



**UNLOCKING
POTENTIAL**
Fair admissions for people with
previous convictions

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CONTENTS OF THIS TEMPLATE DO NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL ADVICE, ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE A SUBSTITUTE FOR LEGAL ADVICE AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON AS SUCH.

Convictions Policy and Process

Policy Statement on Applicants with Criminal Convictions

This policy covers admissions only. Separate policies may be in place for other aspects of life and study at [insert name of University/Institute of Technology here] (the “University”/“Institute”) such as (but not limited to) residences/accommodation, volunteering, representing and working for the University/Institute.

The University/Institute actively promotes equity of access and is keen to encourage a diverse student population with a wide range of talents, backgrounds and experiences. This includes prisoners, former prisoners and persons with convictions who are identified as an access target group. The University/Institute accepts that there is a robust, evidence-based criminal justice system and that it is the role and responsibility of the criminal justice system to determine an individual’s suitability for integration within wider society. Having a criminal conviction is not an automatic bar to enrolling on a programme of study at the University/Institute.

As part of the admissions process, the University/Institute will only require information on criminal convictions as follows:

a) Garda Vetted Programmes

Garda vetted programmes are programmes where vetting is conducted in accordance with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 and 2016 (the ‘Act’), in respect of any person who is carrying out work or activity, a necessary and regular part of which consists mainly of the person having access to, or contact with, children and/or vulnerable persons. The Acts can be viewed at <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/enacted/en/html>.

The University/Institute uses the Garda Central Vetting Unit (GCVU) vetting service to assess the suitability of such applicants, and in some cases, may also require applicants to provide an enhanced disclosure by the completion of an affidavit. Therefore, offers on these programmes are conditional and could subsequently be withdrawn if applicants do not meet the Garda Vetting requirements of the University/Institute. These programmes include teaching, social work, community work and youth work. A full list of the University/Institute academic programmes requiring Garda Vetting is contained in Appendix 1 of this policy.

b) Non-Garda Vetted Programmes

Applicants to Non-Garda Vetted Programmes will only be required to disclose their criminal record if they are currently subject to any licence condition or monitoring restriction that could affect their ability to successfully complete their studies. For example, restrictions on computer use or internet access would prevent a student from being able to successfully complete a computer science degree. In all cases where information is disclosed an assessment will be undertaken to include risk and potential accommodations and supports that the University/Institute may provide. In the majority of cases, applicants with a criminal record will not be subject to any restrictions and in those circumstances, applicants do not need to disclose. The types of licence conditions and/or monitoring restrictions that require disclosure will be outlined on each of the course information pages as they will be individual to a specific programme of study. Details of information that applicants are required to declare and how to do this will be clearly communicated. Further information and advice can be requested from the [insert name of relevant access office] at [insert email address of access office]. Where an applicant is subject to safeguards and/or restrictions and/or licence conditions that will in practice prevent study at the University/Institute, offers already made will be withdrawn or places will be terminated as appropriate.

4. In the event that an applicant fails to declare information as required, the University/Institute reserves the right to refuse to admit an applicant or cancel the registration of a person admitted. If an applicant has already registered on a programme of study this will be dealt with under the terms outlined in the [insert relevant disciplinary regulations].

5. Whilst an overall programme may not require disclosure of a conviction, there may be optional modules or placements which, if chosen, require an applicant to disclose convictions. This is where the optional module involves contact with children and/or

vulnerable persons and/or where an applicant is subject to any licence condition or monitoring restriction that could affect their ability to successfully complete that module. Where an applicant is prohibited from taking an optional module or placement, they will be required to select from the other options available to ensure that a programme of study can be successfully completed.

6. The University/Institute reserves the right to offer deferred entry to applicants where appropriate adjustments can be made to support study, but where there is not sufficient time to put in place agreed adjustments for the next programme intake.

7. Information on convictions will be disclosed only to those members of staff who need to know in order to make the relevant admissions or programme decision and will be held in line with the University's/Institute's Data Protection and Data Retention Policy. Where possible, details that could identify the applicant, such as name, will be excluded unless it is necessary to know the identity of the applicant in order to make the decision.

Process for Applicants with Criminal Convictions

8. The University/Institute process for applicants with criminal convictions is as follows:

a) Garda Vetted Programmes

Applicants who have been provisionally offered and have accepted a place on a relevant academic programme are sent a Vetting Invitation Form (NVB1) (with instructions and guidelines on how to complete the form) by the relevant academic department at the University. The stages that are involved in the eVetting process are described in the University's/Institute's [Student Vetting Procedures](#) [insert relevant link here]

Any issues raised by the vetting application will be dealt with according to the University's/Institute's [Student Vetting Procedures](#) [insert relevant link here]

b) Non-Garda Vetted Programmes

All offers for non-regulated programmes are conditional upon disclosure of all unspent convictions as outlined in our policy (see paragraph 3).

Where a conviction is declared, this will be subject to [insert name of decision maker(s) or decision-making body] approving an applicant as suitable for study.

9. The University/Institute requests that any information on offences, or any disclosure documents, be sent under separate, confidential cover, to [insert relevant contact details here]. We assure applicants that this information will be only used for the purposes of processing their applications and will only be seen by those who need to consider it as part of our admissions process and that it will not be retained longer than is necessary for the purposes of admission. Applicants are also entitled to access their personal data and to have any inaccurate, incomplete or misleading data amended or erased. Applicants for undergraduate study should note that the information should be submitted as early as possible but no later than [insert relevant date here].

10. The University/Institute may require the applicant to provide information from other third parties who may have a view on the above matters. The parties may include probation officers and others who are professionally or personally involved in the rehabilitation of or familiar with the applicant.

11. Where a conviction has been disclosed to the University/Institute by an applicant in the admissions process, the conviction will be reviewed by [insert name of decision maker(s) or decision-making body].

[HEIs may wish to insert further details in this section as to the relevant process to be followed, including, where appropriate, procedure for accepting submissions from the applicant and an appeals process]

12. Additional Information

Applicants should be aware that some professions will carry out criminal records checks on entry, for example law and accountancy, which may impact on your professional options upon completing the programme of study. We recommend that applicants wishing to study courses with a view to a particular profession, undertake research into professional requirements and take this into account when considering your degree options and choices.

13. For further advice and guidance on the options and support available to you, please do not hesitate to contact at [insert email address of access office].



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Appendix 1

University/Institute academic programmes requiring Vetting

This list is subject to annual review

Undergraduate programmes

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Postgraduate programmes

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Other academic work

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