



Guidance for RYA Affiliated Clubs and Organisations and Recognised Training Centres in Northern Ireland

Criminal Records Disclosures

All applications for paid or voluntary work with children or vulnerable adults should be subject to an appropriate level of scrutiny. The RYA's view is that the level of checking you carry out should be proportionate to the role and the level of risk involved. Your organisation should agree a clear policy on who to check and the level of check to be conducted and apply it fairly and consistently. You should at least ask for information about past work or relevant experience, explore the person's experience of and attitudes towards working with children and take up references. In addition the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003 makes it a criminal offence to knowingly employ someone (including a volunteer) in a 'regulated position' if they are listed as having been disqualified from working with children and/or vulnerable adults. If you have volunteers or staff in your organisation whose role involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children and young people (under the age of 18) and/or providing personal care or assistance to vulnerable adults, you can check that they are not on the relevant Lists by asking them to apply for an Access NI check.

Access NI has been set up by the Northern Ireland Office in partnership with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Department of Education and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. It enables organisations to check the records of people who will work with children and vulnerable adults, with their consent, as part of a safe recruitment policy. The records are issued in the form of 'Disclosure Certificates'.

Checks may only be carried out on applicants for posts covered by the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978. This means that they can be asked to disclose information about 'spent' as well as 'unspent' convictions. Excepted employments are positions of trust, including those that bring the person into contact with vulnerable groups such as young people under the age of 18 or adults with a disability, and those who manage these individuals. Your organisation should have a policy which states that a criminal record will only be taken into account when the conviction is relevant and will not necessarily be a bar to employment.

Organisations affiliated to or recognised by the RYA can access the Disclosure process through RYA headquarters in Hamble which is registered with Access NI, using the following procedure:

1. Contact the RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator, Jackie Reid (details below) and request an Access NI Information Pack. This can be sent by post or e-mail. It includes a simple User Agreement which must be signed and returned to the RYA before we can pass any Disclosure information to your organisation.
2. Conduct your recruitment procedure, making clear to applicants that if selected they will be required to obtain an Access NI Disclosure and at what level, Standard or Enhanced. The Enhanced Disclosure is required for people working in 'regulated positions' with children and/or vulnerable adults. It includes additional relevant information from the PSNI which does not form part of their criminal record.
3. Having decided that the applicant is suitable in all other respects, offer the post subject to satisfactory references and Disclosure. You should check the applicant's proof of identity (passport, driving licence etc).

4. Give the applicant the 'RYA Guidance for Applicants' and ask them to apply for either a Standard or an Enhanced Disclosure, depending on the nature of job and the level of contact with children. The application form can be downloaded from the Access NI website www.accessni.gov.uk/application-form.pdf If required the RYA or RYA NI (contact details below) can supply a printed copy of the form.
5. Check that the applicant has completed Parts B and C of the form correctly. Complete and sign an ID verification form (available from the RYA) to confirm that you have seen at least three identity documents, for example a valid passport, UK driving licence or original birth certificate. Complete Parts E1 and E2 stating your organisation's name and the role the applicant will be undertaking. The RYA will complete the remainder of Part E. If the applicant will be receiving payment for their work, either the organisation or the applicant (depending on your policy) must complete Part F and either attach a cheque payable to Access NI for £30 for an Enhanced Disclosure (£28 for Standard) or fill in the credit card section. If the applicant is a volunteer, tick the relevant box in Part F.
6. Send the Disclosure application form and ID verification form to the RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator.
7. The RYA completes Part E, counter-signs the form and forwards it to Access NI.
8. Access NI send the Disclosure Certificate to the applicant, with a copy to the RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator.
9. The RYA contacts the designated person in your organisation and states whether or not the Certificate contains any relevant offences. This information may only be passed to an officer, member or employee involved in the recruitment process. The RYA will not provide your organisation with a copy of the Certificate or divulge any other information about its contents unless the RYA's Case Management Group decides that the individual may present a risk to children and young people or vulnerable adults. The applicant may show you their copy if they choose to do so.
10. Based on all the available information, and having discussed any concerns with the applicant, your organisation makes a final decision on whether to confirm the appointment. The RYA is not responsible for the decision to appoint or for any consequences arising from that appointment.

The RYA undertakes to comply with the Access NI Code of Practice. The Code can be obtained from Jackie Reid at the RYA, or viewed on the Access NI website (details below).

Contacts for further information:

Jackie Reid, RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator
Tel: 023 8060 4104 Fax: 023 8060 4298 E-mail: jackie.reid@rya.org.uk

RYA Child Protection Policy and Procedures
Available from Jackie Reid, as above, or RYA website www.rya.org.uk under 'Working with Us'.

Access NI
Tel: 028 9025 9100 www.accessni.gov.uk

RYA NI
Tel: 028 9038 3812 www.ryani.org.uk E-mail: admin@ryani.org.uk