Cyngor Addysgu Cyffredinol Cymru
General Teaching Council for Wales

GTCW Policy for the Handling and Safekeeping of Disclosure Information

General Principles

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of qualified teachers making an application for registration with the General Teaching Council for Wales, the Council complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information. The Council also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information. This written policy is available to those who wish to see it upon request.

Storage and access

Disclosure information is kept securely, in a lockable, non-portable, storage cupboard with access strictly controlled and limited to members of the Registration and Qualifications Team who require access as part of their daily duties.

If a referral to the Professional Standards Team is made, the Disclosure information will be kept securely, in a lockable, non-portable, storage cupboard with access strictly controlled and limited to members of the Professional Standards Team.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information will only be passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. The Registration and Qualifications Team or the Professional Standards Team if necessary, will maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information has been revealed. It is noted that it is a criminal offence to pass disclosure information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information will only be used by the Council for the purpose of assessing a qualified teacher's suitability for registration with the Council. Disclosure information will only be requested for a teacher when their full consent for the request of the disclosure has been given.

Retention

If a qualified teacher is deemed suitable for registration immediately upon receipt of the enhanced disclosure information from CRB, registration will be completed and the disclosure information will be disposed of under the guidance as shown below.

If a referral has been made to the Professional Standards Team, once a decision has been made regarding the suitability for registration of a qualified teacher, the Disclosure information will not be kept for any longer than necessary. This will generally be for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for an extended period, the Council will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to the data protection and human rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

In line with the retention criteria above, the Council will ensure that any Disclosure information is destroyed by the secure means of shredding. Whilst awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in an insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). The Council will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, The Council may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the teacher, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the assessment of suitability decision taken.