

**POLICY ON THE
RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS
WHO ARE EX-OFFENDERS**

Purpose

The University of Sheffield, Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics, is committed to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities, and subject to the overriding consideration of protecting children and vulnerable adults. This policy aims to ensure that all applicants for the Orthoptics B.Med.Sci (Hons) degree programme receive fair treatment throughout their experience of applying and studying at the University of Sheffield .

Scope

This policy applies to all applicants for the Orthoptic B.Med.Sci (Hons) degree programme only.

Policy Statement

1. The Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics employs the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure Service to assess an applicant's suitability for positions of trust. It complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice.
2. As Orthoptic undergraduate students will have regular contact with children and vulnerable adults as a necessary part of their degree programme, admission on to the course is subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) Section 4(2) (Exceptions) Order 1975 and the Department of Health Circular HC (88) 9 guidelines regarding child protection and police checks. All successful applicants are required to obtain an Enhanced CRB Disclosure prior to admission on to the course. Acceptance on to the course is subject to receipt of a satisfactory disclosure.
3. All Orthoptic course information published by the Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics will contain a statement that a CRB Enhanced Disclosure is required as part of the admissions process.
4. All applicants are required to provide details of any criminal convictions including spent sentences, cautions and bind-over orders on the UCAS application form. Applicants are also encouraged to contact the admissions tutor within the Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics at an early stage in the application process providing details of any criminal convictions. The admissions tutor will ensure that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
5. Where a student fails to reveal criminal record information, this could lead to withdrawal of an offer to study on the Orthoptics degree programme. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar a student's admission on to the degree programme. Admission will depend on the nature of the circumstances and

background of the offence, with due consideration given to the Unit's responsibilities to protect children and vulnerable adults.

6. Where it is revealed that an applicant has a criminal record, the admissions tutor from the Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics will decide whether the nature of the criminal record is such that the individual requires a risk assessment interview in order to establish if the applicants should/should not be offered a place on the Orthoptics degree programme. Each case will be considered individually and guidance will be taken from the Health Professions Council Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.
7. The panel at the risk assessment interview will comprise of the head of the orthoptic degree programme, the orthoptic admissions tutor and an admissions person from another health profession degree programme at the University of Sheffield.
8. Prior to undertaking the risk assessment interview, all members of staff involved are required to have familiarised themselves with the Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics' Policy on the recruitment of students who are ex-offenders.
9. The Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics undertakes to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the student before withdrawing an offer of a place on the Orthoptics degree programme.
10. Information disclosed as part of the CRB procedure will be kept on file in a storage container for 6 months from the date of receipt, after which time the information will be shredded. Following this date only the name of the student, the date, type and reference number of the disclosure will be kept as a record of the admissions process.
11. The Academic Unit of Ophthalmology and Orthoptics undertakes to make this policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders available to all Enhanced Disclosure applicants.
12. During the study of the Orthoptic B.Med.Sci (Hons) degree programme, students should inform the programme leader, in confidence, of any changes to their circumstances which affect their criminal status, in order that the impact upon their suitability to continue with their studies may be reviewed.

For further information about the CRB disclosure policy statement given by the University of Sheffield please visit: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/crbpolicystatement>