



28 October 2015

To: All Handbook holders  
From: UEC Office  
Subject: DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

Dear Friends,

### Updating our DBS application process

This document updates the procedure of applying for DBS Certificates via the UEC office.

**The rationale behind the DBS system** is to prevent those who are unsuitable or who may pose a risk to others from working with children or vulnerable adults. This applies to every organisation in the country where children are regularly present at the organisation's premises: all adults should be checked if they regularly work with children and are legally entitled to be checked. Periodically you read about failures of this system in the media. Because our Churches clearly include children, it follows that all adults working with them should be DBS-checked.

The UEC is a member of CCPAS – the Churches Child Protection Advisory Services – and benefits from the range of services they offer. They also run courses for Churches requiring information about child protection issues.

**Our overall duty of care** within the life of UEC Churches must include an active DBS system. Also, it can be a good witness to the local community, expressing as it does the wish to support children's and young people's groups as part of the Church's ministry and outreach. Indeed, you can request a certificate from the UEC office to put on your Church notice board to the effect that you seek absolute professionalism and show the public that your Church is a safe place for children; it will also have the effect of deterring any adult seeking to circumvent the system.

Currently, everyone who works with children (under 18 years old) and/or vulnerable adults is required to have a current DBS Certificate. UEC Ministers are the usual person to request an application from this office on behalf of the applicant, supervises them filling it in and collecting the proofs and evidence of their name and current address. In my capacity as Lead Recruiter (line 58 on the application form) I am required to see this evidence and check that all pieces of information are provided on the application form. I use this form together with a check list to CCPAS who processes the application through the DBS system.

Assuming the form is completed satisfactorily, DBS send the Certificate direct to the applicant, who should advise me they have received it.

This procedure has been approved by the Ministerial Committee, who will review it in a year's time.

**In future, there are a few changes** to the above system, in order to make it more robust.

1. UEC ministers (including Church Workers) *must* themselves be DBS-checked, and everyone involved (even occasionally) in working directly with children and/or vulnerable adults *must* be DBS-checked.
2. UEC Ministers will be encouraged to delegate the responsibility of DBS-checking the relevant adults to the Child Protection Officer (or Safe-guarding Co-ordinator, as this will cover working with vulnerable adults as well).
3. You will need to advertise the vacancy and prepare an interview system, including asking for two references. You should create own local (Church) application form for these vacancies, and keep a record of the outcomes.
4. You may wish to review your own Child Protection safeguarding policy and practice, tying it in with this updated DBS procedure, and note this in your records or Leadership Minute book.
5. It would be worth noting an action to review the policy every year or two.
6. From now on, line 62 in the application form will be the UEC not your own particular UEC Church. This is now a requirement of CCPAS, with whom I deal direct on your behalf.
7. Once the applicant has received their DBS Certificate, they must show it to me (not merely advise me they have received it).
8. If there is a problem with the application or the Certificate, or DBS have declined to issue a Certificate, then we will discuss the problem in conjunction with the applicant and their UEC Minister concerned. It may be simply a piece of information that doesn't tie up with other DBS checks (such as with the police) or it may be something of deeper concern. These discussions are entirely confidential with the applicant, the UEC Minister and the UEC Office. We also have the option of seeking confidential advice from CCPAS.
9. In order to ensure the safety of children who attend special events organised by your Church, please use a Parental Consent Form (see page 4.11).

**The following pages are a summary** of the complete CCPAS system. This is the procedure for you to use from now on, and are designed to help you get the application process started and completed with as little stress as possible. Please read these through to familiarise yourselves ready for when the next DBS applicant knocks on your door!

The UEC office can continue to act on your behalf, but if you prefer to handle DBS applications for your Church directly with CCPAS, please contact me and we can change the arrangements. If you have any queries about this revised proves, please contact me at any time.

Yours sincerely in His service,

Howard R Gardner  
UEC Company Secretary & Administrator.

The following is a **step-by-step procedure** to ensure your safeguarding practices is complete and watertight, and that adults in your Church applying of DBS checks are treated respectfully, and the DBS check is carried out quickly.

1. Ensure your Church has a Safeguarding Policy in place and complete, including the appointment of a Child Protection Officer (CPO) (this name will need to appear on the Annual Return sent to the UEC office).
2. When there is a vacancy, advertise it appropriately, including asking for two references. These could be members of your Church who have known the applicant for several years. Remember, these vacancies are for unpaid voluntary work, not paid employs.
3. Create your local application form for this vacancy, asking applicants to complete and send it to the CPO.
4. The Church leadership should interview the applicant(s) and decide on appointing (and keep all this paperwork securely afterwards).
5. The successful applicant will need to complete a Self-Declaration Form (see page 4.10) and send it to me at the UEC office.
6. If the Self-Declaration Form is clear, I will send a DBS Application Form to your Child Protection Officer, for the applicant to complete.
7. You can fill in Line 61 on the Application Form. The categories which you can choose from as describing most accurately the work of the adult applying for voluntary work with child and/or vulnerable adults are (and please use these words accurately – don't modify them):
  - a) Church Children's Worker
  - b) Pastoral Worker
  - c) Sunday School helper, assistant, teacher or leader
  - d) Trustee (this is the category for your Minister)
  - e) Associate Minister
  - f) CAP Befriender
  - g) CAP Debt Adviser
  - h) Church Music Group Leader
  - i) formal (qualified) Counsellor
  - j) Church Crèche Worker
  - k) driver of vehicles used for collecting and delivering children
  - l) Family Worker
  - m) Home Visitor (appointed for regular visits only)
  - n) Homeless Shelter Worker
  - o) Hospital Chaplain
  - p) Nursery Manager or Worker
  - q) Youth camp worker.

**PLEASE DON'T FILL IN ANY OTHER BOXES ON THIS PAGE**

8. Once complete and signed by the applicant in box 56, please arrange for me to see this form together with the required evidences. Please do not post anything to me, even via RMSD.
9. I will process the application form with CCPAS. Within about two weeks, the DBS will send the Certificate to the applicant.
10. The applicant must then post it via RMDS to the UEC office, where I will see it (but not take a copy) and return it via RMDS to the applicant.
11. DBS applications by members of your Church who used to be resident overseas (even if they are permanently settled in the UK now), will require special advice. Please contact the UEC office.
12. If the applicant shows evidence of previous offences which still appear on police records, you will need special advice. Please contact the UEC office.
13. Any incident taking place subsequent to the above process must be notified to the UEC Office.
14. Some applicants will have an existing DBS Certificate from their place of work or previous charity or Church work. These cannot be used unless the applicant registers with the DBS Update Service. This enables the UEC to accept that DBS Certificate in place of a UEC/CCPAS-produced Certificate.