

The London Interdisciplinary School

Admissions Regulations and Procedures for Students

Applicants Convicted of a Criminal Offence

The School acknowledges the role of education in rehabilitation, and also acknowledges that a criminal record may not debar an applicant from admission unless the nature and seriousness of the offence in question is incompatible with:

- The programme applied for; or
- Participation in an academic and social setting; or
- The School's responsibility for a safe and neutral environment for students and staff.

Any applicant to the School must declare on their application form if they have a relevant and unspent criminal conviction.

What is a relevant offence?

A relevant offence includes one or more of the following:

- a) Any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm, or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm;
- b) Sexual offences, including those listed in the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#);
- c) The unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking (drug offences only involving possession are not relevant offences);
- d) Offences involving firearms;
- e) Offences involving arson;
- f) Offences involving terrorism.

If an applicant was convicted outside the UK for an offence listed above, this is also considered a relevant offence. Cautions, reprimands and final warnings are categorised as convictions. Public notices for disorder (PNDs) and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are not convictions, unless an applicant has contested a PND or breached the terms of an ASBO/other order and this has led to a criminal conviction.

What is meant by "unspent"?

Convictions that are 'spent' or will be spent at the point of starting the course of study do not need to be declared. A criminal conviction is "spent" after a certain period of time. This period is defined by the [Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974](#), and depends on the court's sentence following conviction. Sentences of over 4 years in prison cannot become spent; most cautions, reprimands and final warnings are spent immediately. More information on offences and rehabilitation periods can be found [here](#).

If an applicant is uncertain as to whether their conviction is spent, they should seek independent advice.

What if an applicant has a relevant, unspent conviction?

An applicant with a relevant, unspent conviction is not automatically excluded from the application process. In line with best practice as defined by Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA), LIS will consider an applicant's criminal conviction separately from the rest of their application.

Where an applicant has declared a criminal conviction on their application form, the Director of Admissions and Student Experience will contact the applicant to seek further information on the conviction and to explain the School's procedure in relation to applicants with criminal convictions. It may be necessary for the School to approach third parties in order to request additional information (e.g., a police check on the applicant's criminal record; additional information from the applicant's referees or probation officer). The applicant's permission will always be obtained before approaching such third parties. A refusal of permission to the School may prevent further consideration of the application.

Details of any relevant, unspent offence will be considered by a Criminal Conviction Panel, comprising the Director of Teaching and Learning, Chief Executive, Director of Admissions and Student Experience and the Registrar. Where the Registrar deems it necessary, they will engage legal expertise to provide advice to the Panel.

The Panel will assess, in light of the documentation gathered by the Director of Admissions and Student Experience, whether the declared conviction(s) is/are such that the applicant ought not to be admitted to the School, or whether special measures should be put in place to facilitate effective support for the applicant and/or to protect other students and staff from risk. Where the Panel is in disagreement, the Chief Executive will have the final say.

The Panel will determine whether the nature and seriousness of the applicant's offence is compatible with the programme, with participation in an academic and social setting, and with the School's responsibility for a safe and neutral environment for students and staff. In coming to a decision, the Panel will take into account the following factors:

- The nature of the offence;
- The time that has passed since the offense was committed
- Any additional information provided by third parties (e.g., Social Services, the Probation Service, senior prison officers);
- Where more than one offence was committed, the number of offences, and whether each was a separate offence or part of a series of similar offences.

Where the Panel is satisfied that the nature and seriousness of the applicant's offence is compatible with the programme, with participation in an academic and social setting, and compatible with the School's responsibility for a safe and neutral environment for students and staff, the applicant's application may proceed as normal, and information about the applicant's criminal conviction will not be taken into account in any decisions about an offer. An offer may however come with specified conditions (e.g., support for the application, restrictions to services or activities not related to the programme), agreed by the Panel.

Where the Panel is not satisfied that the nature and seriousness of the applicant's offence is compatible with the programme, with participation in an academic and social setting, and compatible with the School's responsibility for a safe and neutral environment for students and staff, the applicant's application will be denied.

The Director of Admissions and Student Experience will inform the applicant of the Panel's decision. The reasons for the decision will be recorded by the Registrar, who will keep a record of all cases dealt with in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy. This record will ensure that any decision can be verified, to show that procedures have been correctly followed and to allow any feedback to the applicant if required. All records and correspondence relating to an applicant declaring a relevant criminal conviction will be securely stored in accordance with the School's [Data Protection Policy](#).

If a criminal conviction is declared and the offer-holder becomes a registered student, all records and correspondence relating to the application and supporting materials will form part of the student's personal record and will be kept in the way that all student records are kept. However, any information and correspondence relating to the applicant's conviction will be stored separately and securely.

If a criminal conviction is declared and the offer-holder does not become a registered student, all paper documents will be securely destroyed. The Registrar will keep a copy of the information relating to the conviction and this will be securely stored for a period of one year after the admissions cycle has ended, at which point all electronic and paper files will be deleted. This is consistent with the School's [Data Retention Schedule](#).

In the event that the offer-holder becomes a registered student, the Panel will determine who, if anyone, within the School should be provided with details of the conviction in order to facilitate effective support for the applicant and/or to protect other students and staff from perceived risk.

Information on the criminal conviction will be gathered and a decision reached by the Panel as promptly as possible, to ensure that delays to the standard admissions process are minimised.

An applicant who receives a relevant unspent conviction after applying to the School, whether before or after registration, must declare it immediately. The School reserves the right to withdraw or amend any offer of admission, or to prevent the enrolment and registration of, or to terminate the registration of any applicant that it discovers has withheld information about a relevant unspent conviction.

Placements and students with unspent criminal convictions

It should be noted that Employer Partners may ask students for information on unspent criminal convictions in shortlisting candidates for Placements. It will be made clear in publishing information on which Placements are available as to what information the Employer Partner will ask of students, before students indicate their preferences. This does not necessarily mean that a candidate with an unspent criminal conviction will be ruled out;

this will be determined by the Employer Partner on a case-by-case basis in line with their published recruitment policies.

It should also be noted that any employers in the UK (including major private and public organisations and the Civil Service) have [Banned the Box](#) in recruitment - which either means they have removed the criminal convictions tickbox from application forms and ask about criminal convictions later in the recruitment process, or that they exclude this information altogether.

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Version Control			
Version	Author [name]	Date	Brief summary of changes
1	Hannah Kohler (Director of Admissions and Student Experience)	08/08/2019	Copied from Admissions Regulations and Procedures for Students and made into a standalone policy to be linked to application form

2	Plum Turner (Director of Marketing and Recruitment)	10/08/2019	Updated links
3	Marielle Van Der Meer (Director of Partnerships)	14/08/2019	Inclusion of reference to partnerships