

BS 7858:2019



BSI Standards Publication

**Screening of individuals working in a  
secure environment – Code of practice**

**bsi.**

# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	<b>ii</b>
Introduction	1
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Top management commitment	3
5 Risk management	3
6 Individuals employed in screening	3
6.1 General	3
6.2 Training	4
6.3 Outsourced screening	4
7 Screening process	4
7.1 General	4
7.2 Administration	5
7.3 Provision of information	5
7.4 Preliminary checks	7
7.5 Conditional employment	9
7.6 Period allowed for completion of full screening for individuals in conditional employment	10
7.7 Completion of screening (verification of information)	10
7.8 Review of screening progress	12
8 Subcontractors	12
9 Ancillary staff	13
10 Acquisitions and transfers	13
11 Records	13
11.1 Records of those unsuccessful at preliminary screening	13
11.2 Records held during employment	13
11.3 Records held after cessation of employment	13
<b>Annex A</b> (informative) <b>Example forms</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>21</b>

## Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, and inside front cover, pages i to iv, pages 1 to 21, an inside back cover and a back cover.

# Foreword

## Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 30 September 2019. It was prepared by Technical Committee GW/3, *Private security management and services*. A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

## Supersession

This British Standard supersedes [BS 7858:2012](#), which will be withdrawn on 31 March 2020.

## Information about this document

This is a full revision of the standard, and introduces the following principal changes:

- the scope has been widened to allow this British Standard to be used effectively in other industries outside of the recognized security sector for any employees undertaking work in a secure environment;
- there is now more emphasis on risk assessment and this is a theme that runs through the standard;
- there is now a clear objective to obtain pertinent background information to enable organizations to make an informed decision, based on risk, on employing an individual in a secure environment;
- there is more importance placed on the role of top management in the screening process, i.e. in deploying appropriate resource to ensure the process is effective and taking responsibility for the acceptance of risk (while top management remains responsible for the execution of the provisions of this British Standard, it is recognized that authority can be delegated to competent individuals to undertake specific tasks);
- it has been clarified that the organization retains ultimate responsibility for an outsourced screening process and is required to review the completed screening file;
- there is a recognition of the role of automation;
- the requirement for character references has been removed as this was seen to be too easy to abuse;
- while social media and other open source internet checks are now mentioned, they are not a provision of the standard and can only be used as additional information in any employment decisions. Care is to be taken when using this method so as not to introduce any unlawful discrimination; and
- the forms in [Annex A](#) are now informative and are therefore examples of forms that could be used, which allows organizations to customize them more easily.

This publication can be withdrawn, revised, partially superseded or superseded. Information regarding the status of this publication can be found in the Standards Catalogue on the BSI website at [bsigroup.com/standards](https://bsigroup.com/standards), or by contacting the Customer Services team.

Where websites and webpages have been cited, they are provided for ease of reference and are correct at the time of publication. The location of a webpage or website, or its contents, cannot be guaranteed.

### **Use of this document**

As a code of practice, this British Standard takes the form of guidance and recommendations. It should not be quoted as if it were a specification and particular care should be taken to ensure that claims of compliance are not misleading.

Any user claiming compliance with this British Standard is expected to be able to justify any course of action that deviates from its recommendations.

It has been assumed in the preparation of this British Standard that the execution of its provisions will be entrusted to appropriately qualified and experienced people, for whose use it has been produced.

### **Presentational conventions**

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

*Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.*

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

### **Contractual and legal considerations**

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

**Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.**



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## Introduction

This British Standard provides organizations who engage individuals working in a secure environment with a methodology to reduce risk exposure in terms of their human resources and to give a high level of confidence in recruiting and the setting to work of individuals.

This methodology of screening individuals takes a top down approach, i.e. responsibility for this process remains with top management. Top management can delegate accountability for certain roles and tasks; however, they remain responsible for this process.

This methodology is driven by risk and it is incumbent on the organization to apply risk management good practice when deciding how this methodology is implemented into their organization's processes so that it consistently delivers the desired outcomes.

It is important that the organization ensures that all individuals employed in the screening process (see [Clause 6](#)), and those with the authority to offer employment, maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in view of the special circumstances of the environment in which they are employed.

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## 1 Scope

This British Standard gives recommendations for the screening of individuals working in a secure environment where the security and/or safety of people, goods and services, data or property is a requirement of the employing organization's operations and/or where such screening is in the public interest.

*NOTE 1 "Property" includes intellectual and physical property as well as cash and valuables.*

*NOTE 2 Some insurers require BS 7858 as a part of the policy conditions and have additional requirements for screening, e.g. a longer screening period.*

This British Standard applies equally to all individuals in relevant employment, including full-time and part-time employees, sole traders, partnerships, temporary and permanent employees, and to all levels of seniority, including directors. The objective of screening is to obtain sufficient information to enable organizations to make an informed decision on employing an individual in a secure environment.

This British Standard does not cover the other elements of recruitment and selection that take place when employing people. It is assumed that screening would be an additional process added to existing recruitment and selection processes, for example this British Standard does not cover the application process, right to work status or specific competency in the job role.

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## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

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## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

### 3.1 ancillary staff

individual(s) involved in support activities

*NOTE Examples of support activities include administration, personnel, building maintenance and cleaning.*

### **3.2 conditional employment**

period after limited screening has been completed and employment has commenced ahead of the completion of full screening

*NOTE Successful completion of screening is one criterion upon which the decision to grant confirmed employment is based.*

### **3.3 confirmed employment**

employment granted upon successful completion of full screening and any additional criteria applied by the organization

### **3.4 individual**

person to whom screening applies

*NOTE An individual might be new to the organization or an existing employee transferring roles within the organization.*

### **3.5 limited screening**

along with information required and preliminary checks, the minimum amount of screening necessary to be completed satisfactorily before an offer of conditional employment can be made

### **3.6 organization**

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives

*NOTE The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.*

### **3.7 outsource**

arrangement where an external organization performs part of an organization's function or process

### **3.8 process**

set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs

### **3.9 relevant employment**

employment which involves, or can involve, the acquisition of, or access to, data, information, assets or equipment, the improper use of which could involve the organization, any client of the organization, or any third party, in a security risk

*NOTE The definition applies to individuals irrespective of whether they are engaged full-time or part-time, on a permanent or temporary basis, and/or employed directly or as subcontractors.*

### **3.10 screening administrator**

individual within an organization engaged in screening or a third party providing screening services

### **3.11 screening controller**

individual within an organization responsible for making sure that the screening process is being carried out correctly

### **3.12 screening form(s)**

system or document used to gather and record information required to carry out screening

### 3.13 screening period

period of not less than five years immediately prior to the commencement of relevant employment or transfer to relevant employment, or back to the age of 16 if this date is more recent

### 3.14 subcontractor

company, agency worker(s), individual(s) and temporary worker(s) not directly employed by the organization, contracted to carry out work on behalf of the organization

### 3.15 top management

person or group of people who directs and controls an organization at the highest level

*NOTE* Top management has the power to delegate authority and provide resources within the organization.

## 4 Top management commitment

Top management should:

- a) be committed to satisfying the recommendations of this British Standard;
- b) ensure that the resources and infrastructure needed for the screening process are available;
- c) direct and support persons to contribute to the effectiveness of the screening process; and
- d) ensure that the responsibilities and authorities for relevant roles are assigned and communicated within the organization.

## 5 Risk management

The organization should only employ individuals whose career or history indicates that they would be suitable for the role, given that such employment might allow opportunities for illicit personal gain, or the possibilities of being compromised, or opportunities for creating any other breaches of confidentiality, trust and safety.

*NOTE 1* Attention is drawn to UK employment law, commercial insurance cover and the applicable terms and conditions of employment.

*NOTE 2* In some cases, where the verification procedures cannot be completed satisfactorily, employment might be prevented, terminated or an employment offer withdrawn. It is emphasized that this is not necessarily an indication of unsuitability; it might simply not have been possible to obtain the required positive evidence.

## 6 Individuals employed in screening

### 6.1 General

The screening controller(s) and screening administrator(s) should be screened in accordance with the recommendations of this British Standard. An individual should not screen themselves.

The screening controller(s) and screening administrator(s) should sign a confidentiality agreement (sometimes known as a non-disclosure agreement), covering both the period of employment and post-employment, relating to the disclosure of the organization's confidential information and/or material with respect to individuals and employees past, present and future.

Where the tasks of interviewing, screening and deciding whether to employ and whether to terminate employment are carried out by separate departments, all departments should be co-ordinated, with

particular attention given to the division of functions and authority between each department for internal control purposes.

*NOTE* Attention is drawn to the difference between personal opinion and fact when recording information about individuals.

## 6.2 Training

People engaged in screening should be trained for the duties envisaged. Training should fully cover the recommendations given in this British Standard, the essential elements of all data protection legislation and awareness of relevant regulatory requirements.

*NOTE 1* The organization might wish to consider sending the screening controller and the screening administrator(s) involved in such activities on appropriate external courses organized for this purpose.

Training should also cover the implications of not complying with this British Standard.

*NOTE 2* These implications can include breach of contract, legal action, insurance cover, reputational damage and regulatory enforcement.

Training should be reviewed at least annually to ensure that competency is maintained.

Training records should be accurately maintained.

All training provided online should be recorded electronically. All other training should be signed by the trainee, countersigned by the trainer and retained.

Where a certificate of training is provided by a recognized and relative sector-competent training organization, a copy should be retained.

## 6.3 Outsourced screening

Where any element of the screening process is outsourced, the organization should ensure that the relevant recommendations given in this British Standard are applied.

The organization should retain ultimate responsibility for the outsourced screening process and should review the completed screening file in accordance with [7.7](#).

*NOTE* The organization is advised to consider the desirability of third-party certification for outsourced screening services.

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# 7 Screening process

## 7.1 General

The organization should carry out screening in accordance with this British Standard prior to the engagement of individuals for relevant employment or to their being transferred to relevant employment from other duties.

*NOTE 1* For acquisitions and transfers see [Clause 10](#). Where labour is subcontracted see [Clause 8](#).

The organization should ensure that employees already in relevant employment are screened in accordance with this British Standard.

*NOTE 2* Attention is drawn to the relevant data protection legislation and the Employment Rights Act 1996 [\[1\]](#).

*NOTE 3* It is not a provision of this British Standard that employees already screened to previous editions of BS 7858 are re-screened, provided evidence of previous screening can be clearly demonstrated.

*NOTE 4* The organization may supply, on request, a copy of all screening records for previously employed individuals to that individual's new employer. Where a copy of the screening records is requested, the employee's express consent is needed.

The screening process should be carried out in accordance with this British Standard, regardless of an individual's previous employment, even if that employment was in a secure environment.

*NOTE 5 Attention is drawn to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 [2], the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Scotland) Act 1974 [3] and the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 [4].*

*NOTE 6 Attention is drawn to new and emerging technologies for assessing the character and suitability of individuals. For some roles it might be prudent to seek additional information using best practice social media and other open source internet checks to provide greater insights and reduce risk. For guidance, see the FCA Financial Crime Guide [5].*

Where any element of the screening process is automated, the recommendations of this British Standard should be followed.

## 7.2 Administration

The screening controller should ensure that screening data is held confidentially and stored securely to prevent unauthorized access and alteration.

*NOTE 1 Attention is drawn to the relevant data protection legislation.*

*NOTE 2 With regard to the storage of electronic data, attention is drawn to the following standards: BS EN ISO/IEC 27001, BS EN ISO/IEC 27002 and BS 7799-3.*

The organization's screening working practices should be regularly reviewed and updated if necessary and should deal with such matters as clearing desks, locking filing cabinets, etc. at the end of the working day; disposing of confidential waste (including spoiled documents, etc.); the control of access to data, recordings of telephone conversations, etc.

Organizations should maintain the following in electronic or paper format:

- a) a separate file for each individual subjected to screening. The files of all individuals currently employed but still subject to completion of screening should be identified separately from other employee files; and
- b) verification progress sheets (or equivalent) for each individual subjected to screening.

Where applicable, records should clearly indicate that an individual is conditionally employed but still subject to completion of screening. Records should show prominently the dates on which such employment commenced and is to cease if screening is not completed within 12 or 16 weeks after the date of commencement, dependent on the screening period.

## 7.3 Provision of information

### 7.3.1 General

Evidence should be obtained to see whether or not there is anything in the individual's background which would reflect adversely upon their suitability for the proposed employment (see [Clause 5](#)).

*NOTE When obtaining references, it is important to be sure that the source is genuine. If considered necessary, extra checks can be made to verify the validity of telephone numbers, postal and email addresses.*

### 7.3.2 Information required

The organization should request the following information at the appropriate point of the screening process.

- a) The individual's personal details including:
  - 1) full name, including forename(s) and surname/family name(s);
  - 2) other and/or previous forename(s) and surname/family name(s) used during the screening period;

- 3) aliases, i.e. any name(s) used in addition to current or previous name(s) during the screening period;
- 4) full address history, including “from” and “to” dates, for the past five years;
- 5) date of birth;
- 6) National Insurance number;
- 7) evidence of right to work in the UK; and

*NOTE 1 For further information, see [www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work) and [www.gov.uk/government/publications/acceptable-right-to-work-documents-an-employers-guide](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/acceptable-right-to-work-documents-an-employers-guide).*

- 8) SIA (Security Industry Authority) licence number and expiry date (if held).

*NOTE 2 SIA licensing ensures that private security operatives are “fit and proper” persons who are properly trained and qualified to do their job. For further information about SIA licensing, refer to [www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk).*

- b) Details of the individual’s education, employment, periods of self-employment (see 7.7), unemployment and gaps in employment (including career breaks, etc.) throughout the screening period.

*NOTE 3 If an individual does not want the organization to contact their current employer until an offer is made, see 7.3.3a).*

Organizations should extend the screening period to account for:

- 1) contractual or legislative considerations; and/or
  - 2) specific industry standards.
- c) Details of all cautions or convictions for criminal offences, including motoring offences and pending actions.
- NOTE 4 Attention is drawn to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 [2], the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Scotland) Act 1974 [3] and the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 [4].*
- d) Details of all bankruptcy proceedings and court judgments (including satisfied), financial judgments in the civil court made against the individual and individual voluntary arrangements with creditors in line with the relevant screening period.
  - e) An acknowledgement that misrepresentation, or failure to disclose material facts, either during application or throughout employment could constitute grounds for withdrawal of an employment offer or termination of employment and/or legal action.
  - f) A statement, in writing, authorizing the organization to approach current and former employers, government departments, educational establishments, etc. for verification of a continuous record of their career and history (see 7.3.3).

*NOTE 5 Authorization may be in the form of either a signature or electronic confirmation. For verification of identity of signatories to electronic documents, attention is drawn to the Electronic Communications Act 2000 [6].*

*NOTE 6 An example of the text that can be used is given in Annex A, Form 3, which can be used as a separate form or as part of the application form.*

- g) A declaration signed by the individual which acknowledges that employment is subject to satisfactory screening, that the individual consents to being screened and will provide information as required, that information provided is correct, and that any false statements or omissions could lead to termination of employment (a suitable example is provided in Annex A, Form 3).

### 7.3.3 Authorizations

The screening form should state that information is gathered to facilitate screening in accordance with BS 7858, in order to determine whether individuals are suitable to be employed in a secure environment.

The organization should make the individual aware at their interview or application, whichever is appropriate, that, with the individual's written permission, the organization is authorized to obtain the following in accordance with relevant legislation:

- a) background career/history checks: if permission to contact a current employer is withheld until an offer of employment is made, the individual should be informed that a condition of the offer of employment is that the offer can be withdrawn if the screening is not concluded satisfactorily. The period of current employment should initially be verified by documents which substantiate employment;
- b) a search of public record information, e.g. county court judgments, bankruptcies, financial sanctions and proof of identity and proof of address; and

*NOTE* For further information on financial sanctions, see [www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-sanctions-consolidated-list-of-targets](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-sanctions-consolidated-list-of-targets).

- c) a criminality check: see 7.7j).

### 7.3.4 Interview

Organizations should interview the individual before any offer of employment is made.

## 7.4 Preliminary checks

Preliminary checks should, as a minimum, include the following for each individual being screened.

- a) Establishment of a screening file in accordance with 7.2a).
- b) All information requested in accordance with 7.3.2 has been supplied and a full review of the information provided to confirm that the individual is likely to complete screening.
- c) Confirmation of identity including verification of documents.

*NOTE 1* Acceptable identity documents are as in accordance with Group A and Group B of the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-identity-checking-guidelines).

Wherever possible, the supporting documentation should be photographic, i.e. passport or photo identification driver's licence. Verification should include visual inspection of original documents and retention of a copy. The visual inspection should compare details within the document against the physically present individual and check for signs of tampering or alteration.

Organizations should also carry out verification checks according to the following circumstances.

- 1) Individual holding a valid and current SIA licence: the organization should see the original licence and verify it against the public register of licence holders. The document details should be cross-checked against other information provided by the individual.

A copy of the public register search result should be retained on file.

*NOTE 2* Further verification of identity documents may be carried out at the discretion of the organization.

- 2) Individual not holding a valid and current SIA licence: the organization should be able to demonstrate that they have taken necessary steps to confirm the identity of the individual.

A copy of the document(s) produced should be retained in the screening file together with details of who examined and copied the original document and evidence of any additional

electronic check(s). Details within the document(s) should be cross-checked against other information provided by the individual.

*NOTE 3 Further guidance on document verification can be found at [www.cpni.gov.uk/pre-employment-screening](http://www.cpni.gov.uk/pre-employment-screening).*

- d) Confirmation of current address. Copies of the documents should be retained in the screening file, with details of who examined and copied the original document.

Any documents presented to establish proof of address should be checked for authenticity.

- e) Global watchlist check. Cross-referencing the individual's name(s) against various sanctions, watchlists and fraud databases, including, but not limited to, the HM Treasury's consolidated list of financial sanctions targets in the UK (see [www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/fin\\_sanctions\\_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/fin_sanctions_index.htm)).

*NOTE 4 The organization may agree acceptance of risk procedures with their insurers. If a match is found and advice is required, contact the Office of Financial Sanctions ([www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-financial-sanctions-implementation](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-financial-sanctions-implementation)).*

- f) The individual's public record information: the organization should establish these details by direct reference through a credit reference agency or its agent. The organization should include the following official public record information in the search:

- 1) confirmation that the individual is listed on the electoral roll;
- 2) if not listed on the electoral roll, confirmation that the individual is known at the current address of residence;
- 3) linked postal address for the previous five years should also be searched to ensure no adverse information is listed;
- 4) county court judgments (CCJs) including IVAs;
- 5) bankruptcy orders;
- 6) aliases; and
- 7) date of birth.

*NOTE 5 An individual's public record information is not a credit check.*

If an individual has opted out of appearing on the electoral roll, other forms of evidence such as recent utility bills, bank statements, etc. should be requested to confirm the individual's current address of residence.

If a concern appears during the search, the individual should be invited by the organization to make representation about the concern. If the organization is satisfied with the individual's representation and the organization is satisfied that the individual's financial history does not constitute a risk as described in [Clause 5](#), the following should apply.

- i) If single or multiple CCJ(s) are in excess of £10 000 (whether satisfied or not), top management or an authorized person, having reviewed the documentation, signs to accept the risk.
- ii) If the individual is bankrupt, top management or an authorized person, having reviewed the documentation, signs to accept the risk.
- iii) If the individual is or was a director of another organization, top management or an authorized person of the employing organization, having reviewed the documentation, signs to accept the risk.

*NOTE 6 A Companies House search might be advisable.*

*NOTE 7 The organization may agree acceptance of risk procedures on a block or on an individual basis with their insurers.*

*NOTE 8 Attention is drawn to the relevant data protection legislation.*

## **7.5 Conditional employment**

### **7.5.1 General**

*NOTE* Completing full screening before employing an individual is preferable.

An organization should not make an offer of conditional employment unless:

- a) the level of risk in the intended employment has been evaluated and is deemed to be acceptable and documented;
- b) preliminary checks (see 7.4) have been completed satisfactorily; and
- c) limited screening (see 7.5.2) has been completed satisfactorily.

Conditional employment should end if full screening is not completed satisfactorily within the time period allowed.

### **7.5.2 Limited screening**

In addition to the preliminary checks (see 7.4), the screening file should contain the following.

- a) Confirmation of a continuous record of career and history (see 7.7) for a minimum period of three years immediately prior to the date of application (or back to the age of 16 if this date is more recent).

Evidence can be obtained orally, or by written confirmation or documentary evidence (see 7.7). Where evidence is obtained, the identity of the individual and organization supplying the information should be confirmed.

When contacted by telephone, the telephone number called should be ascertained independently. A telephone number supplied by the individual being screened should not be relied upon.

- b) The name of the screening administrator responsible and the name of the screening controller who reviewed the file to confirm that the limited screening has been completed.

*NOTE* Forms 1 and 2 in Annex A (or other equally effective means) are examples that could be used to monitor and record all actions taken and retained in the screening file.

Where an individual is offered conditional employment following limited screening but before full screening has been completed, the terms and conditions of their employment should clearly state that confirmed employment is subject to satisfactory completion of full screening within the period allowed (see 7.6) and that conditional employment ends if full screening is not completed satisfactorily within the time period allowed.

## 7.6 Period allowed for completion of full screening for individuals in conditional employment

Full screening should be completed within the following time periods:

- a) for 5-year screening, not later than 12 weeks after conditional employment has commenced; or
- b) for 10-year screening, not later than 16 weeks after conditional employment has commenced.

Cases extending beyond the maximum time period may be extended by up to four weeks subject to evidence that written requests to verify information supplied have been made and subject to approval by top management or an authorized person. The decision to extend should be recorded, retained and easily accessible on request. Where screening has not been completed successfully, an individual should not continue in relevant employment.

*NOTE* The extension of the screening period is not intended to be used to cover for a shortage of screening personnel.

## 7.7 Completion of screening (verification of information)

Verification of information should be completed within the period allowed for completion of screening (see 7.6).

If an organization acquires the full BS 7858 screening file from a previous employer or an outsourced screening provider, the screening file of the relevant individuals should be reviewed in accordance with this British Standard and the information provided may be used as confirmation of all or part of the information required [see 7.7a) to j)]. If it cannot be established from records that screening in accordance with this British Standard has already taken place for any member of staff in relevant employment, then screening should be undertaken within the screening period (see 7.6), commencing on the date conditional employment began.

For screening purposes, the organization should establish by direct reference to current and former employers, government departments, educational authorities, etc., with confirmation from them in writing, the details of education, employment, periods of self-employment and unemployment of the individual being screened for the whole of the screening period (see 7.6) with no unverified periods greater than 31 days.

Where it is not possible to establish by direct reference to current and former employers, the organization should follow the additional guidance in obtaining acceptable documentary evidence to verify the relevant period [see 7.7i)].

Where text or other electronic messaging is used, the contact details for the person providing an electronic reference should be verified. This should be through direct contact, and verifying the source and integrity of text messages or emails. Records of how this is achieved should be maintained.

For screening purposes, the organization should seek verification of the following, with confirmation obtained in writing and copies retained.

- a) Date of leaving full-time education: if this falls within the screening period, it should be confirmed.
- b) Periods and type of employment (e.g. full-time, part-time, casual or occasional): these should be obtained from previous employers, although a current employer should not be contacted without the individual's prior written permission.

Where it is not possible to obtain confirmation from a previous employer, the screening administrator should seek documentary evidence to verify the period of employment. Examples of potential evidence should include NI records or two or more different items from: payslips

(start and finish of a period of employment), P60 for each year, P45 (to show date of leaving), redundancy letter (confirming end of a period of employment), contract of employment (to show start of employment), bank statements (to show regular payment of wages/salary), proof of long service, company identification, any correspondence from the employer to the employee over the period.

*NOTE 1 When undertaking screening, it is important to be sure that the source of information and documentary evidence is genuine.*

- c) Periods of registered unemployment: these should be obtained from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), or other government agencies. If a government department states that records are unavailable, the period for which the record is not available should be treated as an unverified period.
- d) Periods of self-employment: examples of acceptable evidence include documents from HM Revenue and Customs, banks, accountants, solicitors, trade or client references, etc., as appropriate.
- e) Career breaks: for periods where an individual has not been in employment and not registered as unemployed, e.g. voluntary career break, stay-at-home parent, unpaid family carer. The screening administrator should establish the reason for the break and request documentary evidence to support the explanation. Acceptable evidence should be relevant to the situation.
- f) Periods of residence abroad: confirmation should be obtained where possible by, for example, approaches to employers, dates obtained from passports and work permits.
- g) Periods of extended travel abroad (longer than 31 days): for periods where an individual has been abroad, confirmation of dates should be sought by the screening administrator to satisfy themselves that, from the evidence submitted, it is reasonable to conclude that the individual was abroad during the dates specified.

*NOTE 2 Acceptable evidence could include airline tickets, holiday booking paperwork, visa and passport stamps, card payment/bank statement, currency exchange receipts, mobile phone bill, employment references whilst working abroad.*

- h) Career and history record incomplete: where the record of career and history is incomplete, the screening administrator should seek documentary evidence to verify the duration and the reasons for the incomplete record. Acceptable evidence should be relevant to the gap and support the applicant's explanation for that period.
- i) Statutory declaration: only when the screening process in accordance with this clause cannot be demonstrably completed, a statutory declaration made before a solicitor, commissioner for oaths, notary public or justice of the peace by the individual being screened, may be used as an alternative (see [Annex A](#), Form 4). A statutory declaration should only be used to cover:
  - 1) one unverified period of no more than six months in the most recent five years of the screening period; or
  - 2) unverified period(s) not exceeding a total of six months in any five-year period in the preceding years where screening is undertaken for a period longer than five years. This procedure should only be used with the prior documented approval of top management.

*NOTE 3 Form 5 given in [Annex A](#) can be used to document the approval of top management.*

- j) The organization should ensure that at least one of the following is either held by, or has been obtained for, the individual being screened:
  - 1) a SIA licence for the appropriate sector (if applicable);

- 2) a NPCC Appendix C check (police letter) under the NPCC Security Systems Policy<sup>1</sup>; or
- 3) a Disclosure from the appropriate government body<sup>2</sup>.

*NOTE 4* In the case of a security systems company operating in England, Wales or Northern Ireland, 7.7j)2) would be required unless the company is one that does not need to be registered with the police (for example, a company that does not do any police-calling security systems, or is in a police area where the police force does not apply the Appendix C check and the check is not available from other police forces).

*NOTE 5* Attention is drawn to the obligations set out in the Code of Practice and Explanatory Guide published by the Disclosure and Barring Service [7].

*NOTE 6* Where an individual is employed in a position that is likely to bring them into contact with children or vulnerable adults, e.g. child and adult workforce, a higher level of disclosure might be necessary. It might be necessary for individuals to provide information about themselves in order to complete the verification procedures.

*NOTE 7* Effective screening is dependent upon those having knowledge of the individual being screened supplying information and references. It is hoped that individuals and organizations would co-operate in supplying information and references when requested, unless there are good and substantial reasons for not doing so.

An organization should not make an offer of confirmed employment unless full screening has been completed satisfactorily.

## 7.8 Review of screening progress

The screening controller should operate a systematic administrative system, which ensures that progress is reviewed for each employee throughout the screening period.

A verification progress sheet (or other equally effective means) should be used to record the action taken.

*NOTE* An example verification progress sheet is given in [Annex A](#), Form 2.

## 8 Subcontractors

*NOTE 1* Attention is drawn to Private Security Industry Act 2001 [8].

The recommendations given in this British Standard should be applied to all subcontractors who, through contractual arrangements, are engaged in relevant employment on behalf of the organization.

Before an organization can allow individuals from a subcontractor to be engaged in relevant employment, the organization should either:

- a) ensure that the subcontractor provides evidence that it operates in accordance with this British Standard and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the organization's insurance policy; or

*NOTE 2* Evidence can include:

- 1) current proof of certification by a UKAS accredited certification body which includes BS 7858 in the scope or an SIA approved contractor. In both cases, a written statement that the individual(s) being supplied have been screened in accordance with BS 7858 is required; or
  - 2) a fully completed BS 7858 screening file.
- b) carry out full screening of all subcontracted personnel.

<sup>1</sup> This applies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland only.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of writing, the appropriate government bodies are Disclosure Scotland, Access Northern Ireland and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

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## 9 Ancillary staff

The recommendations given in this British Standard should be applied to all ancillary staff who have access to sensitive information, assets or equipment.

The organization should have in place procedures which ensure that individuals who have not been screened are restricted from having access to sensitive information, assets or equipment.

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## 10 Acquisitions and transfers

If an organization acquires the business or an undertaking of another organization and the operations of the combined organization are such as to require screening for part or all of the transferring business or undertaking, the screening of all relevant individuals in the transferring business or undertaking should be reviewed.

*NOTE 1 Where an employee liability information (ELI) document is provided by the transferring organization and meets the recommendations of this British Standard, this may be used as confirmation of employment.*

If it cannot be established from records that screening in accordance with this British Standard has already taken place for any member of staff in relevant employment, screening should be undertaken within the screening period, commencing on the date of acquisition or transfer of the business or undertaking. Any previously unscreened employee who, as a result of the acquisition or transfer, is employed in a position requiring screening should also be screened in accordance with this British Standard.

*NOTE 2 Where retrospective screening discloses transferred employees who are unable to meet the recommendations of this British Standard, attention is drawn to the Employment Rights Act 1996 [1].*

*NOTE 3 Attention is drawn to the relevant data protection legislation and the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 [2].*

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## 11 Records

### 11.1 Records of those unsuccessful at preliminary screening

The screening file of those unsuccessful at preliminary screening should be retained for a minimum of 12 months and disposed of securely.

### 11.2 Records held during employment

The screening file should be retained during employment.

### 11.3 Records held after cessation of employment

After cessation of employment, the following records should be retained for seven years:

- a) written provision of information (see [7.3](#));
- b) a signed statement in accordance with [7.3.2e](#));
- c) proof of identity;
- d) confirmation of continuous record of career and history;
- e) verification progress sheet (see [Annex A](#), Form 2) or equivalent;
- f) employment verification;
- g) statutory declaration (see [Annex A](#), Form 4); and
- h) acceptance of risk (see [Annex A](#), Form 5).

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## **Annex A (informative)**

### **Example forms**

These forms are examples only and may be modified in any convenient style.

Form 1	Oral enquiry
Form 2	Verification progress sheet
Form 3	Authorization and compliance
Form 4	Statutory declaration
Form 5	Acceptance of risk

**Form 1 – Oral enquiry**

---

**1. Employee (applicant)**

Surname: .....

Forename(s): .....

**2. Verifier**

Name of organization: .....

Telephone number: .....

Telephone number verified: .....

Name of contact individual: .....

Dates employed: .....

– as stated by employee: .....

\* – as confirmed: .....

\* Please comment on the applicant’s suitability for the role.

.....

.....

\* Do you have any other relevant comments you wish to make regarding the applicant?

.....

.....

Signed: .....

Date: .....

(Screening administrator)

\* Where response indicates that applicant is NOT suitable for proposed employment, bring to immediate attention of screening controller responsible for screening.

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**Form 3 – Authorization and compliance****DECLARATIONS**

I understand that employment with this company is subject to references and screening in accordance with BS 7858.

I confirm that the information I have provided on my application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand and agree that I will be subject to any or all of the following checks:

- Address check
- Financial probity check which the company will retain on file
- ID verification checks
- Academic/professional qualification check
- Employment history, including any periods of unemployment/self-employment and any gaps
- Criminal background check

I authorize the company or its agents to approach government agencies, former employers, educational establishments, for information relating to and verification of my employment or unemployment history, a consumer information search and ID check with a credit reference agency, which will keep a record of those searches in line with current legislation.

I further declare that any documents that I provide as proof of my identity, proof of address, and any other documents that I provide are genuine and that any falsified documents may be reported to the appropriate authority. I understand that it may be a criminal offence to attempt to obtain employment by deception and that any misrepresentation, omission of a material fact or deception will be cause for immediate withdrawal of any offer of employment.

I accept that I may be required to undergo a medical examination where requested by the company. I understand and agree that if so required I will make a statutory declaration in accordance with the provisions of the Statutory Declarations Act 1835, in confirmation of previous employment or unemployment.

I understand that any false statement or omission to the company or its representatives may render me liable to dismissal without notice.

By signing this declaration, I agree that I have provided complete and true information in support of the application and that I understand that knowingly making a false statement for this purpose is a criminal offence.

**Please sign to confirm you agree to the above processing terms:**

SIGNATURE: .....

PRINT NAME: .....

DATE: .....

**CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

You are applying for a position of trust and in the event of being offered employment by the company we may apply for a criminal background check. However, having a criminal record does not necessarily bar you from employment. For more information ask a member of staff for a copy of the appropriate criminal record body code of practice and/or our company policy statement regarding ex-offenders. Criminal record information is treated in a sensitive way and is restricted to those who need to see it to make a recruitment decision. By signing this document, upon request you agree to provide a copy of the criminal record certificates. The criminal background information is not retained. By signing below you agree to this process.

**SCREENING**

The applicant consents to being screened in accordance with BS 7858 and will provide information as required. Any offer of employment is subject to satisfactory screening and the applicant acknowledges that any false statements or omissions could lead to termination of employment.

Applicant name: .....

NI number: .....

Applicant signature: .....

Date: .....

**Form 4 – Statutory declaration**

I [insert full name as shown on your passport]

of

[insert residential address]

holder of Passport No [insert passport number]

Date of birth [insert date of birth]

Do solemnly and sincerely DECLARE as follows:

1) (set out the required information in numbered paragraphs)

2) ...

3) ...

I make this declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and in accordance with the provisions of the Statutory Declarations Act 1835.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the details I have given above are complete and correct.

I understand that any false statement or omission to the company or its representatives may render me liable to dismissal without notice.

DECLARED .....the ..... day of ..... 20.....

.....,

(signature)

Company Representative:

.....

(signature)

**Form 5 – Acceptance of risk**

Risks identified during the consumer information search are to be signed-off. Top management or an authorized person, having reviewed the documented evidence, are to sign-off the screening file.

**Applicant’s name:**

**Applicant’s address:**

**Date conditional employment commenced:**

**Items requiring acceptance of risk:**

**Screening Controller:**

**Date:**

**Declaration:**

The above named applicant’s screening file has been reviewed and I have/have not accepted this applicant as being appropriate having considered **BS 7858:2019** because:\*

.....  
 .....  
 .....

\* Signatory to provide reason for sign-off.

**Name:**

**Signed:**

**Position:**

**Date:**

## Bibliography

### Standards publications

For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

[BS 7799-3](#), *Information security management systems – Part 3: Guidelines for information security risk management (revision of BS ISO/IEC 27005:2011)*

[BS EN ISO/IEC 27001](#), *Information technology – Security techniques – Information security management systems – Requirements*

[BS EN ISO/IEC 27002](#), *Information technology – Security techniques – Code of practice for information security controls*

### Other publications

- [1] GREAT BRITAIN. Employment Rights Act 1996. London: The Stationery Office.
- [2] GREAT BRITAIN. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. London: The Stationery Office.
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- [4] GREAT BRITAIN. Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978. Belfast: The Stationery Office.
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- [6] GREAT BRITAIN. Electronic Communications Act 2000. London: The Stationery Office.
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