

THE TUTOR WEBSITE

PRESENTS:

‘THE TUTOR’S GUIDEBOOK’

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PRIVATE TUTORS IN THE UK

IN ASSOCIATION WITH LOTUS TUTORS



Version 2

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The Private Tuition Industry in the UK

Until recently, there has been no governing body for home educators in the UK. However, In May 2013, The Centre for Market Reform launched a proposal to form The Tutors Association with the aim of providing minimum standards of education for private tutors and drawing up a code of ethics by which all members will be expected to abide. It's proposed that tutors teaching secondary-age pupils should hold university degrees in their chosen subject and tutors teaching children up to the age of 11 should hold a general degree in any subject.

Many of the UK's largest tuition agencies have shown support for the proposal of the voluntary membership which aims to promote quality assurance in the industry. The Association intends to hold an annual conference for tutors and organisational providers to facilitate the sharing of best practice.

The Tutors Association is due to launch its membership packages in October 2013. Both organisational and individual memberships include access to free or member-discounted legal and tax advice, insurance, discounted teaching and learning materials, publications, and seminar and conference attendance.

Previously, there's been much debate about how qualified a tutor needs to be in order to practice their trade. As a general rule however, it's considered that they should be significantly more qualified than their students. A tutor is far more likely to be seen as valuable in the eyes of a student or parent if they have shown dedication to the subject they are teaching. It also gives students and parents piece of mind that they know their content.

Qualified teachers often decide to offer their services as home educators to supplement their full-time teaching job. Newly qualified or retired teachers also offer their services as personal tutors. Qualified teachers are sometimes the preferred choice for students and their parents as their previous experience clearly shows their expertise. On the other hand, many students consciously decide to choose someone who is not a teacher, who may have a slightly different approach to learning.

Setting up a Private Tutoring Business

There are several things to consider when setting up as a personal educator. The first, being your qualifications. Having a relevant qualification in the subject you intend to teach, will improve your credibility to your target audience. Being educated to at least degree level will far increase your chances of being contacted by students and parents if you intend on tutoring on a self-employed basis. If you intend to work as a tutor in a school or college, it's likely that you'll need a Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE).

Get Safety Checked

Anyone in the UK who works with young or vulnerable people needs to undergo a Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) check. If you're registered with an agency or an employer, it's relatively easy to obtain a disclosure certificate but if you're a sole trader it can be more difficult as an individual cannot apply for a DBS check on themselves. There are however, umbrella bodies to which you can apply for one.

Charge What You're Worth

In the UK, home educators tend to charge somewhere in the region of £15 to £70 per hour, normally based on experience and qualifications. There are those who charge more than this and there are those who charge less. If you are educated to degree level, be sure not to undercharge for your services. Charging too low in order to undercut the competition doesn't reflect well on your ability and reduces the value that students and parents see in the industry.

Don't limit your Audience

Teaching adults can be just as rewarding as teaching school children. In order to tutor adults, you don't necessarily need to have a CRB certificate although having one will give your tutees piece of mind. Classes will most likely take place at local colleges, universities, and often, at places of work. Teaching adults can be a rewarding experience and can open up opportunities for specializing in specific areas of adult education such as dyslexia, which requires further training and experience.

Be Your Own Boss

One benefit of becoming a personal tutor is that you can enjoy fairly flexible working hours. Tuition normally takes place after school but it's essentially down to you and the student to arrange when you will meet for lessons. It can be beneficial to produce a written contract, outlining the content of your lessons, your rates, location and times.

Home Tutor or Travelling Tutor?

Before you deciding to offer your educational services, you have to consider where you will be working. For some people, teaching from home can be an effective means of earning a living from the comfort of your own dining room table. Here is a list of things to consider when tutoring from home:

- ▶ Where will lessons take place? Do you have enough space in your home to provide a comfortable and stimulating learning environment?
- ▶ Consider your utility bills. Will the cost of your utilities increase as a result of your tuition business?
- ▶ Do you need public liability or professional indemnity insurance?
- ▶ If you are a tenant, are you permitted to run a small business from your home?
- ▶ If you decide to become a travelling tutor, you may want to consider the following things:
 - ▶ How far will you travel and what impact will this have on your travel costs? Will you need to spend more money on petrol or bus fares?
 - ▶ What will you do about students who cancel at the last minute? Will you decide to use a cancellation policy?
 - ▶ Most private tuition takes place after school hours, so are you willing to give up some of your evenings and weekends?

Finding Students at the Start of the School Term

In general, tutoring tends to be seasonal, with busy periods and not-quite-so-busy periods. Students and parents generally start contacting tutors at the beginning of the school year in September then again in January, after prelim exams. It can however, take some time at the beginning of the school year for interest to pick up. Here are some tips to maximize your chances of being contacted by students:

Leaflets

Do some research of your local area. If you can identify the areas that young families live in, by distributing leaflets to those areas, you'll automatically increase your chances of reaching someone who might consider using your services. Try posting leaflets in areas which are near to high schools as there's more likelihood of families living nearby.

Create Your Own Website

As more and more people become internet savvy, searching through book directories is soon to be a thing of the past, so where better to start attracting customers than by creating your own website and advertising online?

There are a number of free website templates on the internet that can get you started quickly and easily. Many of these sites also offer web hosting to display your site. At the moment, Google are offering free website layouts, a domain name and web hosting for a whole year to encourage British businesses to get online. For more information, visit their website: [GBBO](#).

Register with an Agency

If you find yourself struggling to find students at the start of the year, you could also try registering with a tuition agency. One advantage of registering with an agency is that they will do most of your promotion and marketing for you. They will also be able to provide you with a steady supply of students to tutor and will collect payments from families directly, ensuring you are paid on time.

Word of Mouth

Often, the best ways of ensuring people contact you, is to build up a good reputation in your local area by word of mouth. Sometimes, a good word from a previous parent or student can do wonders for your services.

Sometimes, finding the most effective advertising methods involve some trial and error. It may be worthwhile setting up a business email address and telephone number, solely for the use of tutoring enquiries. This will make it easier to keep track of how successful your advertising has been.

Maintain Students Over the Summer - TEFL

Typically, over the summer months home educators tend to find it more difficult to find new students because of school summer holidays. One alternative is to consider Teaching English as a Foreign Language. A TEFL qualification can bring about many new tutoring opportunities as many international students look for English teachers to help with their tutorial work. Many businesses also contact self-employed TEFL tutors directly rather than using an agency.

A TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) qualification gives you the knowledge and the skills to teach English grammar in a classroom or one to one environment. A TEFL qualification is a qualification on its own and not something that cannot be gained as a result of other qualifications, e.g. an English Degree.

There are a few different TEFL qualifications available including [CELTA](#) (Cambridge English Language Teaching to Adults) and the [Trinity College of London's](#) CertTesol (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). When choosing a TEFL course it's important to make sure that the qualification that you will gain is recognised and accredited.

It can be a relatively quick process, gaining a TEFL qualification if you're willing to work hard for a few weeks and willing to pay for an intensive course. There are many language schools which offer courses and an intensive course lasts around one month and normally cost between £800 and £1000. It's important to make sure that the language school you choose is accredited by the AAELC (Association for Accredited English Language Centres).

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There's a vast array of resources available on the internet, providing further information about TEFL courses and the [Direct Gov](#) website is a good place to start. There are also lots of free English Language Resources available through the [British Council](#) and [TES Connect](#).

The UK School Education System

The National Curriculum is the system by which school-aged children are taught and assessed on their academic ability. The Curriculum dictates the subjects and stages pupils are taught throughout their school careers. From the age of five to sixteen, children who attend state schools are expected to learn under the National Curriculum.

The main aim of The National Curriculum is to ensure that all children are taught the same subjects at the same level and are educated from the same coursework.

Schools themselves, have the freedom to decide the way in which The National Curriculum is taught as long as its standards and guidelines are adhered to. In England, as of April 2012, the curriculum is set by [The Teaching Agency](#). In Scotland, [Learning and Teaching Scotland](#) (LTS) is responsible for the development of the Scottish Curriculum. Both websites have an array of information regarding the current school syllabus and examination procedures.

The Key Stages of Learning

The National Curriculum itself is laid out in terms of pupils' ages and year groups. Before starting school, children are taught under the EYFS, which stands for Early Years Foundation Stage – this normally applies to children under the age of five. From ages five until seven, children are taught at Key Stage 1 level, where the core subjects of Maths, English and Science are taught and assessed through examination. When a child reaches the age of 7, they are taught under Key Stage 2 until they reach the age of 10 or equivalently reach year 6 in their school year, where they undergo National tests and classroom examinations in the core subjects listed at Key Stage 1. These classroom examinations continue until a child reaches their seventh school year and are then taught under the Key Stage 3 criteria. When a child reaches the age of 14 or school year 10, they learn under Key Stage 4 and many begin taking their GCSE exams at this stage. Certainly, by the time a pupil reaches 16, students are generally expected to be taking their GCSE's.

Keys Stages and Private Tuition

The parents of children as young as 5 or 6 have been known to use tutors to aid their children's learning and many do offer their tuition services at the Key Stage levels. At this age, it's particularly important to be aware of a child's learning capacity and not to overload them with too much information or indeed, study time which may have a negative impact on their well-being. Those who offer their tuition services at primary education level, should be CRB checked and hold a valid, recent certificate to prove so.

Eleven Plus Examinations

Schools pupils sit the Eleven Plus examination in their final year of primary school. In the UK, all schools used to have this examination but in more recent years, only some councils use the exam. Many of the councils that do use the exam, do not teach the exam technique as part of the school curriculum, therefore eleven plus tuition is very popular in some parts of England. A good source of information on the 11+ plus exam can be found at [Eleven Plus Exams](#), a site which has been set up specifically, by a parent, in order to help others understand the 11+ system.

Tax Matters

Please be aware that the information below is only general information. For concise information on paying tax as a tutor, please contact Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, [HMRC](#).

From the moment you become self-employed, you need to register with HMRC, as you would need to in other form of self-employment. Technically, as soon as you receive your first payment for your private tuition services, you need to declare those earnings. Failing to register as self employed can result in you being fined.

How to Register as a Self Employed Private Tutor

The easiest way to register as self employed is to do so online. By completing a registration form, you are making HMRC aware that you are now working for yourself and you then become responsible for keeping track of your income and your expenses.

Once you are registered as self employed, you will be sent a Self Assessment Tax Return every year after the 5th April which will instruct you on how to declare your earnings for the previous year. This form will also highlight your deadline dates for when you need to return the form. If you choose to complete the form online, you are normally given an extended deadline to do so. Once you have submitted your form, you will then be contacted by HMRC and told how much income tax you owe for the period in question.

Paying National Insurance Contributions

Being self-employed also means paying your own Class 2 National Insurance contributions and if you earn over a certain threshold, you also need to pay Class 4 contributions. It is possible to defer your National Insurance payments and depending on your earnings, you may also be exempt from paying National Insurance altogether. In order to find out if this applies to you, please contact HMRC for further guidance and information.

Paying Value Added Tax (VAT)

If you are earning over a certain amount, you may also be eligible for paying VAT on the services that you provide. In the 2012/2013 tax year, you have to be earning more than £73,000 before you have to register to pay. It is also possible to register for VAT voluntarily.

Completing a Self Assessment Tax Return

As a home educator, you have to declare any earnings you make to HMRC as you would with any other employment, regardless of whether you work full-time or part-time. Please be aware that The Tutor Website is not a registered tax advisor but hopefully the advice in the article will provide you with some hints and tips for completing your tax return efficiently. Self Assessment tax return forms are issued to those registered as self-employed, every April, covering the previous 12 months (i.e. the tax year to the 5th April just passed).

Before You Get Started

In order to ensure that the process is as stress-free as possible, it's a good idea to gather all the information that you need beforehand. It's important to check that all your relevant paperwork is up to date. Legally, everyone who is self-employed needs to keep records of their income.

Here is a brief outline of some of the information that you may need before you begin completing your Self Assessment form:

Records of your income and anything you can claim as expenditure like expenses

- ▶ If you have PAYE employment as well as being self-employed, you will need details of any pay received from your employer
- ▶ Information on 'other income' including investments, savings and pensions
- ▶ Details of any capital gains that you might have
- ▶ Your P60
- ▶ Your bank statements or access to your online banking account

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- ▶ A cheque book and paying-in book

Here are some further questions to consider before completing your return:

Will You File Your Return Online or by Post?

Filing your tax return by post is the traditional method for declaring your earnings although there are several advantages to filing online. By filing over the internet, you are normally given a longer deadline and are able to save your application as you go.

Are You Self employed Doing More Than One Job?

If you have more than one self-employed job you'll need to fill in some additional pages on the tax return form. The supplementary pages - SA103S or SA103F – provide a space for you to declare any earnings you have gained from other jobs where you are self-employed.

Which Form Do I Fill In?

The form that you need to complete is called SA100. There are guidance notes to help you throughout the form and they tell you which parts you need to complete depending on your circumstances.

HMRC normally send you the forms you need and the guidance notes by post, however, you can also download the forms from the [HMRC website](#).

When Is My Tax Return Deadline?

The tax year starts on the 6th April and lasts until the 5th April the following year.

If you're returning your completed form by post, your deadline is 31 October. If you're completing your forms online, you have until 31 January the following year.

- ▶ Any tax that you owe must be paid by 31 January

Missing these deadline dates can incur a £100 penalty, regardless of whether you have taxes to pay or not.

Useful Contacts:

HMRC's Self Assessment helpline - 0845 9000 444.

HMRC's [Guide to Filling in Your Tax Return](#)

Improving Learning

In recent years, there has been a call for more involvement in student-centred learning in the classroom with the belief that students learn more effectively through experience. Traditionally, classroom-based teaching has involved students learning 'passively' from a teacher using a range of different mediums from blackboards to smartboards to power point with the teaching focus generally centred on the teacher and classroom technologies.

Home tuition by nature, although not exclusively, requires a more student-centred approach in a more student-focused setting.

- ▶ It was the philosopher Carl Rogers who brought the idea of student-centred learning to prominence in 1951, through his belief that students do not learn effectively through direct teaching and only the student themselves can facilitate their learning.

In the context of one to one teaching, it's important to find the correct balance between tutor and student focus. Whereas tuition has many advantages over classroom teaching, e.g. the tutor's undivided attention, it's ultimately the tutor who is the most knowledgeable in the subject area being taught and this should remain apparent throughout lessons.

Tutor VS student-Centred Learning

In order to decide how much control a student should have over their learning; the tutor first needs to assess a student's ability and be clear themselves, where the student needs to improve. This doesn't necessarily need to involve a range of tasked assessments; it would be quite possible to make such observations from a student's work in class through assessments and feedback from their class teacher. Once a tutor has an understanding of a student's ability, the question of strengths and weaknesses can then be posed to the student them self. Once it has been agreed where the improvements need to take place, the onus can then be placed on the student as to what steps they should take in order to enhance their learning. By using goal-setting strategies and breaking the ultimate goal into small, manageable tasks, a student consequently feels they are responsible for their own learning which increases motivation.

Confidence Building

Some people believe themselves to be naturally unconfident doing certain tasks. Confidence however, is a skill that can be learned like any other, through practice. People who consider themselves to be confident in a certain situation, have at one point, embraced their uncertainty. Through practice and taking action, it is possible for someone to change their perception of how they perform and to achieve their goals.

Feeling in Control

If a student feels they are in control of their learning, they feel more confident in their ability to succeed in their studies. One way of improving a student's confidence is to create an agreed structure to future lessons. Familiarity and repetition can help a student adopt a resourceful mindset and aid their learning. The structure of lessons will vary according to the subject and the level being studied.

Positive Language

During your lessons, try to use positive language as much as possible, even when correcting a student's errors. Try reframing the idea of 'mistakes' into something more encouraging. If you highlight an error, give a constructive explanation that leaves the student feeling enlightened rather than deflated. By the same account, it's important not to be overly-positive and to praise mediocrity. By using positive language honestly and effectively your student will know when they have genuinely achieved in a task and will respect your feedback.

Replacing Limiting Beliefs

As an educator, it's important not to accept the word 'can't' as a reason for a student's shortcomings. If your student is struggling with a particular concept or process, break it down into small, manageable chunks and take the time to explain the minor details. It is often the minor details that make all the difference. Ask your student to explain exactly what they don't understand about what they are studying and give a clear, concise explanation of the practice.

Self Expression

Encourage your student to express their opinions on everything relating to their studies including your suggestions. After a day of classroom learning and being taught mostly through a one-way system, encourage your student to ask questions that they may not otherwise get the chance to ask in the classroom for risk of embarrassment or due to time constraints. By letting a student know that their opinions are just as relevant as yours or their teacher's, they will develop a stronger sense of self-worth, knowing that their thoughts are valued.

The Confidence Effect

When a student starts to see an improvement in their learning, their confidence grows and often they find that the techniques they have learned from one subject can be transferred to another. This can have a knock-on effect and students often see their grades improve in other subjects too.

Challenging Behaviour

Most of the time, students are more than happy to use the services of a tutor, even if lessons have been arranged by a parent. At some point in your career however, you are likely to come across students who, despite your best efforts, do not engage with what you are trying to teach. This can take the form of students being bored during lessons, being easily distracted or even verbal confrontations.

- ▶ A 2005 report from [Ofsted](#) (Office for Standards in Education) states:

'The great majority of children and young people enjoy learning, work hard and behave well. Among the schools inspected in 2003/04, behaviour was good or better in 90% of primary schools, 68% of secondary schools and 80% of special schools and PRUs. However, Ofsted's annual reports have highlighted the fact that the behaviour of some pupils, usually boys, remains a serious concern for many schools and other settings. Their behaviour troubles others, affects the climate of the learning community and disrupts their own and others' progress.'

Here are some tips for managing challenging behavior from students during your one to one lessons:

- ▶ Focus on the quality of your teaching and make sure that what you are teaching is relevant. A student can easily get bored if they do not recognise the coursework. You can do this by checking you country's National Curriculum website.
- ▶ Do what you can to improve communication between you and your student. By checking in with your student regularly, you will get an idea of which approaches are working and which are not. Try simply asking your student what it is about the lessons that they do not find interesting. You may be surprised at how useful their feedback could be.
- ▶ Make sure you have a system in place for tracking their achievements. If a student can see small improvements in their leaning, they are far more likely to want to continue doing well. Make good use of the information you have about their achievements. Why not highlight their progress in a letter to their class teacher or to their parents in a progress report? Sometimes a little encouragement can go a long way.

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- ▶ Review your student/parent/tutor relationship and make sure that everyone has the same goals in mind. If anyone feels there are any barriers in place of achieving these goals then encourage honest and open communication.
- ▶ Be consistent with your praise and accurate with your feedback. If you have highlighted an area for improvement in the past and notice a marked improvement in effort on your student's behalf, let them know.
- ▶ Communicate with your student's class teacher and see how they respond to pupils with more challenging behaviour. See this information as a good means of targeting your approach to your student.

Revision Strategies and Exam Advice for Students

When it comes to retaining information, everyone has their own way of memorising material. A common anxiety of secondary school students is not knowing how to revise. This can come from feeling overwhelmed with the sheer amount of knowledge that a student needs to have, over a range of different subjects. By implementing effective revision techniques, including the organisation of their workload, a student can change from feeling anxious to feeling in control of their learning, relatively quickly. As a tutor, you may want to suggest some of the revision techniques below to see which styles your student instinctively feels would work for them.

Reviewing What You Know

Rather than just rewriting coursework notes, have your student recount what they know verbally. Afterwards, have your student skim read their notes for anything that they missed. This can be an effective way of assessing how much your student already knows and which areas need improvement. Using keywords and phrases can also be a good way to memorise difficult information as can creating acronyms.

Visual Techniques

Having visual representations of coursework can also aid in memorising important areas. Many students find that the process of creating mind maps can act as a reminder of coursework and provide a visually stimulating final product with all relevant information in the one place. Similarly, creating revision posters can act in the same way and placing post it notes with essential keywords around a study area can also stimulate learning.

Revising in Groups

For students who find it difficult to organize their revision time, organising a study group with friends can be beneficial. It may be an idea to arrange to meet in a public place such as a library rather than at a student's home where there are less distractions. Study groups can help put revising into perspectives and make a student feel that they're not alone in their struggles and successes. For some students,

teaching a subject to one of their peers can be useful for both parties - as the saying goes, 'if you want to learn something, teach it'.

Exam Advice

For teenagers of high school age, sitting exams can be nerve-racking. Passing on the following tips to your students can be used to calm nerves, reassure and encourage best performance. Before the Exam:

- ▶ Make sure you get a good night's sleep.
- ▶ Have a good breakfast in the morning.
- ▶ Get there early. You don't want to be rushing around on the day because you overslept or because the bus was late. Do what you need to in order to ensure you'll be there early – set an alarm clock the night before, arrange a lift to work etc.
- ▶ Take your study notes with you to read over before you step into your exam. By reading your notes just before you enter the exam hall, your mind will have already started focusing on the material and will help you find a confident mindset.
- ▶ Switch off your mobile phone.

During the exam:

- ▶ Take some deep breaths – a cliché it might be but you'd be amazed at how quickly it can focus your attention.
- ▶ Be sure to listen to the invigilator's instructions.
- ▶ Have all your materials ready to hand. This includes spare pens, pencils, rulers etc – once the exam has begun you won't be able to search through your bag for equipment.
- ▶ Read the instructions on the exam paper before you begin and make sure you have completed the cover sheet with your name, student ID etc.
- ▶ Block out all distractions.

After the exam:

- ▶ Relax.
- ▶ You may want to take the examination paper with you to look over the questions afterwards. Some people prefer not to look at the paper again and remove it from their minds, after all, once it's done, it's done.
- ▶ Some people prefer not to discuss the exam with friends afterwards. It doesn't matter how easy or difficult everyone found it, not everyone will have written the same answers.
- ▶ Try not to think about your performance afterwards and focus your attention on the next one. Speak with a teacher if you feel particularly anxious about how it went but try not to dwell on it too long.

Keeping Parents in the Loop

In most cases, enquiries for tuition tend to come from parents therefore they will be keen to know how your lessons are going. It's important to keep parents up to date with your student's progress and this can be done in different ways:

1. Speak with parents after lessons and then know what the lesson's focus was. Highlight any positive aspects of the session and let them know about which areas you intend on focusing on during the next lesson.
2. If you or your student's parents don't manage to discuss the lesson afterwards you can always keep contact by telephone or email.
3. Create a monthly progress report to show parents. Having a progress report can be a handy tool for revising what material you have covered throughout your lessons so far. It also allows parents to see exactly what you have been focusing on. It may also be an idea to include any assessment mark in the report or homework grades that you have given.

It's important to be honest with parents when discussing a student's progress and a good idea to strike a balance between praise and criticism. Over-praising a student can lead to false expectations for students and parents. You don't want everyone being disappointed on the day of the exam results because you were unrealistic in your expectations.

Likewise, being overly critical of a student's work can have negative effects on your student's morale and give parents an unrealistic idea that their child isn't performing as well as they could be. Try to frame criticism in a positive light using hopeful language. Rather than saying something is 'wrong' or a 'mistake', try to focus firstly on which aspects of the question they got right then address the issue of where they fell short.

Parents are always keen for their child to do their best. Try to be aware however, of parents putting all their hopes in you as a tutor without having any expectations of effort on their child's part. Although you are considered the expert in your subject, a certain amount of engagement from students is expected in order for them to produce the results that they and their parents are hopeful for. If possible, try to avoid giving grade predictions too early on in your series of lessons. Some parents will

push for you to give your opinion on what level your student should be achieving but don't feel pressurized into giving a definite answer if you are unsure or simply haven't spent enough time with the student. Sometimes parents will state that their child 'needs an A' in order to pursue future levels or careers even. It's important to be honest here, and set their expectations on their child's current ability level and to reinforce how much work needs to be done in order to achieve this result.

It's also worthwhile creating a Terms and Conditions document, stating your hourly rates etc, but more importantly, stating that although you will give your full efforts, you cannot guarantee that students will attain their desired grades. This isn't necessarily a reflection on your tutoring ability but can be due to external factors.

Overall, it's important to have a positive relationship with parents, built of trust and honesty.

Safety Awareness

As of the 17th June 2013, The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged into the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). As a result of this merge, CRB checks are now called DBS checks.

DBS checks are required for certain jobs or voluntary work. For example, someone may need to undergo a DBS check in order to work with children, work in healthcare or to apply to foster or adopt a child.

For people wishing to obtain a criminal record check in Scotland, the application process is different and is administered by Disclosure Scotland. In Northern Ireland, applications are overseen by Access Northern Ireland as part of the Department of Justice (NI).

Who Can Ask for a DBS Check?

Employers aren't usually allowed to ask job applicants about any previous convictions; however, for jobs that specifically require a DBS check, employers are allowed to enquire about spent convictions.

For more information on which roles require a DBS check, the DBS eligibility guidance lists most roles that are eligible for a check. However, the guidance isn't comprehensive, and it's advised that you should contact the DBS if you're unsure.

Employers provide applicants with a form to complete and return alongside any relevant documents proving your identity.

Who Can Apply For a DBS Check?

Employers can apply for a DBS check on behalf of potential or existing employees.

However, individuals can't apply for a DBS check on themselves and must be over 16 years of age.

A 'basic disclosure' is available for people who want to apply for a check on their own, which provides details of any unspent convictions. This can be obtained from Disclosure Scotland and be applied to from any individual anywhere in the UK.

Types of Criminal Records Check

There are 3 types of criminal records check. The employer or organisation requesting the check should provide the applicant with more information about what level of check is required.

- Standard DBS Check

A Standard DBS check costs £26 and details spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings. It normally takes about 2 weeks for a standard check to process.

- Enhanced DBS Check

Enhanced checks cost £44 and include all details outlined in a standard check plus any additional information held locally by police forces that is considered relevant to the post applied for.

- Enhanced DBS with list checks

An Enhanced DBS with list checks costs £44 and include all details outlined in an enhanced check plus a check of the appropriate DBS barred lists.

- Further Information

DBS checks for volunteers are free of charge. This includes anyone who spends time helping people and:

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

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

DBS checks don't have an 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 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 an existing certificate, for example, for a potential employee.

Personal Safety Advice for Tutors

- ▶ Always let someone know where you are going. Provide a name and address of the student you are going to visit.
- ▶ If you have any reservations about visiting a student, don't go. This may be because of how you perceived the student or parent over the phone or because of the area that you will be travelling to.
- ▶ Always carry a mobile phone with you. Let someone know when you have arrived at your destination and how long you intend on being in the property. Likewise, let someone know when you have left your destination.
- ▶ If possible, travel to your student's home by car. This is a far safer option than taking the bus or walking as you will be able to reach a safety point much quicker if necessary.
- ▶ Always plan your route to your student's home. Make sure you have good directions to where your student lives, especially if you are not travelling by car.

For more information on lone worker safety, please visit the [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#) website.

Useful Links

www.revisionworld.co.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/learning

www.bbc.co.uk/languages

<http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/>

www.deni.gov.uk

www.education.gov.uk

www.oxfam.org.uk/education

www.ltscotland.org.uk

www.learningdisabilities.org.uk

<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk>

www.sqa.org.uk

www.wales.gov.uk

Tutoring Forums

www.tes.co.uk/forums

<http://forums.moneysavingexpert.com>

Small Business and Tax Advice

www.bgateway.com

www.businesslink.gov.uk

www.completlycrb.co.uk

www.directgov.uk

www.hmrc.gov.uk

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

www.atl.org.uk

Safety Advice

www.nspcc.org.uk

www.suzylamplugh.org

Publisher Details

'The Tutor's Guidebook' was published in June 2012 by The Tutor Website.

Other Publications by The Tutor Website

[A Parent's Guide to Private Tuition](#), published 2012

[The Private Tuition Boom](#), published 2013

[The Tutor Website](#) is an online resource providing practical advice to students, parents and tutors on private tuition in the UK through our publications, blog articles and news items. We also provide free access to our tutor directory, allowing parents and tutors to find private tutors in their local area.