



## **Policy Statement on the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates and certificate information for applicants to University of Exeter programmes.**

Version: Final

Approval: Approved by the Admissions Policy Group (APG)

Date: July 2018

Review: Annual review cycle coordinated by Admissions Policy Officer

(This policy does not apply to applicants whose programme of study is offered at a Partner Institution or to applicants whose programme is wholly delivered by a partner FE or HE Institution).

### **General Principles**

As an organisation using the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the University of Exeter aims to comply fully with the DBS code of practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, and retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which can be found at <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/privacy/applicants/>

### **Storage & Access**

Certificate information is always kept separately and 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.

### **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 the University recognises that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

### **Usage**

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

## **Retention**

Once a relevant decision has been made, the University does 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.

## **Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, the University of Exeter will ensure that any DBS certificate information is destroyed by secure means, i.e. 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, the University may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, and the programme for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the applicant or student decision taken.