

## **Principles and Procedures for the Admission of Students who have a Criminal Conviction**

This document sets out the principles and procedures for the admission of applicants who hold a criminal conviction. These principles will be applied in the context of Arden University being a virtual online institution. These principles and procedures do not apply to courses where a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks may be required, where separate procedures would apply.

Having a criminal conviction does not necessarily exclude any applicant from studying a course with Arden University. However, Arden University has a duty of care to investigate all criminal convictions identified during the application process. Criminal convictions will not normally affect the decision of whether or not to admit an applicant unless the criminal record poses a risk to:

- Arden University's students, staff or the wider Arden University community
- The integrity of the programme
- The integrity of Arden University's processes and those of its awarding partners
- Reputation

Arden University requires applicants to declare any relevant unspent criminal convictions. Such offences 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. It is not necessary to declare minor cautions or convictions. Any convictions regarded as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, are not regarded as relevant and need not be revealed.

Applications that contain a declaration of a criminal record will first be considered on academic grounds in accordance with the normal admissions criteria. In considering applications any declared criminal convictions will be disregarded. If the applicant fails to meet the required academic criteria, the application will be rejected through the standard process.

If it is decided to offer a place to the applicant based on the academic criteria, before an offer is made to the applicant, the admissions team will request from the applicant full written details of the offence(s) using the annexed correspondence template. Once received, the details will be assessed by the Head of Admissions who will determine whether the offer should be made, and if any special conditions should be attached to the offer. All cases of a serious conviction (i.e. one that is deemed to pose a risk to Arden University or its community) will be referred to Arden University's Senior Admissions Committee for decision.

Where deemed appropriate, the applicant may be required to obtain, or provide express written consent for Arden University to obtain an appropriate disclosure from other sources, such as the DBS or the Probation Service.

When considering the admission decision, the Admissions Committee will take into consideration:

- a) the nature of the offence(s);
- b) date(s) of conviction;

- c) penalties applied;
- d) the circumstances in which the offence(s) was/were committed;
- e) the seriousness of the offence(s)
- f) the number of any offences
- g) any pattern of offending behaviour
- h) any attendance/success on rehabilitation programmes
- i) a full written assessment of the risks the probation officer considers material to the admission of the applicant on to the course in question
- j) The risks posed to Arden University (as defined above)
- k) The potential impact on students, staff and other s with whom the applicant will have contact

The Admissions Committee has the authority to:

- a) refuse the application of any individual;
- b) lay down such conditions as it sees fit for the admission of an individual; and

Notification of the decision whether to accept or reject the applicant shall be notified to the Head of Admissions. Where an application is rejected, the applicant shall be notified in writing with a summary of the reasons for the rejection.

All information obtained in relation to the criminal conviction will be held and disposed of in accordance with the Data Protection Act. The rationale for progressing the application in view of the criminal conviction will be recorded on the student record.

When registering the applicant with the awarding University, Arden University will provide the University with:

1. Confirmation of student name and student ID number
2. Copy of the applicants response to your request for further information about their criminal conviction
3. Rationale for progressing their application in view of the criminal conviction

<b>Last reviewed by:</b> Admissions Group	<b>Date of last review:</b> 25 February 2014
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## **Annex – Letter template to applicant who has disclosed a criminal conviction**

Dear {::future::Opportunities::contacts::first\_name::},

Thank you for your application to study the [::COURSE\_NAME::] awarded by [::COURSE\_PROVIDER::] for the [::ENROLLMENT\_DATE\_FY::] intake.

I note from your application form that you have declared you have a criminal conviction(s). **If you have mistakenly placed a cross in the “yes” box, please reply to this email stating that in fact you have no relevant convictions.**

In most cases an applicant’s criminal offences do not have any effect on our decision as to whether or not we will make an offer of a place. However, I am sure you will appreciate that we have a duty to investigate further any declared offences.

I should be grateful if you would provide full written details of the offence(s), including dates, nature of the offence and sentence received, together with any reports from social workers/ probation officers etc. that you may have. Please note, it is not necessary to declare minor cautions or convictions. Please send this information as soon as possible and in any case within two weeks of the date of this email. If I do not receive a reply within two weeks we will regard you as no longer being interested in applying to Arden University and your application will be withdrawn.

Arden University may seek information from your social worker/ probation officer etc. particularly if you have not been able to include any report (see above). It would be very helpful if you could include the name and address of any social worker etc, who will be able to supply “supporting information”. We will assume that in supplying the contact details you are agreeing to our contacting the person named for further information.

Arden University may require you to obtain a certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service. If we do require this we will write to you with full information on obtaining the certificate.

You are only required to reveal “relevant” offences. Such offences 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. Any convictions regarded as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, are not regarded as relevant and need not be revealed.

If you are convicted of any criminal offence after making your application you must inform Arden University immediately.

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and will not be revealed to anyone except staff directly involved in considering whether or not the criminal conviction(s) prevent your application from being considered further.

If you wish to discuss this further, please do not contact to contact me on 0800 268 7737 or +44(0)24 765 15700.