

TITLE:

Secure Use, Storage and Retention of Disclosure Information SOP

Summary of Contents:

This SOP sets out procedures for the use of information provided to SERC by AccessNI for the purposes of assessing Applicant's suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes.

Date First Created:
January 2013

CMT Approval Date:
21 January 2013

Responsible Owner:

Chief Human Resources Officer

REVIEW INFORMATION

Reviewed: December 2013
 December 2014
 April 2016
 April 2018
 November 2021

Next Review Due: 31 August 2024

Requires CMT Approval (yes/no):
Nov 2013: No
Dec 2014: No
Apr 2016: No

Previous Reference (for control purposes):
SO116:12/13

1.0 Background

South Eastern Regional College (SERC) complies fully with the Code of Practice, issued by the Department of Justice, in connection with the use of information provided to registered persons, their nominees and other recipients of information by AccessNI under Part V of the Police Act 1997, for the purposes of assessing Applicant's suitability for employment purposes, voluntary positions, licensing and other relevant purposes. The College undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly and not to discriminate unfairly or unlawfully against the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

SERC is committed to equality of opportunity, following practices and to providing a service which is free from unfair and unlawful discrimination. The College ensures that no applicant or member of staff is subject to less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, marital status, race colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, age, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependents, physical or mental disability political opinion or offending background, or is disadvantaged by any condition which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

SERC will request an Access NI Disclosure only where this is considered proportionate and **relevant** to the particular position. This will be based on a thorough risk assessment of that position and having considered the relevant legislation which determines whether or not a Basic, Standard or Enhanced Disclosure is available to the position in question. Where an Access NI Disclosure is deemed necessary for a post or position, all applicants will be made aware at the initial recruitment stage that the position will be subject to a Disclosure and that SERC will request the individual being offered the position to undergo an appropriate Access NI Disclosure check.

SERC agrees to abide by the following conditions in relation to all Disclosure information as described in Access NI Code of Practice.

2.0 Scope

This SOP applies to all staff.

3.0 Procedure

SERC will ensure that:

- Disclosure information is not passed to persons who are not authorised to receive it under section 124 of Part V of the Police Act;
- Disclosure information is available only to those in the College who need to have access in the course of their duties;
- Disclosures or a record of Disclosure information are not retained for longer than is required for the particular purpose. This will be no longer than six months after the date on which recruitment or other relevant decisions have been taken; or after the date on which any dispute about the accuracy of the Disclosure information has been resolved.

This period will only be exceeded in very exceptional circumstances which justify retention for a longer period;

- All sensitive and personal Disclosure information is stored when not in use in a locked and non-portable container in a secure environment;
- It co-operates with AccessNI to undertake assurance checks as to the proper use and safekeeping of Disclosure information; and
- It reports to AccessNI any suspected malpractice in relation to this policy or any suspected offence concerning the handling or storage of Disclosure information

4.0 Review

This Standard Operating Procedure will be reviewed biannually or sooner to reflect changes in legislation or circumstance.

5.0 Communication Plan

This Standard Operating Procedure will be published on the SERC Learning Engine.