seek further information about your circumstances, and may make other inquiries to enable an informed decision to be made about your application. At this stage, you can make further representations in writing, and you may be invited to discuss your application directly with the admissions tutor or the programme director. In the case of medical conditions, with your consent, further information may be sought from your doctor, or a medical consultant but this will not be done by academic members of staff. As mentioned above, this will be managed by Occupational Health service colleagues.

***Please circle yes or no for each question***

1. **Should any health issues occur during the duration of your studies do you undertake to seek guidance from the medical profession?** An example may be that you have asthma and this is fine now, but during your studies it worsens.  
YES / NO
  
2. **Similarly do you undertake to seek guidance for any new or worsening of an existing medical difficulty that may occur during the duration of your course?**  
YES / NO
  
3. **Practice Placement: Should any health issues occur during the duration of studies do you undertake to seek guidance from the medical profession and agree to only undertake practice or placements when you are sufficiently well to do so?** YES / NO

*If you have answered 'no' to any of these questions, you are invited to provide further information in the box below.*

- I understand that the information that I have provided will be checked against my Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau or successor bodies disclosures and that my signature affirms that this is a full and accurate declaration.
- I understand that I must notify the admissions tutor and programme director of any change in my circumstances which might have an impact on the information included in this declaration.
- I understand that if I refuse to provide additional relevant information or otherwise assist in this suitability process that the provisional offer of a place on the programme may be withdrawn.
- I also understand that failure to disclose relevant information is regarded as a serious matter and that if it is discovered after I have been accepted upon the programme, it could result in a suitability investigation which may lead to exclusion from training.
- I give my agreement for the programme to obtain a health report from my GP, consultant, or other relevant person, if this is considered necessary.
- I agree that the information that I give may be used to assess my suitability for social work training.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## DECLARATION OF OLD AND MINOR CONVICTIONS, CAUTIONS REPRIMANDS AND WARNINGS

### GUIDANCE TO APPLICANTS

Changes to the legislation introduced in May 2013 have resulted in certain old and minor cautions and convictions, reprimands and warnings being filtered from criminal record certificates issued by the DBS.

The filtering rules for criminal record check certificates are as follows:

For those 18 or over at the time of the offence:

An adult conviction will be removed from a DBS certificate if:

- 11 years have elapsed since the date of conviction; and
- it is the person's only offence, and
- it did not result in a custodial sentence

Even then, it will only be removed if it does not appear on the list of offences which will never be removed from a certificate (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-list-of-offences-that-will-never-be-filtered-from-a-criminal-record-check>)

If a person has more than one offence, then details of all their convictions will always be included.

An adult caution will be removed after 6 years have elapsed since the date of the caution – and if it does not appear on the list of offences relevant to safeguarding.

For those under 18 at the time of the offence:

The same rules apply as for adult convictions, except that the elapsed time period is 5.5 years

The same rules apply as for adult cautions, except that the elapsed time period is 2 years.

As a result applicants do not have to declare convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings which fall into the categories above. However failure to declare details of any convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings which subsequently appear on a criminal record certificate issued by the DBS may result in your application being rejected, or if you are accepted, in withdrawal from the course. June 2013