

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**  
**TEAM INSPECTOR**  
**RECRUITMENT AND DEPLOYMENT POLICY**

**DATE OF POLICY: MAY 2019**  
**REVIEW DATE: MAY 2020**  
**APPROVED BY: CHIEF INSPECTOR**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the key stages of the Team Inspector recruitment and deployment process.

## 2. STATUS

To those who are successful in completing the recruitment, training and selection requirements, the role of Team Inspector is offered on a paid consultancy basis. Team Inspectors are self-employed.

### Expectations

All Team Inspectors are expected to commit to the following:

- Must commit to undertaking a minimum of one inspection per year, and two in the year following training.
- Must maintain a subscription to the DBS Update Service.
- Must commit to attending the annual conference and undertaking ongoing update training at own expense.
- Must commit to completing any further training at the discretion of the Chief Inspector
- Must sign the Team Inspector Declaration of Professional Conduct.
- Must read and agree to adhere to the ISI Inspector Code of Conduct, ISI Data Protection Policy and ISI Anti-Corruption Policy.
- Must be familiar with and follow all ISI guidance, which will be provided to successful applicants.
- Must have a private laptop with a recent, up-to-date operating system and the latest version of Microsoft Word for completing the Record of Evidence (RoE).
- Must be available and willing to travel to locations across the United Kingdom.
- Must keep their inspector records up to date.

## 3. RECRUITMENT OF NEW INSPECTORS

The ISI training team holds a mailing list for individuals who would like to apply to become ISI inspectors and existing ISI inspectors who would like to apply to train for new roles.

Applicants are directed to add themselves to the ISI training mailing list: <https://www.isi.net/inspectors/become-an-isi-inspector/>

## 4. APPLICATIONS AND SHORTLISTING

Applicants on the ISI training mailing list will be informed when applications open for Team Inspector roles. Candidates will have three weeks to submit their applications. Applicants will be required to fill in a detailed application form, and should do this regardless of whether they have applied previously.

Shortlists are determined according to the extent to which a candidate's experience, knowledge and skills match the role requirements. Fulfilling the advertised requirements does not guarantee that a candidate will be accepted on to the Inspector Training Course. At the discretion of the Chief Inspector, specific criteria may be given additional weighting according to ISI's requirements at any given time. All applicants will be treated against the same criteria within each recruitment round.

ISI will email all candidates within three weeks of the application deadline, by the date provided in the application form, to inform them of the decision made in respect of their application. Due to the volume of applications, specific feedback will not be provided at the shortlisting stage. Unsuccessful applicants

wishing to reapply should sign up again to the mailing list to be notified the next time recruitment opens.

## 5. SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Successful applicants will be notified by email three weeks after the application deadline, by the date provided in the application form. The successful notification will include:

- information about the dates of the upcoming training course; and
- a request to provide original supporting documentation for ISI to undertake the necessary recruitment checks, see **Stage 1 – Recruitment Checks** for further information.

Attendance is conditional on suitable references being provided and an enhanced DBS application being in progress via Atlantic Data within four weeks after the shortlisting stage. Please note that there are no waiting lists. If an individual cannot attend a course, they will have to re-apply to train in the next academic year, with no guarantee of repeated success as this will depend on the inspectorate's priorities for recruitment at any given time.

Individuals attending the ISI training course must meet their own expenses for travel and accommodation. ISI advises that individuals do not book non-refundable travel and accommodation until joining instructions have been received from ISI, normally three weeks before the course.

## 6. STAGES OF TI INITIAL TRAINING

### Stage 1 – Recruitment Checks

ISI will check the suitability of all successful applicants. These checks will need to be completed within four weeks of the applicant receiving notification that they have been successfully shortlisted. Should these checks not be completed within the four-week window, ISI will be unable to proceed with the application.

Inspection is considered to be regulated activity and the same checks therefore apply:

- Identity
- Right to work in the UK
- Enhanced DBS checks with barring information
- Prohibition from Teaching
- Prohibition from Management
- Medical fitness
- Qualifications
- References

At this stage, applicants will need to provide:

- Proof of identity (passport)\*
- Proof of address\*
- Proof of right to work in the UK\*
- Qualifications relevant to the role\*
- Signed Medical Fitness form
- Signed TI Declaration of Professional Conduct

- Signed Update Service Consent Form
- Documents and payment required for ISI to undertake an enhanced DBS check, as detailed in Inspector Checks Required document

\*All starred documents should be provided as originals. These can be posted recorded delivery or brought in to the ISI office at First Floor, CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, EC1A 9HA, for the attention of the Recruitment and Training Team. Items that are not starred may be scanned and emailed to [training@isi.net](mailto:training@isi.net) or posted/delivered to the address above.

Copies of documentation will held on file in line with data protection requirements. If the candidate is unsuccessful at the training, ISI will securely dispose of all the copies taken within two weeks of informing the candidate of the outcome of the training.

### Identity and Right to Work

It is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be. ISI must see proof of ID, such as passport, driver's licence or birth certificate combined with evidence of address, before any appointment is made. Applicants should provide ISI with all previous names they have been known by and documentary proof of any name changes, for example a marriage/civil partnership/divorce/deed poll certificate.

ISI is legally required to make sure that successful candidates have the right to work in the UK. Proof may be provided in the form of a UK passport, biometric residence permit or work visa.

### DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Check

All successful applicants will need to have an enhanced DBS check in progress within four weeks of receiving notification of successful shortlisting. ISI's DBS Policy for Inspectors is provided in Annex A.

### Prohibition from teaching and prohibition from management of an independent school (section 128 directions)

All applicants are checked by the ISI office for prohibition. No additional steps or information are required from the applicant to enable these two checks.

### Medical Fitness

Applicants will be required to complete a medical fitness declaration form to self-certify that they are medically fit to work around children.

### Qualifications Check

ISI Team Inspectors are not required to have qualified teacher status. However, successful candidates will be required to provide proof of any professional qualifications that they claim to hold which are relevant to their application, particularly any relating to teaching.

### References

ISI takes up references for all candidates to become an inspector, at any level. The basic requirement is for references from **two referees**. These must be people of the highest seniority who are in direct line

management of the applicant in the relevant organisations, who are in a position to be aware of any concerns that have been expressed about the applicant, or disciplinary/competence matters.

Referees must be from **two different institutions**. The relevant schools will be those at which the applicant is currently, or was most recently, employed. ISI may also seek additional references from any source to follow up information received.

For an applicant who is a Head, appropriate referees will usually be their current and former Chair. For others, it will usually be their current and former Head. So, for example, for a candidate who is in their first headship, the appropriate referees will usually be the Chair of their current school and the Head of their previous school.

For applicants who have not worked in more than one school, at the Chief Inspector's discretion, exceptions can be made to the general rule if there is cogent evidence that the candidate has sufficient breadth and/or depth of professional experience for the role. However, a second professional referee of convincing seniority should be provided.

Inspectors are not permitted to participate in ISI training until the reference requirements have been met to the satisfaction of the Chief Inspector, whose discretion is absolute.

## Stage 2 – Training & Assessment

### Joining Instructions and pre-course tasks

On successful completion of recruitment checks and references, and with an enhanced DBS check in progress, successful applicants will be invited to attend a three-day training course. Joining instructions will be sent three weeks prior to the course, and will include a requirement to undertake pre-course reading and tasks in preparation for the training. Tasks will need to be submitted prior to the training and failure to do so may result in the applicant being removed from the course.

### Three-day training course

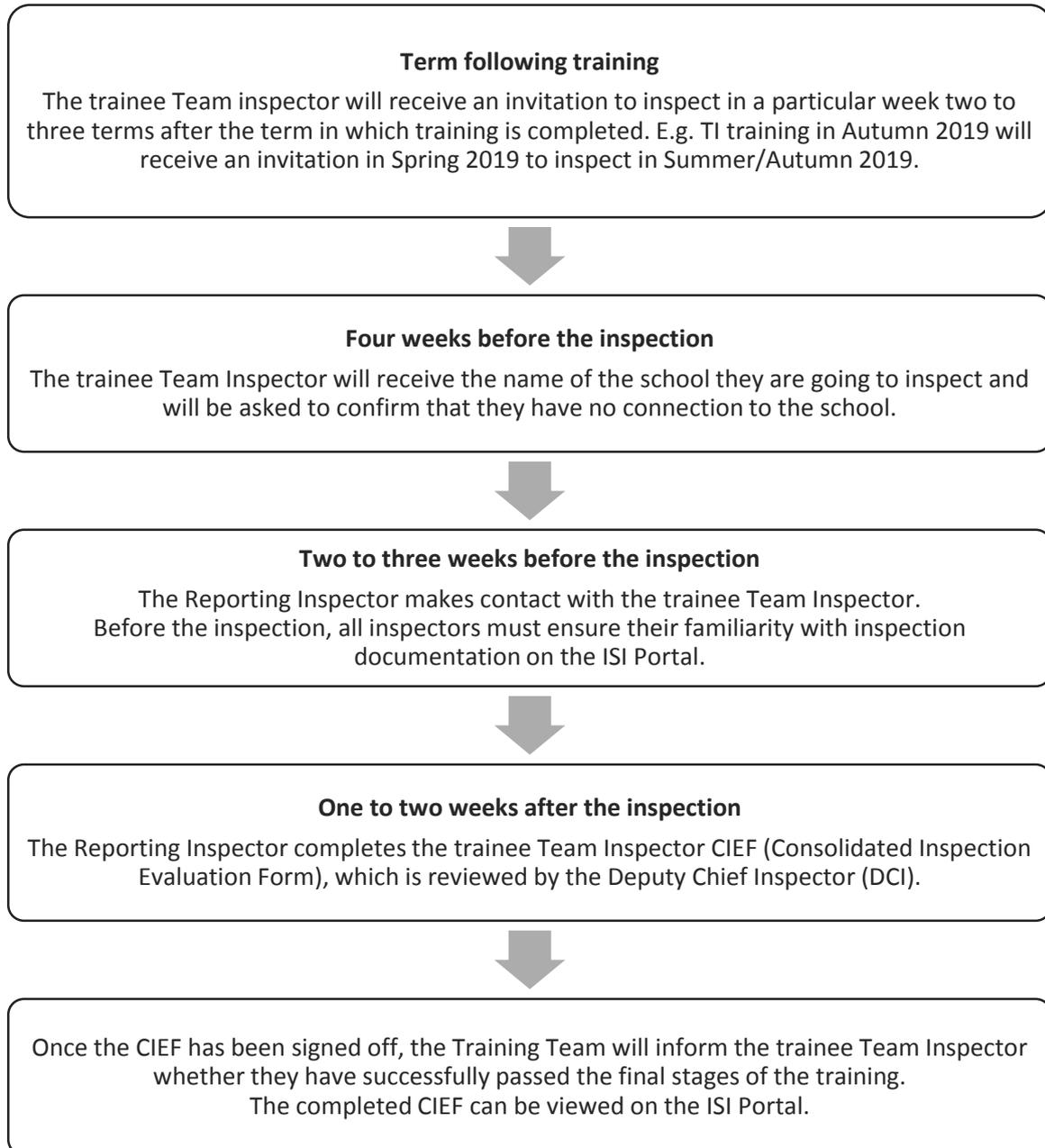
Trainees will be required to attend a three-day training course. Attendance at the full course as well as a number of overnight tasks is required in order to complete the training, and trainees are advised to ensure they arrange their schedules accordingly.

### Post-course assessment

Immediately following the three-day training course, trainees will be given three weeks to complete a post-course assessment, which will be marked by the trainer and reviewed by the Deputy Chief Inspector. The written assessment is a key part of the training and failure to complete all parts satisfactorily and submit by the deadline provided will result in a course 'fail' result. Trainees will be given written feedback about their progress based on the key criteria for Team Inspectors. Where a trainee inspector's performance has been judged to be satisfactory but to require some further improvement prior to deployment on an inspection, at the discretion of the training team, individual inspectors may be offered the opportunity to conduct further assessment tasks. And additional two weeks will be allowed for additional assessments and deadlines will apply. Where an inspector does not meet the required standards an opportunity for discussion with a senior member of staff will be offered.

### Stage 3 – Practical training

After the applicant has been informed that they have been successful in the first two stages of the Team Inspector Initial Training, they will be invited to be deployed on a probationary inspection. Connectivity declarations must be made and taken into account (see section on DEPLOYMENT below). The following diagram shows the process for the practical stage of training:



## 7. DEPLOYMENT

### Contracts

Before deployment, all inspectors must sign both their agreement with the ISI terms and conditions and all associated documents.

### Connections to schools

All inspectors must declare any actual or perceived connections to the schools inspected by ISI. Team Inspectors declare by completing the relevant page of their individual profile on the ISI internal system stating all connections to schools, past and present. The duty to declare connections is ongoing and is set out in detail in the terms and conditions signed by Team Inspectors upon appointment. Inspectors are advised that when they are in any doubt a potential connection should be brought to ISI's attention. A failure to do so is likely to result in no further deployment for the inspector.

Inspectors cannot be deployed in relation to the inspection of schools to which they have a connection:

- Inspectors must not inspect a school at which they have worked/advised in the last 6 years: connectivity in practice may be considered to extend much longer due, for example, to ongoing acquaintance with former colleagues who remain on the staff of a school.
- Following an inspection, inspectors may not work in or advise the school in a personal capacity (including for ISIC) for a period of two years.
- Inspectors will not usually inspect a school which they have previously inspected. As a general rule, an inspector must not re-inspect a school at its next inspection if it is a routine scheduled inspection, a 'brought forward' inspection or an 'additional' inspection. However, inspectors may conduct the 'progress monitoring visit' after an initial inspection where there have been compliance failings or a 'material change visit'. In some instances, it can be particularly helpful for the same inspectors to return.

### Inspector connections to schools which do not meet the standards

**Employees of schools** – By definition, inspectors who are currently serving in schools will be heads or senior leaders. As such they may be perceived by schools inspected by ISI as sharing responsibility for any reported deficiencies in their employer school, whether or not this was attributable in practice to their own fault.

**Proprietors, including trustees, governors and others** – Proprietors are legally responsible for ensuring that their school meets the Independent School Standards and that their senior leaders have the necessary skills, knowledge, diligence and competence to ensure consistent compliance. As such they are and may be perceived by schools inspected by ISI as responsible for any reported failings in their school, even where day-to-day responsibility was/is delegated.

**Procedure for informing ISI of non-compliance** – Inspectors must:

- Inform the ISI delivery team when their school is reported not to meet the standards, by notifying [delivery@isi.net](mailto:delivery@isi.net)
- If invited to inspect, pro-actively check with the ISI Delivery team that the team is aware of their connection to a non-compliant/recently non-compliant school and has taken this into consideration in offering the inspection invitation.

**Deployment during non-compliance** – Inspectors may not inspect while they are connected (whether as an employee/governor/proprietor) to a school which does not currently meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards.

#### Historic issues

ISI will not deploy any inspector who works or has worked in a senior capacity in a school which was non-compliant at the time they left. In addition, if ISI is made aware of historic regulatory issues, particularly those linked to safeguarding, which are alleged to have occurred whilst the inspector was working in a senior capacity at a school, ISI reserves the right to no longer deploy the Team Inspector, subject to a discussion with the inspector. This is at the absolute discretion of the Chief Inspector.

**Exceptions to the rule** – ISI recognises that it is in the interests of children that struggling schools should be able recruit knowledgeable governors and employees to assist them to turn around non-compliance and improve rapidly. Therefore, if an individual is joining a school after that school fails an inspection, this circumstance should not preclude this individual from training. However, this exception lasts only until the next inspection after the individual joins the school. Equally, there may be circumstances where, in the interests of the well-being of children or the reputation of the inspectorate, an inspector should not be invited to inspect again.

In exceptional circumstances, the two-year period may, therefore, be **reduced or extended** at the discretion of the Chief Inspector taking into account information such as:

- the role of the inspector in the school
- the date and length of the connection
- the nature of the non-compliance
- the severity of the non-compliance
- the length of time for which the school was non-compliant
- the extent to which the inspector was or might be perceived to have been responsible for the reported non-compliance
- the role played by the inspector in remediating the non-compliance
- the inspector's performance history with ISI
- information from third parties, such as (but not limited to) the DfE or statutory agencies, whether or not in the public domain
- reputational risk to ISI
- any other relevant information.

In considering whether inspector status may be re-instated, the Chief Inspector reserves the right to set pre-conditions and conditions, such as:

- taking up new references
- consulting statutory agencies
- asking the inspector to submit to additional vetting checks
- requiring the inspector to attend an interview with the Head of People, a Deputy Chief Inspector, or the Chief Inspector
- requiring the inspector to undergo additional training
- placing restrictions on the type of inspection or school that the inspector can inspect

- any other pre-conditions or conditions considered appropriate.

Decisions regarding the recruitment and continued deployment of inspectors are at the absolute discretion of the Chief Inspector, whose ruling is final.

### **Performance Reviews**

The Performance Review Team (PRT) meets each term to make recommendations to the Chief Inspector about issues which have arisen prior to, during or after an inspection, when the Inspector Code of Conduct may have been breached, and to discuss any ongoing performance management issues. Consideration will be given to an inspector's historical performance, through evaluations, appraisals and feedback from schools. The inspector will have the opportunity to respond to any concerns about their performance or conduct. Failure to meet the standard required may result in ISI discontinuing the deployment of an inspector.

### **Non-Serving Team Inspectors**

ISI retains a list of non-serving Team Inspectors who can be invited for deployment when no serving Team Inspectors are available, for up to three years following retirement; these deployments are rare and often at the last minute. In line with current policy, if ISI has not needed to deploy a non-serving Team Inspector for at least two years, that Team Inspector will no longer be eligible to be deployed and will be removed from the list of inspectors.

### **Ongoing Training**

Team Inspectors are expected to attend ongoing training as required by the Chief Inspector. This may include an annual Team Inspector Conference, as well as ad hoc training in response to learning needs identified through the CIEF (Consolidated Inspection Evaluation Form).

## ANNEX A: DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS) POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all inspectors to share this commitment. For this reason, and in accordance with the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE), all individuals applying to become inspectors must undergo the same safe recruitment vetting checks as teachers (see [\*Approval of independent inspectorates September 2014\*](#)).

### 2. PURPOSE

This policy sets out ISI's approach to obtaining DBS disclosures for inspectors prior to training and also sets out the process of re-checking the criminal records of existing inspectors.

### 3. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all inspectors who are currently deployed by ISI as well as applicants for inspector roles, and is in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service eligibility guidance and code of practice.

### 4. CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

- a. All inspectors are required to undergo an **enhanced DBS check with barring information** via direct checking by ISI. The new system ensures that all inspectors are immediately ready for deployment after training. ISI inspectors who have previously been accepted on the basis of pre-existing checks, such as those continuously employed in schools, will be required to move over to the new system.
- b. All inspectors are required to undergo an initial enhanced DBS check at their own, or their schools, expense. In addition, inspectors will be required to sign up for the DBS Update Service and maintain an active subscription. The online DBS Update Service allows for the following:
  - i. Applicants to keep their DBS certificates up to date
  - ii. ISI to check that DBS certificates remain up to date
- c. The initial enhanced DBS check, including fees from the umbrella body, costs £63.00 and is payable to 'Independent Schools Inspectorate' when submitting documents. **ISI operates on a cost-recovery basis and this fee is not retained by ISI.**
- d. The Update Service registration cost is currently £13.00 per year and this is paid by the inspector or applicant directly to DBS.
- e. DBS checks may be carried out:
  - i. via the DBS Update Service, for existing subscribers, or
  - ii. directly by ISI, requesting a new check, or,

- iii. exceptionally and at the Chief Inspector's absolute discretion, a recent check carried out by a school where the inspector/candidate is currently employed may be adopted by ISI on condition that it is at the enhanced level with barring information and the original certificate is seen by ISI.
- f. As a matter of policy, ISI repeats criminal record checks, including barring, every three years as a minimum.
  - i. To facilitate re-checking, at the time of applying to become an inspector, inspectors are required to join the DBS Update Service. It is a matter for the Chief Inspector's absolute discretion whether to allow an application to proceed where the candidate declines to join the Update Service.
  - ii. Inspectors whose service for ISI commenced before the policy decision to recommend the DBS Update Service, are required to join the Update Service when their check is renewed.
  - iii. Team Inspectors who do not currently work in a school must join the DBS Update Service before their next deployment.
  - iv. ISI will re-check inspectors against the Update Service on a termly basis (for non-serving RIs & TIs).
- g. Inspectors and applicants are also required to disclose any cautions, convictions<sup>1</sup>, or orders barring them from working with children or vulnerable adults, and any professional sanctions or directions from the Secretary of State, or matters disqualifying them from childcare (including by association), or allegations or disciplinary or competence proceedings against them, whether in the UK or overseas. This is an ongoing duty of disclosure. **Failure to disclose any relevant matter is in itself a serious matter likely to have an adverse effect on an application or the continued deployment of a current inspector.**

## 5. REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS ACT 1974

ISI recognises the rehabilitative intent of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974: the disclosure of a criminal record, or other information, will not necessarily bar a person from becoming an inspector unless the nature of the information disclosed renders them unsuitable to inspect.

## 6. SUITABILITY

- a. Suitability to inspect is assessed in accordance with the DfE's requirements as set out in paragraph (i) of Approval of independent inspectorates September 2014, which include:
  - i. *"Inspectors should behave professionally at all times ..."*

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<sup>1</sup> Cautions and convictions generally become "spent" after a specified period of time and are no longer disclosable to most employers. However, in certain categories of employment where an enhanced DBS check is required, as is the case for inspectors, spent cautions and convictions must still be disclosed.

- ii. *“Inspectors refrain at all times from expressing views or participating in activities that could undermine public trust in their ability to inspect objectively against the independent school standards, particularly the standard relating to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils”.*
- b. With the above in mind, where a conviction or caution or other information has been disclosed, in assessing suitability, ISI will consider:
  - iii. the nature of the offence;
  - iv. whether more than one offence has been committed;
  - v. how long ago the offence was committed<sup>2</sup>;
  - vi. the person’s age when the offence was committed; and
  - vii. other factors that may be relevant.
- c. In some cases, a criminal conviction or caution may prevent an individual from becoming an inspector; however as stated above, it will not automatically prevent an application from progressing. An application is more likely to proceed, or current inspector status be unaffected, where the offences are historical and less serious, and do not cast doubt on the applicant’s current suitability to become an inspector. An application is less likely to be able to proceed if the applicant has committed offences that are recent or of a more serious nature, or if the offences involve fraud or dishonesty. If the applicant has committed an offence that led to a prison sentence, whether or not suspended, it is very unlikely that the application will be allowed to proceed.

## 7. SERIOUS VIOLENT AND SEXUAL OFFENCES

- a. Due to the sensitive nature of ISI’s work and the need for inspectors to refrain from any activity that would undermine public trust, certain types of cautions and convictions for serious violent and sexual offences will always prohibit an individual from becoming an inspector. This would include:
  - viii. cautions and convictions for serious violent and sexual offences;
  - ix. other offences of relevance for posts concerned with safeguarding children and vulnerable adults;
  - x. all convictions resulting in a custodial sentence, whether or not suspended; and
  - xi. all convictions where more than one conviction is recorded.

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<sup>2</sup> As a rough guide, six years following a caution and 11 years after a conviction may be considered a sufficient length of time where there are no other concerns.

## 8. MOTORING OFFENCES

- h. Convictions for motoring offences must be declared and will be treated in the same way as any other criminal conviction. ISI treats offences related to driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs seriously and a conviction for any such offence will mean that it is unlikely that an application will be allowed to proceed, subject to the factors listed at paragraph 6.2 above.
- i. Any disqualification from driving must be declared. If the applicant has regained their licence following disqualification only within the last four years, it is unlikely that their application would be allowed to proceed.

## 9. DECISION TAKING

Ultimately, final decisions about suitability are made by the Chief Inspector whose discretion is absolute; however, all staff who deal with inspector applications should be aware of the contents of this guidance.

## 10. CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSION

- a. Candidates for inspector training may call ISI in advance of making an application to have a discussion in confidence regarding their circumstances. Such queries should be directed to the Head of People ([training@isi.net](mailto:training@isi.net)) in the first instance.
- b. Current Reporting Inspectors may request a confidential discussion with either the Head of People ([training@isi.net](mailto:training@isi.net)) or the Chief Inspector ([Chief.Inspector@isi.net](mailto:Chief.Inspector@isi.net)).

## 11. HANDLING OF DBS CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

ISI complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of DBS certificates and certificate information. Disclosure information will only be shared with relevant persons in the course of their specific duties relevant to recruitment and vetting processes. ISI will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, ISI will keep a record of the date of issue and the unique reference number of the certificate.

## 12. REVIEW OF DBS POLICY

This policy and procedure will be reviewed by May 2020.