

Are the details about my convictions secure?

The College must ask every potential student whether or not they have a criminal conviction. The answer to this question (either Yes or No) must be given on either the application form or the Student Learning Agreement.

However, the detail of the offences only needs to be disclosed to the Deputy Head of Service for Student Services and SEND Support or designated officer. The information that you give during this interview will then be discussed confidentially with the members of the Risk Assessment Panel.

Information submitted through online and distance learning processes will be dealt with confidentially.

If the Risk Assessment Panel feel that they can only accept your application or enrolment if you agree to your course tutor(s) being made aware of your offences, they will be then told on a strictly confidential basis. If you would prefer them not to know, then the Panel may have no alternative but to recommend the termination of your application or enrolment.

The details of your offences are kept securely and separately to any other information the College may hold about you.

What if I need further information about how the process works?

You can get more information about the risk assessment process from Student Services.

The
**Sheffield
College**

Safe Learning for All

Information for those thinking
of coming to college who have a
Criminal Conviction.

Introduction

The Sheffield College is responsible for ensuring a safe and healthy environment for learners, staff and other members of the public who use our services. We take this responsibility very seriously.

Ensuring a safe and healthy environment encompasses a number of measures, from more basic things like ensuring the physical building is safe to use, to more complicated matters such as managing any risk arising from other people's behaviour – past or present.

As part of this commitment, the College asks all current or prospective students to disclose whether or not they have a criminal conviction. The question can be found on both the application form and Student Learning Agreement.

What must I declare?

You must answer Yes to the question on the Application Form or Student Learning Agreement if you have an unspent criminal conviction. However see advice below.

Is my conviction spent?

Some convictions or cautions become spent after a certain period of time. It is for you to check whether or not your conviction is spent. The definition of spent is defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

If your conviction is spent, you do not need to answer Yes to the question unless you are applying for courses which could lead to a career in one of the following areas:

Teaching, or an environment which involves working with children or vulnerable adults, healthcare, the law/legal environment, accounting and finance, veterinary practices, RSPCA, taxi drivers.

For these courses, you must tell us about any convictions, cautions, reprimands or final warnings, whether they are spent or not.

What if I am not sure how to answer the question?

If, having read this, you are still not sure whether you should tell us about a previous conviction, reprimand or final warning, you should get independent advice from a qualified professional. This could be someone from your local Citizens' Advice Bureau, the Probation Service or the Youth Offending Team. Alternatively a Deputy Head of Service for Student Services and SEND Support at the College would help you.

What happens next?

If you answer Yes to the questions on the application form or Student Learning Agreement, the College must carry out an assessment to ensure that your presence at college will not pose a risk to others or to identify whether there is any support we may need to provide for you.

In the meantime, the College will process your application or enrolment in the usual manner, subject to a satisfactory risk assessment being carried out.

If available, a college manager or designated officer will contact you about the risk assessment process in more detail and collect some information from you about the nature of your offences. They will be able to give you an indication about when a decision is likely to be made.

Your application or enrolment will then go before a Risk Assessment Panel along with the information you have disclosed. The panel may also take up references from your Probation Officer or Youth Offending Team worker if you have one.

The risk assessment panel may give the following outcomes:

- Confirm your application or enrolment without any restrictions (Green status)
- Confirm your application or enrolment with restrictions (Amber status – for example, you may continue to enrol on the proviso that your course tutor is made aware of your convictions)
- In extreme circumstances, the panel may decide not to give you permission to commence your course. As part of their response they will give you details of the reasons why this decision has been reached and how you can appeal against it.

Finally, the panel may also defer your application or enrolment until further information is obtained – such as references from your Probation Officer or the outcome of a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.