

Overseas Criminal Record checks

The Diocese of Ely and parishes are required to follow Safer Recruitment practices when recruiting staff and volunteers to work with our vulnerable groups. We seek to discharge these duties by asking applicants, where relevant, to apply for an Overseas Criminal record check. The information below sets out the current requirements.

**For those who are not British Citizens** a criminal record check should be obtained from their country of origin, going back to that country’s age of responsibility for criminal activity. In addition to this if they have lived, worked or volunteered in countries other than their country of origin for a continuous period of six months or more at any point within the previous 10 years an overseas criminal record check must be obtained for each relevant country.

**For British Citizens** – If an applicant has lived, worked or volunteered outside of the United Kingdom for a continuous period of six months or more at any point within the previous 10 years an overseas criminal record check must be obtained for each relevant country.

**For British Citizens** **born outside of the UK** – If an applicant remained in their country of birth over the age of that country’s age of criminal responsibility an overseas criminal record check must be obtained going back to that country’s age of responsibility for criminal activity.

Military Personnel – when personnel are sent on overseas postings engage in criminal activity, whether on or off base, information should appear on the UK’s Police National Computer (PNC). However, we are aware that not all military convictions do end up on the PNC. It is also possible that crimes committed outside of the base will not appear on to the PNC. Therefore, we will follow the same guidelines as for British Citizens as shown above. The same would also apply to the members of the military personnel’s family who lived overseas if applying for a role within the diocese.

All costs incurred to be met by the applicant.

A Certificate of Good Character – also sometimes referred to as “Certificate or Letter of Good Conduct” can be requested by an applicant, usually from the home embassy of the country(ies) that they have lived or worked in. The application process for the certificate varies from country to country and up to date guidance can be found on the Home Office website. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

Where the information cannot be obtained or is not available, the applicant should be asked to provide evidence of their attempt to obtain a certificate and the responsible person should take extra care when taking up references or checking any previous employment record and, in such cases, it would be advisable to seek additional references, as well as actually speak to referees on the telephone.  It is acknowledged that if someone has been travelling abroad, e.g. on a gap year where a number of countries would be visited, it will not be possible to obtain the information in this format. Therefore, it is even more important that the references and any previous employment or volunteer experience is verified.

There are companies who carry out overseas checks for many different countries, which may offer a more robust solution to the ‘Letter of Good Conduct’.

OSCRC- 01.2024