



## Retention and Handling of DBS Certificates

### 1. Introduction

This guidance is in regards to the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates and certificate information.

The [code of practice](#) states that all registered bodies must have a written policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of DBS certificate information.

It also obliges registered bodies to make sure that a body or individual, on whose behalf they are countersigning applications, has a written policy.

### 2.1 General principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, [Oxford Guardians complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

It also complies fully with its obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation which sits beside the amended Data Protection Act 2018 which places certain obligations on the Company, its staff and those who process data on our behalf. The EU GDPR was incorporated directly into UK law as the UKGDPR. We have students based in the EU and therefore the EUGDPR applies to services supplied to them. The EU approved adequacy decisions on 28 June 2021 this means data from the EU can flow as before in the majority of circumstances. We also comply with other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information.

### 2.2 Storage and access

Physical certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

## 2.3 Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

We are an organisation that requires retention of certificates in order to demonstrate 'safer recruitment' practice for the purpose of safeguarding audits and are legally entitled to retain the certificate. This practice will need to be compliant with the Data Protection Act, Human Rights Act, General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR), and is incorporated within our GDPR policy on the correct handling and safekeeping of DBS certificate information.

## 2.4 Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

## 2.5 Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints, or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits.

Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

## 2.6 Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, for example by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack).

We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we will keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the certificate was requested and the unique reference number of the certificates.

## 2.7 Acting as an umbrella body

Our umbrella body, United Medicare, will take all reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that they will handle, use, store, retain and dispose of certificate information in full compliance with the [code of practice](#) and in full accordance with this policy.

We will also ensure that any body or individual, at whose request applications for DBS certificates are countersigned, has such a written policy and, if necessary, will provide a model policy for that body or individual to use or adapt for this purpose.

| Date Reviewed    | Reviewed by | Next Review   |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 28 November 2020 | Kevin Bacon | November 2021 |
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