

DBS Glossary of Terms

Thirtyone:Eight (31:8): DBS umbrella body that countersigns DBS applications on behalf of an organisation (e.g. the Diocese, a benefice or parish) and sends them directly to the Disclosure & Barring Service.

Umbrella Body: an organisation registered with the Disclosure & Barring service who can submit checks on behalf of other organisations that do not meet the threshold to register and submit checks to the DBS directly.

Ebulk: Term for the online system by which you can submit multiple DBS applications, or applications in bulk.

Disclosure & Barring Service: the government body responsible for criminal records checks and barring for those working with children or vulnerable adults (or in certain other specified roles, e.g. trustees of a children's or vulnerable adult's charity).

Eligibility: the DBS have a comprehensive set of criteria detailing which types of work with children or vulnerable adults is eligible for a DBS check and at what level – this is known as eligibility. 31:8 may query a DBS application if it is not clear how eligibility has been met. DBS eligibility is not optional; it is informed by legislation around the rehabilitation of ex-offenders which means ineligible DBS checks are unlawful and a breach of the applicant's rights.

Regulated Activity: specific types of work with children or vulnerable adults (as decided by the DBS) that make a person eligible for a check of the barred lists for work with children, adults or both – this is dependent on the exact nature of their duties and role.

Basic Check: these check for unspent convictions only and can be requested for any role with no eligibility criteria.

Enhanced Check: these check for unspent and spent convictions, and relevant police information, in cases where a person will be undertaking certain work or duties with children or vulnerable adults. The type of activities that are eligible are defined by the DBS eligibility criteria and must be adhered to stringently or a check may be unlawful.

Enhanced Check with Barring: these check for unspent and spent convictions, relevant police information and the relevant barred list (child, adult or both) in cases where a person will be undertaking regulated activity (as defined by the DBS) with children or vulnerable adults. The eligibility criteria must be adhered to stringently or a check may be unlawful.

Child Workforce: this applies to people who will be working in contact with children.

Adult workforce: this applies to people who will be working in contact with vulnerable adults.

Recruiter: 31:8's terminology for a person who will be initiating, ID checking and submitting DBS applications via their system, and who will have responsibility for ensuring completed DBS checks have come back clear (if not, the diocesan safeguarding team should be contacted). Recruiters must be registered with 31:8 via their registration form – please let the Diocesan DBS Coordinator know if you need recruiters added, removed or amended and they will communicate with 31:8 on your behalf. There are two types of recruiters: lead recruiter and additional recruiter. Every 31:8 subunit (account) must have a lead recruiter attached to it, and additional recruiters can be added as needed.

Subunit: 31:8's terminology for the account you will have access to to manage the DBS process. You will need to set up your log-in information and password following 31:8's instructions once you are registered. Once this is complete, for future logins via two-factor authentication, you will need to enter the organisation reference number (located at the top of your registration form – please note this), email address and date of birth, followed by your chosen password, before a one-time passcode (OTP) is sent to you.

ID Check: it is a DBS requirement that all DBS applications include an ID check so you can verify the information provided in the application is correct. You will need to view documents in-person unless extenuating circumstances apply (please seek advice first) and complete the online ID check form via 31:8.

Section Y: this provides information about the nature of the role, for example the role title, level of check (including whether a barred list check is required), whether the role is home-based and whether it is for a volunteer. Previously, this was included in the ID check online form, but with 31:8 it is separate – you will need to complete the ID check, and then complete Section Y before the DBS application can be submitted.

Volunteer: the DBS definition of a volunteer is defined in legislation as “Any person engaged in an activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party and not a close relative.” For DBS purposes, an applicant does not qualify as a volunteer if they will directly benefit from their position, receive payment (aside from travel and approved expenses), are on a work placement or course requiring them to do the role, or are in a trainee position that will lead to a full-time role or qualification.

Confidential Declaration Form: this is a Church of England requirement and separate to the 31:8 process, but must be completed by all applicants applying for an enhanced, or enhanced with barring, DBS check (those applying for a basic check should only answer questions one and two as legally there is no basis to ask the other questions). It provides the opportunity for self-disclosure of any information that may impact on a

person's suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults and should be assessed accordingly. If any information is disclosed, this should be shared with the diocesan safeguarding team so it can be assessed; although this does not necessarily mean the person can't undertake the role, you should wait for a diocesan outcome before the person starts in post.

Safer Recruitment & People Management (SRPM): DBS checks form just one part of the SRPM process, and it is important the full Church of England SRPM guidance is followed for all recruitment (volunteer or paid) for roles involving contact with children and vulnerable adults (it can also be used as good practice for other roles, bearing in mind proportionality and legality – e.g. a DBS cannot be sought if there is no eligibility, but other steps could be followed). Self-directed SRPM training is also available via the Church of England online training portal and should be undertaken by anyone identified as the person responsible for a piece of recruitment.

DBS Online Update Service: this keeps enhanced, or enhanced with barring, disclosure information (results of DBS checks) up to date on a rolling basis but is separate from the 31:8 system. Applicants must register for the Update Service themselves and maintain their subscription (free for volunteers) on a yearly basis. If someone is registered on the Update Service, provided the level of check and workforce required for their new role is the same, they do not need to apply for a new DBS check, but can instead present their original registered certificate and ID documents (as per DBS guidelines) so the Update Service can be accessed instead. Diocesan guidance is available, and the Diocesan DBS Coordinator can be contacted for further advice. Please note that all other elements of the safer recruitment process, including the Confidential Declaration form, should still be completed, and the Update Service is not available for Basic checks.

Overseas Checks: DBS checks only cover time spent in the UK, so if someone has lived overseas in the ten years prior to their check, additional checks will be required from the countries they have resided in, usually a certificate of good conduct or similar from the relevant authorities. This process varies from country to country, but please seek advice in the first instance if you are unsure. Usually this is something the applicant will need to obtain themselves, but the DBS offer a list of information covering most countries. Where there are difficulties, please inform the Diocesan DBS Coordinator.

Diocesan Outcome Letter: Previously, you were required to wait for a diocesan outcome letter confirming the results of a DBS check. These will no longer be required for checks obtained via 31:8 as you will be able to view results via the online system directly. It will clearly state if the DBS contained no information, or if you need to view the applicant's certificate because information has been disclosed – the online system won't tell you what the information is, it will only be printed on the certificate. Any information disclosed will need to be referred to the diocesan safeguarding team so it

can be assessed before a recruitment decision is made. Please keep copies of previous outcome letters for your records.

Useful Links for Further Information

Thirtyone:Eight: <https://thirtyoneeight.org/dbs-service/>

DBS eligibility: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-workforce-guidance>

DBS ID checking: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines/id-checking-guidelines-for-standardenhanced-dbs-check-applications-from-22-april-2025>

General DBS guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dbs-check-requests-guidance-for-employers#volunteer-applications>

DBS Online Update Service: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/digital-and-online-services>

Overseas checks: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

CofE Safer Recruitment: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-e-manual/safer-recruitment-and-people-management-code-practice>

Diocese of Worcester safeguarding: <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/safeguarding>

Contact the diocesan safeguarding team: <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/safeguarding/contact-the-team/>

If you have any queries or require further information about DBS checks, please contact the Diocesan DBS Coordinator by email: dbsadmin@cofe-worcester.org.uk, or by phone: 01905 732811.