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DBS Disclosure News

June 2014



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of DBS Disclosure News. It's been a year since we launched the Update Service, which was a significant development for DBS.

To celebrate this milestone, we've devoted the majority of this edition to all things Update Service, covering everything you need to know. This includes, after listening to your feedback, important information that we are extending the window for the number of days you can join the Update Service with your certificate from 14 to **19 calendar days from the date of issue** (which is printed on the certificate).

We've also been speaking to you about your experiences of using the service, and Julie Shaw, Director at Vision for Education, and Janet Gerrard from The Duchess's Community High School, kindly share their thoughts.

Finally, this is my last edition as I am retiring from DBS and have handed over to Ian Johnston, the new Director for Operations (Disclosure).

I leave you with my best wishes and the knowledge that you're in very capable hands.

Sue Quigley
Director for Operations (Disclosure) – outgoing



Thanking Sue for making my transition a straightforward one, it's business as usual. You'll still receive all the latest operational developments and news here – only the picture on page one will change!

DBS carries out very important work in protecting the public and this is a really exciting time to be joining, as we continue to develop our focus on putting the customer first.

Previously, I was Operations Director, responsible for a portfolio of residential care homes nationwide. My focus was to do what's right for vulnerable, elderly people

while driving income, improving efficiencies to reinvest into the business and developing new products and services to compete in an increasingly competitive market.

I took this role as I was impressed by the relentless ambition DBS was pursuing to become a Centre of Excellence and the momentum to drive positive change. I'm delighted to have joined such a forward-thinking and ambitious organisation.

Ian Johnston
Director for Operations (Disclosure)

■ Plan of action

Our ambitious [three-year Strategic Plan](#) was published this month on our website.

The Plan, incorporating the one year Corporate Plan for 2014-15, sets out the nature of the functions that DBS performs on behalf of government. It looks at these functions over the subsequent three year period, and details how DBS will expand and develop on these to support government.

Our Chief Executive, Adrienne Kelbie, said: "The Plan includes major developments of our systems and

services. We continue to develop and modernise our core products and will see our business diversify quickly. We will make things easier for our customers and position ourselves as the experts for suitability information in response to government needs. Over the next three years, we look forward to developing our capabilities, widening our activities and achieving our potential as a new Centre of Excellence in our field."

■ Update Service: a year on

A year since we launched our flagship Update Service, we're thrilled that over 187,000 applicants have subscribed. It has complemented the safeguarding processes already in place – in the past year over 200 certificate status changes have occurred, prompting applicants to apply for a new certificate. Over 216,000 status checks have been carried out so far by employers and/or Registered Bodies, and the number of checks being carried out each day continues to grow as appetite for the service increases. Growing numbers of employers are also appreciating the time and cost savings that free online status checks bring. You can read more on our website about when you should carry out [status checks](#) and how to do it. Thanks for continuing to tell your client organisations about the service. This means they too can take advantage and speed up their recruitment processes, which plays an important part in driving customer satisfaction for the Update Service as our recent research tells us (see below).

Giving our Update Service users a voice

Our recent research, which we touched on in [last month's edition](#), showed encouraging levels of satisfaction – most citing the service's ease and efficiency. We're already looking at ways to use the views you shared, and the valuable insight around

barriers to service usage, to influence future developments. More on this to come...

Service users driving improvements

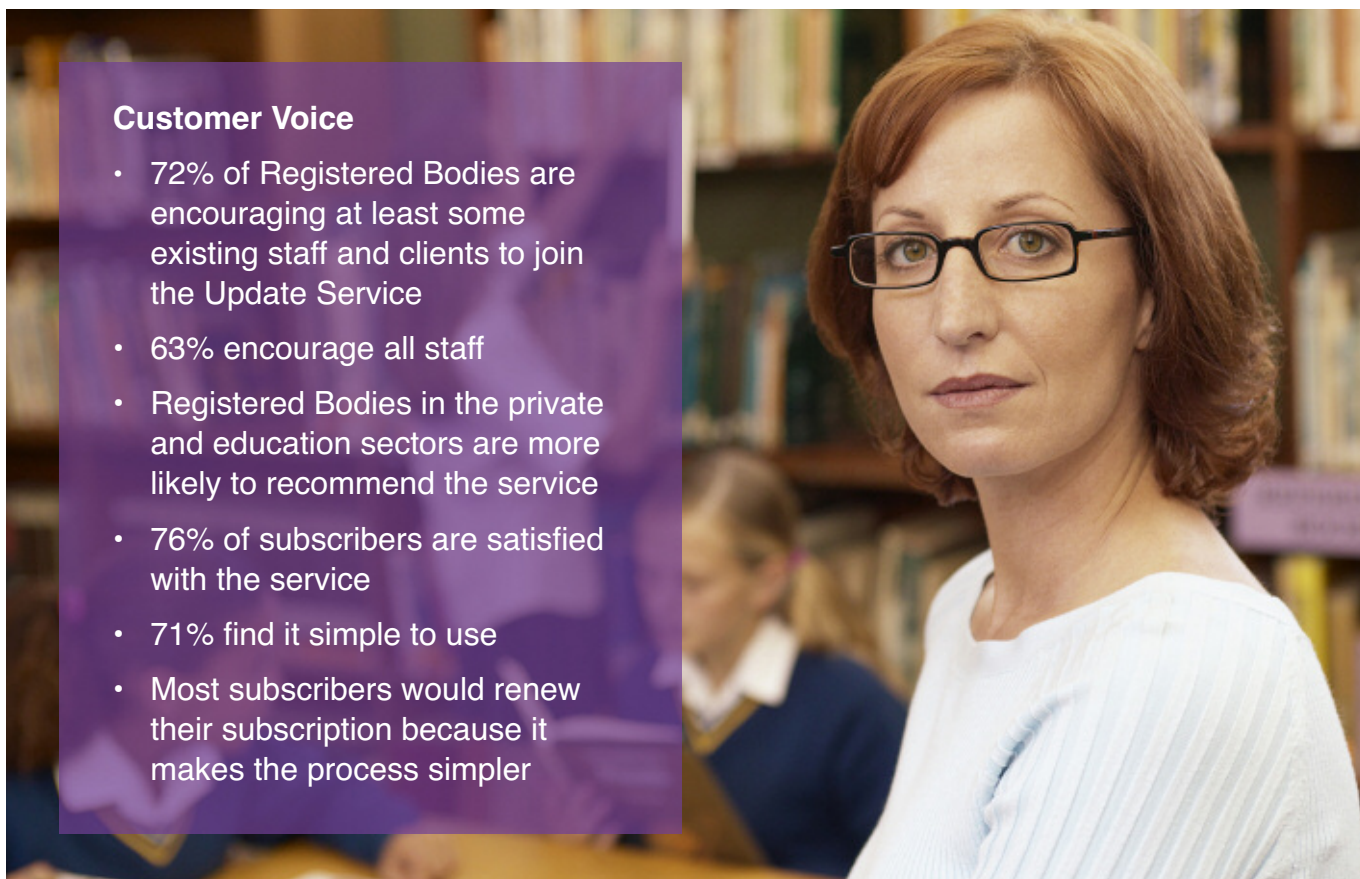
Our applicants really value your input – telling them about the Update Service as soon as they apply for a DBS check helps them to join early.

Some people surveyed said their employer might have a lack of knowledge of the service and how it could benefit their organisations and applicants. Some applicants don't know when to join and believe the employer handles the process. To help you guide applicants through, we've:

- distributed application form inserts and [uploaded the template to our website](#) for you to print and distribute to applicants directly
- produced a range of [Update Service guidance](#) on our website
- offered advice and guidance
- promoted the service and resources in DBS Disclosure News
- been in touch with organisations about the [multiple status checking facility](#)
- included information in external presentations

Customer Voice

- 72% of Registered Bodies are encouraging at least some existing staff and clients to join the Update Service
- 63% encourage all staff
- Registered Bodies in the private and education sectors are more likely to recommend the service
- 76% of subscribers are satisfied with the service
- 71% find it simple to use
- Most subscribers would renew their subscription because it makes the process simpler



■ Update Service: a year on

Vision For Education's experience



Vision For Education, a teacher recruitment agency, provides a local and personal service to schools and teachers. They've used the Update Service since it launched last June and have successfully integrated it into their processes and 92% of their applicants have subscribed. Julie Shaw, Director, tells us more...

"We require all of our candidates to register with the Update Service and we explain the advantages to them at interview. We check that a candidate is registered before they're cleared to work, having first seen their certificate.

When they register, we ask them to sign a declaration that gives us ongoing consent to check their Update Service record, and we encourage them to select the automatic renewal service, but of course this is their personal choice and they may choose to renew themselves. DBS also sends out a reminder four weeks before they're due for renewal.

We have in-house software that checks records for any changes in status of cleared candidates. This is carried out weekly and is the standard default for checking. This means the DBS check is always current.

We have peace of mind knowing that we've taken every reasonable step to ensure the safety of pupils. This gives candidates greater freedom to get work quickly. The DBS check is not the only safeguarding tool for agencies, but it's a very powerful one.

"The Update Service is ideally suited to the education sector..."

The Update Service is ideally suited to the education sector because of the safeguarding requirements and the size of the temporary supply workforce. It gives candidates flexibility and choice in relation to work, and ensures that safety of children is top of the agenda. There have been some recent service availability

issues, however, 'glitches' have been infrequent and I can't think of anything I'd improve. Candidates still get a little confused over the timings of registration, but we make the effort to guide and support them through the process – it's worth it.

We encourage candidates to renew their subscriptions – in fact it will be a condition of them continuing to work for us. We plan to contact them and hopefully there will be no need for them to have another DBS check.

After the initial learning curve, I believe the service has been one of the most dramatic and worthwhile changes to the way agencies operate within the Education Sector."

Janet Gerrard, Cover and Events Manager, The Duchess's Community High School:

"It gives great peace of mind to know that my preferred supply agency, Vision For Education, operate such a thorough safeguarding system. I'm especially pleased with the new DBS system and the knowledge that each of our teachers is checked regularly by the agency through the Update Service.

As a school, it's imperative we do all we can to ensure the safeguarding of our students and this is a major factor in deciding upon which supply agency to use."



"The advantages are obvious to all parties – schools in particular are reassured that all possible steps have been taken to ensure the accuracy of a candidate's record and that it's in real time."

■ Update Service: a year on

Update Service in education

The Department for Education has published statutory guidance, '[Keeping children safe in education](#)'. This explains that, if the applicant has subscribed to the Update Service, with permission from the individual, the school or college may carry out an online check of the status of their certificate.

Update Service in health and social care

NHS Employers have published '[An employers guide to using the DBS Update Service](#)', which explains the key aim of the Update Service.

We've also been working in partnership with the NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR) Central Team to develop a two-way link between the ESR and our systems. The new link triggers two key functions: Update Service status updates and barring notifications.

ESR will request regular updates on an employee's DBS disclosure record status and will notify holders of a new disclosure and safeguarding role when a change to an individual's disclosure status occurs.

This is now available to NHS organisations. Find out more at the [ESR website](#).

Applications vs. certificate – the best time to join

Approximately 81% of subscribers join with their certificate rather than at the point of application, yet they have more time to subscribe when they apply for a DBS check.

You've found the 14 day window is too short if applicants want to join with their certificate. We gave the service some time to bed into recruitment process and we've listened to your feedback. We've made changes

to our system to extend this window to 19 calendar days from the date of issue which is printed on the certificate. When you're notifying an applicant of the requirement for a criminal record check, in line with current legislation provisions, you can advise them of how to join the Update Service.

We've produced an [Update Service checklist and application form reference receipt](#) to help. Where possible, give the application form reference to the applicant so they can use it to join.

Making the service work for your organisation

As more applicants are hearing about the Update Service, you're developing new ways to evolve and meet their demands. The service can be quickly incorporated into existing suitability decision-making processes.

[The DBS Update Service: Multiple status checking guide](#) explains how to develop a system that will enable you to carry out status checks in bulk.

Providing incorrect information

If an applicant contacts us about an error on their certificate and it's an applicant or Registered Body error, a new certificate won't be issued. A new application needs to be submitted.

What does this mean for Update Service users?

Where an incorrect certificate is linked to the Update Service, we'll unlink it. A new application needs to be submitted and linked to the Update Service account. This means an additional fee for a new certificate will need to be paid.

Customer snapshot

A recent survey showed that applicants working in care are more likely to have been encouraged to join by their employer than average; those in education were less likely.



■ Update Service: a year on

Future service usage

In our recent survey:

33% of Registered Bodies stated they've plans to include the Update Service in staff contracts. The frequency of checks they intend to carry out varies, which reflects the flexibility the service offers and can help meet safeguarding requirements and complement recruitment processes.

After the interviewer gave more information about the service, 38% of Registered Bodies not using the service said they would encourage applicants to join as a requirement of their recruitment process. 35% are likely to encourage existing and new staff to subscribe.

88% of subscribers are likely to renew their subscription, citing that it makes the process easier, they need re-checks and multiple certificates and it saves time and money. Those not renewing say the service won't be useful for them in future.

63% of non-subscribers said they would be likely to subscribe after hearing more information. Those who wouldn't, feel the Update Service wouldn't benefit them. Organisations mandating the service and free provision would be key drivers to them using the service in the future.

How can we improve?

The Update Service has been a significant change for some organisations and has presented some challenges alongside its benefits.

Some of you feel the service would be improved if applicants were contacted directly about subscribing. We appreciate that applicant communication is key and this is an ongoing challenge we're striving to overcome as we don't have direct channels of communication with applicants.

We want to engage with applicants more by way of digital communication as our online channels are ever

more popular: 50% of applicants surveyed had visited our website and 90% of these were satisfied with it. Although satisfaction levels are high, we continue work with the Cabinet Office to try to influence website signposting to address difficulties people have experienced in accessing their accounts.

You've highlighted some areas you'd like improving – the time frame in which individuals need to have joined if they use their certificate in particular. The article '*Applications vs. certificate – the best time to join*' explains the benefits of applicants joining with the application form number.

Some of you have found the service difficult to integrate into your processes. Our article '*Making the service work for your organisation*' and Julie Shaw's experiences with Vision For Education may help you.

We've also taken away suggestions in relation to applicants being able to demonstrate their Update Service 'membership'.

You'd have liked more time to integrate the service into your processes. We've listened and, where we can, we'll keep you informed ahead of any future changes, developments and implementations.

There is [guidance on our website](#) that can help with any queries you may have about the service.

In the next issue

We will continue with our customer feedback theme: We will tell you about our recent survey of DBS Disclosure News readers, which has started to shape how we communicate with you, particularly in relation to service delivery and performance. We'll also have more to tell you about our disclosure customer insight and satisfaction research.

We hope you feel encouraged by our appetite for customer engagement – designed to give you, our customers, an influential voice.

■ Keep in the loop

For information on keeping your details up-to-date, see the 'changing your registration details' section on the [guidance for employers](#) page, or [DBS Disclosure News May edition](#).

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Guidance
Criminal record checks: guidance for employers

From: Disclosure and Barring Service and Home Office
History: Updated 18 November 2013, see all updates
Part of: DBS filtering guidance, DBS checking service guidance, DBS update service guidance, Helping employers make safer recruiting decisions, + others

■ ID guidelines: a reminder of planned changes

Last month, we told you we've been working with the Home Office to identify changes that can be made to our [identity checking guidelines](#) from 1 July 2014.

In particular, we've been looking at the use of adoption certificates and EU driving licences. The guidelines have been amended to provide that from 1 July 2014, adoption certificates are to be treated the same as an original birth certificate, and that EU driving licences are treated the same as a UK driving licence. This means

the Adoption certificate and the EU photo card driving licence now sit (from 1 July) with the other Group 1 documents.

The identity checking guidelines available on our website have now been updated to reflect this change. If any other changes to the guidelines are introduced, we'll give you plenty of time to make any necessary changes to your documentation and systems.

Contacts

Address:

PO Box 110
Liverpool L69 3EF

For Disclosure issues and information, please phone:

Customer Services	0870 90 90 811
Minicom line	0870 90 90 344
Llinell Gymraeg	0870 90 90 223

For Barring issues and information, please phone:

Barring helpline	01325 953 795
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We have two different telephone systems so we're really sorry that we can't transfer your call between

our offices.

Email:

customerservices@dbs.gsi.gov.uk

Websites:

www.gov.uk/dbs

Use our online tracking service to check the progress of DBS applications by visiting

<https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/tracking-application-getting-certificate>