

**Disclosure
and Barring
Service
(DBS)
checks
(previously
CRB checks)**

DBS

1. Overview

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged to become the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). CRB checks are now called DBS checks.

A DBS check may be needed for:

- certain jobs or voluntary work, eg working with children or in healthcare
- applying to foster or adopt a child

Who can ask for a DBS check

An employer can ask for a DBS check for certain roles.

DBS eligibility guidance lists most roles that are eligible for a check. However, the guidance isn't comprehensive so contact DBS if unsure.

Applicants (job candidates) can't do a criminal records check on themselves. Instead, they can request a 'basic disclosure' from Disclosure Scotland (you don't have to be from Scotland to do this).

How to get a DBS check

1. The employer gets an application form from DBS or an umbrella body (a registered body that gives access to DBS checks).
2. The employer gives the applicant the form to fill in and return to them along with documents proving their identity.
3. The employer sends the completed application form to DBS or their umbrella body.
4. DBS sends a certificate to the applicant. The employer has to ask the applicant to see the certificate.

If the applicant has subscribed to the DBS update service, the employer can check their certificate online.

Types of criminal records check

There are 3 types of check. The employer or organisation running the check should provide the applicant with more information about the level of check required.

Criminal record check applicants must be 16 or over.

Standard (£26)

This checks for spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, and will take about 2 weeks.

Enhanced (£44)

This includes the same as the standard check plus any additional information held by local police that's reasonably considered relevant to the workforce being applied for (adult, child or 'other' workforce). It takes about 4 weeks.

'Other' workforce means those who don't work with children or adults specifically, but potentially both, eg taxi drivers. In this case, the police will only release information that's relevant to the post being applied for.

Enhanced with list checks (£44)

This is like the enhanced check, but includes a check of the DBS barred lists, and takes about 4 weeks.

An employer can only ask for a barred list check for specific roles. It's a criminal offence to ask for a check for any other roles.

Volunteers

Checks for eligible volunteers are free of charge. This includes anyone who spends time helping people and is:

- not being paid (apart from for travel and other approved out of pocket expenses)
- not only looking after a close relative

An employer can only apply for a check if the job or role is eligible for one. They must tell the applicant why they're being checked and where they can get independent advice.

A DBS check has no official expiry date. Any information included will be accurate at the time the check was carried out. It is up to an employer to decide if and when a new check is needed.

Applicants and employers can use the [DBS update service](#) to keep a certificate up to date or carry out checks on a potential employee's certificate.

2. Documents the applicant must provide

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged into the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). CRB checks are now called DBS checks.

The person going through a DBS check (the applicant) must give their employer original documents (not copies) to prove their identity.

The documents needed will depend on the route the application takes. The applicant must try to provide documents from Route 1 first.

Route 1

The applicant must be able to show:

- 1 document from Group 1, below
- 2 further documents from either Group 1, or Group 2a or 2b, below

At least 1 of the documents must show the applicant's current address.

Route 2

If the applicant doesn't have any of the documents in Group 1, then they must be able to show:

- 1 document from Group 2a
- 2 further documents from either Group 2a or 2b

At least one of the documents must show the applicant's current address. The organisation conducting their ID check must then also use an appropriate external ID validation service to check the application.

Route 3

Route 3 can only be used if it's impossible to process the application through Routes 1 or 2.

For Route 3, the applicant must be able to show:

- a birth certificate issued after the time of birth (UK and Channel Islands)
- 1 document from Group 2a
- 3 further documents from Group 2a or 2b

At least one of the documents must show the applicant's current address. If the applicant can't provide these documents they may need to be fingerprinted.

Continuation sheets

The applicant can [download a DBS continuation sheet](#) for additional information they can't fit on the DBS application form.

Unusual addresses

The applicant must make sure they fill in the address part of the form correctly if they have an unusual address, eg if they live abroad, in student accommodation or a hostel.

Group 1: Primary identity documents

Document	Notes
Passport	Any current and valid passport
Biometric residence permit	UK

Document	Notes
Current driving licence – photocard with paper counterpart	UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands and EU (full or provisional)

Birth certificate - issued at time of birth	UK and Channel Islands – including those issued by UK authorities overseas, eg embassies, High Commissions and HM Forces
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Adoption certificate	UK and Channel Islands
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Group 2a: Trusted government documents

Document	Notes
Current driving licence – photocard (if you were issued a paper counterpart but don't give it to your checker)	All countries (full or provisional)
Current driving licence – paper version	UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands and EU (full or provisional)
Birth certificate – issued after time of birth	UK and Channel Islands

Document	Notes
Marriage/civil partnership certificate	UK and Channel Islands
HM Forces ID card	UK
Firearms licence	UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man

All driving licences must be valid.

Group 2b: Financial and social history documents

Document	Notes	Issue date and validity
Mortgage statement	UK or EEA	Issued in last 12 months
Bank or building society statement	UK and Channel Islands or EEA	Issued in last 3 months

Document	Notes	Issue date and validity
Bank or building society account opening confirmation letter	UK	Issued in last 3 months
Credit card statement	UK or EEA	Issued in last 3 months
Financial statement, eg pension or endowment	UK	Issued in last 12 months
P45 or P60 statement	UK and Channel Islands	Issued in last 12 months
Council Tax statement	UK and Channel Islands	Issued in last 12 months
Work permit or visa	UK	Valid up to expiry date

Document	Notes	Issue date and validity
Letter of sponsorship from future employment provider	Non-UK or non-EEA only - valid only for applicants residing outside of the UK at time of application	Must still be valid
Utility bill	UK – not mobile telephone bill	Issued in last 3 months
Benefit statement, eg Child Benefit, Pension	UK	Issued in last 3 months
Central or local government, government agency, or local council document giving entitlement, eg from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Employment Service, HMRC	UK and Channel Islands	Issued in last 3 months
EU National ID card	-	Must still be valid
Cards carrying the PASS accreditation logo	UK and Channel Islands	Must still be valid

Document	Notes	Issue date and validity
Letter from head teacher or college principal	UK - for 16 to 19 year olds in full time education - only used in exceptional circumstances if other documents cannot be provided	Must still be valid

4. Tracking the application and getting a certificate

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged into the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). CRB checks are now called DBS checks.

The person being given a DBS check (the applicant) can check on the progress of their application using the [DBS tracking service](#).

Employers can [track multiple applications](#) and order blank application forms online.

The applicant, employer and organisation that applied for the search will see the results of the check.

You can't access the [DBS update service](#) through the tracking service.

DBS certificate

Once the check is completed, DBS will send a certificate listing the results to the applicant. The employer will have to ask the applicant to [see the certificate](#).

Security features

Certificates have security features to prove they're genuine, including:

- a 'crown seal' watermark repeated down the right side, visible both on the surface and when held up to the light

- a background design featuring the word 'Disclosure', which appears in a wave-like pattern across both sides of a certificate; the pattern's colour alternates between blue and green on the reverse
- ink and paper that change colour when wet

The security features for a CRB certificate issued before 1 December 2012 are the same as for the DBS certificate.

Reusing a DBS check

A DBS certificate only contains information from a DBS check on a certain date and for a particular purpose.

Employers can accept a previously issued certificate but must:

- check the applicant's identity matches the details on the certificate
- check the certificate is of the right level and type for the role applied for
- carry out a free-of-charge status check to see if new information has come to light since the certificate's issue; the applicant must have already joined the DBS update service

Employers can accept a previously issued certificate without a status check but at their own risk.

CRB-branded certificates should be treated the same as DBS-branded certificates.

Lost certificates

DBS can't provide replacements for lost or destroyed certificates.

5. DBS barred lists

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged into the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). CRB checks are now called DBS checks.

Jobs that involve caring for, supervising or being in sole charge of children or adults may require an enhanced DBS check with a check of the barred lists.

This will check whether someone's included in the 2 DBS 'barred lists' (previously called ISA barred lists) of individuals who are unsuitable for working with:

- children
- adults

People on the barred lists can't do certain types of work.

There are specific rules for working in places where there are children - known as working in a regulated activity with children.

These are different than the rules for regulated activities for adults.

Refer someone to DBS

Contact the barring helpline for help referring someone to DBS.

DBS barring helpline

Telephone: 01325 953795

Find out about call charges

Employers must refer someone to DBS if they:

- sacked them because they harmed someone
- sacked them or removed them from working in regulated activity because they might have harmed someone
- were planning to sack them for either of these reasons, but they resigned first

You're breaking the law if you don't refer someone to DBS when you should.