

Programme Specification

Title of Course: *MSc Criminology*

Date first produced	02/11/2012
Date last revised	29/10/2024
Date of implementation of current version	01/09/2025
Version number	12
Faculty	Faculty of Business and Social Sciences
School	School of Law, Social and Behavioural Sciences
Department	Department of Criminology, Politics and Sociology
Delivery Institution	Kingston University

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes and content of each modules can be found in the course VLE site and in individual Module Descriptors.

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Award(s) and Title(s): <i>Up to 10 pathways</i>	MSc Criminology
Intermediate Awards(s) and Title(s): <i>There are 4 Intermediate awards for each pathway</i>	PgCert Criminology PgDip Criminology
Course Code <i>For each pathway and mode of delivery</i>	PPCRI1CRI20 PFCRI1CRI20
UCAS code <i>For each pathway</i>	n/a

Award(s) and Title(s): <i>Up to 10 pathways</i>	MSc Criminology with Forensic Psychology
Intermediate Awards(s) and Title(s): <i>There are 4 Intermediate awards for each pathway</i>	PgCert Criminology PgDip Criminology
Course Code <i>For each pathway and mode of delivery</i>	PPCRI3FPY20 PFCRI3FPY20
UCAS code <i>For each pathway</i>	

RQF Level for the Final Award:	Masters
Awarding Institution:	Kingston University
Teaching Institution:	Kingston University
Location:	Penrhyn Road
Language of Delivery:	English
Modes of Delivery:	Full-time Part-time
Available as:	
Minimum period of registration:	Full-time - 1 Part-time - 2
Maximum period of registration:	Full-time - 2 Part-time - 4
Entry Requirements:	The minimum entry qualifications for the programme are: A good first degree (minimum classification lower second) in a relevant area and or professional /

	practitioner experience at an appropriate level for an appropriate timeframe in a relevant field. A minimum IELTS score of 6.5 (with 7.0 in writing) or equivalent is required for those for whom English is not their first language.
Programme Accredited by:	
QAA Subject Benchmark Statements:	<i>Criminology</i>
Approved Variants:	There are no variants to the Postgraduate Regulations.
Is this Higher or Degree Apprenticeship course?	

For Higher or Degree Apprenticeship proposals only

Higher or Degree Apprenticeship standard:	N/A
Recruitment, Selection and Admission process:	N/A
End Point Assessment Organisation(s):	N/A

SECTION 2: THE COURSE

A. Aims of the Course

The main aims are:

- develop in students the knowledge and skills to critically analyse contemporary theoretical issues and enable them to engage with debates about the study of crime from a local and global perspective.
- enable students to understand and critically evaluate the dynamics of social, ideological, political, economical and legal influences on the construction of crime.
- enable students to understand and critically evaluate the dynamics of social, ideological, political, economical and legal influences on the development of criminal justice policy.
- provide students with a theoretical framework for understanding local, national and international approaches to crime control.
- develop a range of research skills for application to independent research.
- formulate, design and strategically plan an extended piece of criminological research.

B. Intended Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes are referenced to the QAA subject benchmarks for Criminology (2019) and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2014), and relate to the typical student.

The programme learning outcomes are the high-level learning outcomes that will have been achieved by all students receiving this award. They must align to the levels set out in the [‘Sector Recognised Standards in England’](#) (OFS 2022).

Programme Learning Outcomes					
	Knowledge and Understanding		Intellectual Skills		Subject Practical Skills
	On completion of the course students will be able to:		On completion of the course students will be able to		On completion of the course students will be able to
A7	demonstrate critical knowledge of the major concepts and debates in the legal and investigative domains of forensic psychology	B7	critically evaluate research within the investigative domain of forensic psychology	C7	demonstrate reflective, analytical and observational skills
A6	engage critically with current debates on law, crime and the criminal justice process	B6	conceptualise an individual piece of extended research.	C5	employ critical evaluation skills in the application of theory to practice
A4	apply analytical concepts to critically evaluate claim making in criminology	B5	demonstrate their ability to be independent autonomous learners and engage in reflective practice	C4	operationalise an individual piece of extended research successfully to completion
A3	demonstrate a critical understanding of the local, national and international contexts of crime, victimisation and crime control	B1	identify and contextualise criminological problems, formulate questions and investigate them	C3	analyse data using appropriate software packages
A2	demonstrate a critical understanding of the dynamics of social, ideological, political, economic, legal and technological influences on the development of criminal justice policy and crime construction from inclusive and international perspectives.	B3	deconstruct and explain complex social problems in terms of theory	C2	enable active engagement with a community of peers in academic debate and dialogue
A1	demonstrate an advanced level of knowledge and critical understanding of developments in contemporary criminological and victimological theorising	B2	analyse and evaluate contemporary issues of policy, crime control and punishment within a local and international context	C1	synthesise data and evidence and present it an appropriate format for a variety of audiences.

A5	demonstrate an understanding of the methods and principles of social research and evaluative research as applicable to criminological topics and of the ethical principles governing criminological research	B4	objectively analyse, assess and communicate empirical information about crime, victimisation, responses to crime and deviance from inclusive and international perspectives.		
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In addition to the programme learning outcomes, the programme of study defined in this programme specification will allow students to develop the following range of Graduate Attributes:

1. Creative Problem Solving
2. Digital Competency
3. Enterprise
4. Questioning Mindset
5. Adaptability
6. Empathy
7. Collaboration
8. Resilience
9. Self-Awareness

C. Outline Programme Structure

This programme is offered in full-time/part-time/ mode, and leads to the award of MA Criminology

E1. Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies

NA

E2. Work-based learning

Work based learning, either in formal placements or volunteer attachments, is actively encouraged. It is, in most circumstances, the responsibility of individual students to source and secure such placements. This is usually done with the advice and guidance of personal tutors. The proximity of Kingston to a wide range of criminal justice organisations across the London and metropolitan area is an important factor in generating access and availability.

Work based learning allows students to reflect upon their own personal experience of working in an applied setting, to focus on aspects of this experience that they can clearly relate to theoretical concepts and to evaluate the relationship between theory and practice. In addition, long experience of running these programmes in the Criminology field has demonstrated their importance for the personal development of students in terms of their confidence and broader employability skill sets.

While it is the responsibility of individual students to secure appropriate work-based learning opportunities, the Careers and Employability Serviceteam and KU Talent offer students support at all stages of the application process, including writing CVs, completing application forms, participating in mock interviews, assessment centre activities and psychometric tests. Sourcing and applying for work-based learning thus students with the opportunity to experience a competitive job application process.

The experience of the work-based learning enables students to apply their knowledge to the professional work environment, to reflect upon their own personal experience of working in an applied setting, to focus on aspects of this experience that they can clearly relate to their prior learning, and to evaluate the relationships between academic skills and employers' expectations.

E3. Outline Programme Structure

This field is part of the University's Postgraduate Credit Framework (PCF). Fields in the PCF are made up of modules which are designated principally at level 7. Two single modules in the framework are valued at 30 credits together with four 15 credit modules and one 60 credit dissertation comprising the entirety of the MA Criminology Programme. The minimum requirement for a Postgraduate Certificate is 60 credits, for a Postgraduate Diploma is 120 credits and for a Master's degree is 180 credits. In some instances, the Postgraduate

Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma may be offered to students who only complete specified parts of the Master's degree. Students will be provided with the PCF regulations. Students can study the MA in Criminology as a full field course or in combination (for example, Criminology with Forensic Psychology). The MA Criminology programme is made up of three 30 taught credit modules, and four 15 credit modules (of these the Policing in Context module must be taken and students may then choose one module from the other three optional modules (Victimology, Criminal Behaviours and Social Harms and Penology) 60 credit Dissertation. Full details of each module will be provided in module descriptors and on our on-line teaching and learning resource – Canvas.

MSc Criminology

Progression to Level 5

N/A

Progression to Level 6

N/A

Level 6 requires the completion of

N/A

Level 7							
MSc Criminology							
Core modules	Module code	Credit Value	Level	Teaching Block	Pre-requisites	Full Time	Part Time
Criminology Dissertation	CM7007	60	7	1 & 2			
Critical Criminology	CM7016	30	7	Year long		1	1
Dissertation Research Methods and Professional Practice	CM7020	30	7	1 & 2		1	1
Penology	CM7025	15	7	2		1	1
Understanding Crime and Criminal Careers	CM7015	30	7	Year long		1	1
Victimology	CM7019	15	7	1	None	1	1
Optional Modules							

Level 7 information

MSc Criminology with Forensic Psychology

Level 7							
MSc Criminology with Forensic Psychology							
Core modules	Module code	Credit Value	Level	Teaching Block	Pre-requisites	Full Time	Part Time
Criminology Dissertation	CM7007	60	7	1 & 2		1	2
Dissertation Research Methods and Professional Practice	CM7020	30	7	Year long		1	2
Investigative and Legal Processes in Forensic Psychology	PS7031	30	7	Year long		1	1
Understanding Crime and Criminal Careers	CM7015	30	7	Year long		1	1
Optional Modules							
Critical Criminology	CM7016	30	7	Year long		1	2
Penology	CM7025	15	7	2		1	2
Victimology	CM7019	15	7	1		1	2

D. Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The teaching and learning strategy has been designed to support a curriculum which provides a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of contemporary criminal justice policy, practice and politics in local, national and global contexts. The core components require students to explore complex issues in an innovative way, with new areas of knowledge being approached from different, sometimes unexpected, standpoints, thus reflecting the demands students may face in future work settings. In exploring these areas students will have to demonstrate a high degree of independent thought and action, as well as an ability to work with peers in collaborating to enhance knowledge and understanding for mutual benefit.

Teaching will be delivered and managed by a team of Kingston University academics who have subject relevant practical, professional and research experience. Expert external practitioners will also contribute to the programme where relevant and applicable.

The teaching and learning strategy encompasses a range of different methods:

- interactive workshops – embracing lecture and seminar formats.
- small group work.
- case studies.
- poster presentations.
- peer review.

- presentations.
- field-based learning.
- individual tutorials.
- research preparation.
- reflective journals.
- reports.

Lectures will provide an overview of the relevant material, mapping out the terrain and identifying key issues and problems. They will draw on a range of academic disciplines and apply a variety of methodologies and perspectives to the consideration of critical issues and problems. Lectures will frequently be supported by seminars and group work, which will provide students with an opportunity to clarify issues, raise questions and engage in a critical dialogue with lecturers and fellow students. These teaching formats are normally housed within a two-hour interactive workshop.

Debates about crime and punishment are frequently polarised and can generate unproductive division, consequently the teaching and learning environment is designed to ensure that students feel free to exchange and discuss ideas throughout the course on the basis of reasoned and evidence-based argument.

Students are encouraged to engage in field-based learning settings through volunteering. This helps students to explore the links between theory and practice, but also to acquire a grounded experiential knowledge which makes them attractive to prospective employers. Field based learning requires considerable responsibility on the part of the student who has to source and then maintain their field position. However, personal tutor support is available where required and students may choose to adapt field-based experience into a dissertation project with the help of academic staff.

In addition to field-based learning, field excursions are, where feasible, organised as extracurricular activities. For example, our students have benefited from a prison tour to enhance their penological knowledge and understandings of the prison environment.

Students are taught advanced independent study skills, so that they will feel confident in the work they produce and the decisions they make while preparing that work. The dissertation is an opportunity for students to make use of the range of knowledge and skills they have acquired during the previous teaching blocks. They will be in a strong position to identify a topic worthy of research and equipped with the necessary skill and analytical capacity to complete a substantial piece of writing of up to 15,000 words, working independently.

The overall assessment regime for the MA is designed to help students learn and to demonstrate that they have met the learning outcomes of the programme and of each level of study. A range of assessment strategies is used in the field in order to encourage a range of skills and to accommodate students' different learning styles. Assessment methods include critical essays; reflective essays; reports, research proposals; case studies, both group and individual oral, and poster presentations and dissertation.

The different assessment modes reflect and enhance the interdisciplinary inputs to the field programme. All modules provide explicit formative opportunities, including self-evaluation, for practice and constructive 'feed forward' designed to help students reach their full potential in summative assessment and care is taken to avoid assessment bunching. The development of academic skills is woven throughout the programme and assessed both formatively and summatively. All post graduate students are set a formative diagnostic assessment within their first few weeks of study so that their individual academic needs can be identified and supported in advance of their summative assessments.

E. Support for Students and their Learning

Students are supported by:

- A Module Leader for each module who takes responsibility for the teaching and learning experience of all those students registered and who monitors their progress, motivates their learning, monitors their performance and attendance, provides feedback and is responsible for their final grading.
- A Head of Department and Postgraduate Teaching Co-ordinator to help students understand the programme structure, regulations and to advise on requests for programme change.
- Personal Tutors to provide academic and guidance to students throughout their time at Kingston by monitoring their progress and helping to identify their individual needs.
- Support Needs Tutor to ensure students with special needs are able to fully access the teaching and learning experience offered by the programme.
- An academic misconduct tutor for students who have plagiarised.
- Technical support to advise students on IT and the use of software.
- A designated Course Administrator.
- An induction week.
- Staff Student Consultative Committees
- Canvas – a versatile on-line interactive intranet and learning environment.
- CASE -A substantial study skills centre that provides academic skills support.
- Student support facilities that provide advice on issues such as finance, regulations, legal matters, accommodation, international student support etc.
- Dyslexic and Disabled student support services.
- The Students' Union.
- Careers and Employability Service (KU Talent).

F. Ensuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Course

The University has several methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of its provision. These include:

- External examiners
- Annual review and development
- Periodic review undertaken at the subject level
- Student evaluation
- Moderation policies

G. Employability and work-based learning

The development of employability skills is embedded throughout the curriculum in this programme. It has been designed to equip students with the ability to relate the knowledge and skills that they have learned to real world contexts in which they may work in future. Building effective channels of communication with a wide range of external criminal justice practitioners and service providers to inform the employability aspects of course and assessment design, in addition to careful monitoring of the design of the programme's modules, ensures that the skills, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation have been identified and embedded. Graduates on this course have taken up posts in a variety of criminal justice and advocacy organisations including: the Metropolitan Police, UKBA, National Offender Management Service/Community Rehabilitation Companies, Prison Service, Youth Offending Teams, The Prison Reform Trust, Young Offenders Institutions, National Staking Agency, Victim Support as well as a range of Policy advisory units in the social and political sectors and doctoral study.

Work-based learning, including sandwich courses and higher or degree apprenticeships

Students are actively encouraged to undertake formal placements where feasible or volunteer opportunities with criminal justice sector organisations which is the more frequent option taken.

H. Other sources of information that you may wish to consult

See subject benchmarks for Criminology
https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-criminology.pdf?sfvrsn=8f2c881_4

See British Criminology Society

N/A

I. Development of Course Learning Outcomes in Modules

This table maps where course learning outcomes are **summatively** assessed across the modules for this course. It provides an aid to academic staff in understanding how individual modules contribute to the course aims, a means to help students monitor their own learning, personal and professional development as the course progresses and a checklist for quality assurance purposes.

Module Code		Level 7						
		CM7020	CM7016	CM7025	CM7015	CM7007	PS7031	CM7019
Knowledge & Understanding	A7							
	A6							S
	A4							S
	A3							S
	A2							S
	A1							S
	A5							
Intellectual Skills	B7							
	B6							
	B5							
	B1							
	B3							S
	B2							S
	B4							S
Practical Skills	C7							
	C5							
	C4							
	C3							
	C2							S

	C1						S
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Students will be provided with formative assessment opportunities throughout the course to practise and develop their proficiency in the range of assessment methods utilised.