

Harrow Council Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Harrow Council is committed to the fair treatment of all its staff, potential staff, and users of its services, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, or offending background.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential, and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions of trust which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order, using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Harrow Council complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against anyone on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from being employed by Harrow Council. This will depend on the nature of the role, professional suitability and the circumstances, nature and background of the offences.

Harrow Council can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that the Council is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended), Harrow Council will only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.

An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, recruitment materials will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.

At interview, or in a separate session, any offences or other matters that might be relevant to the position will be considered through an open and measured discussion. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

Any matter revealed on a DBS certificate will be discussed with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

This Policy Statement is made available to all DBS applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. A copy of the DBS Code of Practice and guidance on which cautions and convictions are now 'protected' and therefore not subject to disclosure to employers are available on the DBS website.