



MSc International Criminal Justice (Online Distance Learning)

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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Course Details

1. Named Awards

MSc International Criminal Justice

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C1901P

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5. Accrediting Body

N/A

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

N/A

7. Document Control Information

August 2015

8. Effective Session

2016-17

9. Author

Marika Henneberg

10. Faculty

FHSS

11. Department

ICJS

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

- To develop students' understanding of the internationalisation of criminal justice and the importance of comparative perspectives;
- To develop students' understanding of the role, function and international policy-making impact of a diverse range of international criminal justice bodies;
- To develop students' critical understanding of the development of international and transnational offending via appropriate criminological, legal and political perspectives;

- To provide students with the opportunity to consider a range of international policing issues associated with a range of forms of transnational offending and political violence;
- To develop students' ability to use a range of research methods, understand the importance of research design, information literacy and to develop students' writing skills to enable the completion of a substantial research project of the students' choice.

13. Reference Points

The programme and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- Institute of Criminal Justice Studies 'Core Values'
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic staff of the Institute of Criminal Justice Studies
- The University of Portsmouth Curricula Development Framework Document
- Subject Benchmark Statement for Criminology
- Framework for the Higher Education Qualifications
- Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 7

Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

15. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- A.1 The United Nations, European Union and other regional criminal justice bodies with reference to international criminal justice, legal norms and standards, transnational offending and concepts of international and comparative criminal justice.
- A.2 Impact of international and transnational patterns of criminal offending on criminal justice.
- A.3 A range of internal and external issues that impact upon international criminal justice and criminal justice agencies, such as international police cooperation to counter-terrorism, differing forms of transnational offending, and crimes against international criminal laws.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

- B.1 Engage critically with concepts of universal, international and comparative criminal justice, and human rights, and apply them to the international policing and criminal justice context;
- B.2 Apply relevant frameworks or approaches to understand criminal justice norm setting and policy-making in an international context;
- B.3 Critically engage with literature on the differential impact of international criminal justice policy and action upon countries at differing stages of economic and political development;
- B.4 Engage with a range of other associated international criminal justice, transnational crime and policing and comparative justice issues.

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

- C.1 Reflectively apply concepts of criminal justice and transnational offending, and human rights standards, in an international and comparative context;
- C.2 Locate, evaluate, synthesise and summarize evidence from a wide range of relevant national and international criminal justice research studies;
- C.3 Present an informed opinion on the operation of criminal justice systems within diverse global contexts with reference to levels/stages of development;
- C.4 Undertake independent, methodologically sound and well-designed comprehensive criminal justice research, relevant to own practice and/or future employment prospects, demonstrating an ability to research independently, to evaluate different kinds of evidence, and to synthesise and evaluate material from a wide range of different sources.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

- D.1 Select and effectively use a range of strategies and resources to explore problems, research different options and formulate valid proposals.
- D.2 Develop a broad range of appropriate academic and professional skills particularly in communication, information technology skills and problem solving.
- D.3 Communicate through a range of forms of written work and online asynchronous communication.
- D.4 Demonstrate a basic knowledge of ICTs, including word-processing, use of email, online discussion tools, effective web searching and evaluation of sources, electronic academic bibliographic database searching, etc.
- D.5 Manage time, plan, research, implement and write up a dissertation.
- D.6 Take charge of one's own learning (planning and managing own time), reflecting and evaluating personal strengths and weaknesses for future learning (and developing as appropriate).

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Multimedia online learning materials will provide essential knowledge and encourage students to engage interactively with the subject materials enabling A1-A3 to be achieved. In all cases, student will be directed to further readings via the University of Portsmouth Online Reading Lists system, the e-Library (e-databases, e-journals and e-books), documentaries and pod-casts (Box of Broadcasts), and other selected web-based sources. Further, there are additional learning opportunities within

the Course Induction period (online and optional face-to-face), the annual Portsmouth-based ICJS Study School and the Postgraduate Research Study Day (start of Year 2).

Dedicated Virtual Learning Environments (in Moodle) will host the course content for each unit, forming an interactive repository of relevant learning materials supported by asynchronous 'thematic discussion' events (over 5 days). The annual cohort nature of the intake is sustained throughout the programme and, in conjunction with the discussion rooms (and any attendance at face-to-face events) will enable the development of an interactive specialist international criminal justice learning community comprising students and relevant academic staff to support the development of internationally aware professional practice, applied knowledge and critical understanding.

The multimedia online learning materials in Moodle will encourage ongoing analysis and critical reflection on course content, competing interpretations, and differential country experiences enabling B1-B4 to be achieved. The annual cohort nature of the intake in conjunction with the discussion rooms (and any attendance at face-to-face events) will promote interactions and critical reflective skills development within the specialist international criminal justice learning community of students and relevant academic staff.

The multimedia online learning materials in Moodle encourage students to relate the concepts and theories in question to their relevant professional knowledge and experience. The diverse nature of the annual student cohort will be acknowledged as a critical contributor to the exploration of relationship between course content and critical understanding of practical situations in diverse crime and criminal justice contexts around the world, supporting the attainment of practical, professional and subject specific skills as set out in C1-C4 above.

The Dissertation is supported through regular individual (possibly face-to-face, and) virtual meetings and email-based exchanges to guide and direct students to the relevant literature, to provide the essential knowledge for the research project, feedback on draft work to enable C4 to be achieved.

The majority of coursework assignments will expect students to locate appropriate materials from a range of sources (directed and undirected), to evaluate their utility, accuracy and currency and to use them to communicate effectively in a wide range of written and discursive formats (D1-D5). All assignments must be word-processed and students are expected to seek academic and technical sources of help and advice from a number of sources at different stages of the programme (D2-D4). All students are required to take personal responsibility for their learning throughout and to plan and deliver assignments within a framework of paced-study and appropriate deadlines (D6).

17. Assessment Strategy

A1-A3 will be assessed through a range of assignments including academic Essays, a Case Study, Reports, grading of Online Discussion and Peer Review, a Research Proposal, a Literature Review and a Dissertation thesis.

B1-B4 will be assessed through a range of academic Essays, a Case Study, Reports, grading of Online Discussion and Peer Review, a Research Proposal, a Literature Review and a Dissertation thesis, which will require deployment of range of critical analytical skills and bibliographic research and evaluation skills. Dissertation criteria will require demonstration of B1-B4.

C1-C4 will be assessed through a range of essays, case study, online discussion, reports, a literature review, a research proposal, and a dissertation thesis.

The majority of coursework will expect the application of theory to diverse real world contemporary situations and will require an opinion about the appropriateness of the application of principles such as international criminal justice and human rights to practical criminal justice contexts.

D1-D4 will be assessed through the peer review and final coursework requirements for each unit. D5 is substantially assessed through the dissertation. Overall, the staged learning materials, planned thematic discussion events for the three subject core units, and the deadlines and associated penalties for late and/or non-submission of all coursework, provides a framework for student planning of time and academic tasks, and encourages personal responsibility for own learning (D6).

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See [Unit Web Search](#)¹ for full details on the course structure and units

- Achievement of 60 credits is required to achieve a Pg.Cert., 120 credits for a Pg.Dip. and 180 credits for a Masters degree. Standard University rules and regulations apply.
- The programme operates on a 2 OR 3 year basis with the course structure designed to enable continuity in the learning of each cohorts of students within a distinct learning community for the duration of their subject core units. There are opportunities to move between the different paces of study should this be required within the practical constraints of the course structure.
- Units are 30 credits, with the exception of the 60 credit Dissertation.
- One credit is equivalent to 10 notional learning hours.

19. Employability Statement

Most students are already in relevant employment contexts prior to entry onto the course. Consequently, our curriculum is informed by the applied scholarly, research and knowledge transfers expertise of ICJS academic staff, and a continuous quality and curriculum relevance review. This is founded upon the Personal & Professional Development Planning (PDP) statement (and subsequent relevant PDP planning via Personal Tutor engagement), student feedback after the completion of each unit, and upon final course completion.

Students are initially introduced to career management skills via the completion of the online On-Entry PDP Questionnaire that is formally reviewed by the Course Leader. Feedback on this initiates a continuous process of self-awareness, personal skills, and professional development planning and development, whilst undertaking units that progressively challenge and develop existing skills.

Further reflection on career development is enabled via the annual Study Schools that include opportunities to participate as an audience at taught Doctorate in Criminal Justice (D.Crim.J.) presentations. Study Schools will include plenary sessions for students on the further development of career management skills, supported by interactive online exercises and website resources related to the subject area, and access to an interactive online Employability Hub.

All students (and Alumni) are strongly encouraged to join the LinkedIn professional network to present their profile in a professionally relevant context; and then to engage in networking and knowledge sharing with staff, students and Alumni of the Institute, and to participate in discussions in relevant LinkedIn Groups.

For students who live locally to the campus, then they are able to also participate in a series of Faculty-wide careers events with employers from a range of relevant employment sectors during the year and a Faculty Alumni Day. ICJS also runs a Careers Panel, which invites former ICJS students, who have since gained employment in the relevant sectors, to return to the university and share their experiences with current students.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- A Course Leader manages the Course.
- An extensive online (and where possible, face-to-face) Induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course. This builds upon the ICJS Pre-Course Preparation which is enabled once a student accepts an Offer to Study.
- Full technical support is provided by [Information Services](#), initiated via online testing tools to enable students to ensure they have correct software, updates and browser setting. Technical support personnel are available throughout via the [Service Desk](#) and at Course Induction (including the face-to-face event) to resolve any technical issues in the setting up University network accounts, etc.

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

- Each student has a Personal Tutor (normally their Course Leader) who is responsible for ongoing pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, counselling, chaplaincy, etc.
- The specific distance learning support services of the Academic Skills Unit (ASK) and their online resources.
- [The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre \(ASDAC\)](#).
- Excellent electronic and physical library facilities are available, with specific support services for off-campus students (see: <http://www.port.ac.uk/library/help/distance/>).
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student Departmental and Course Handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations, etc. with Unit guidance via each unit instance of the VLE.
- Written formative feedback is provided on all assignments to assist improvement of student performance and deepen academic development in line with the ICJS Marking Protocol. In the first Unit of study, the unit assessment pattern will ensure early feedback and assessment is provided so that remedial action can be acted upon in a timely fashion. For the Dissertation proposal a two-page *Summary* is submitted for advance formative feedback and early warning of any possible research ethics problems. Relevant Unit Coordinators will also act proactively, for example in contacting those students whose performance appears to indicate that they would benefit from study support, and the Institute follows up with direct contact to any student non-submission. A marker referral system is also in place to identify specific academic skills gaps and their resolution via enhanced skills support.
- Personal & Professional Development Planning (see section 16. Employability Statement).

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

Normally a first degree (2.2 minimum) in a relevant subject

or

exceptionally a strong profile of relevant professional experience and/or training and demonstration of academic ability to achieve postgraduate level

APL Tariff

Candidates with appropriate qualifications and experience will be eligible to apply for RPL on this course. All recognised courses are recorded on the RPL tariff, including the following:

Completed the University of Portsmouth accredited Centrex Senior Leadership Development Programme (SLDP), gaining advance standing APL against Issues in Transnational Policing (30 credits in total).

Or

Completed the assessment for the University of Portsmouth accredited Independent Police Complaints Commission training programme, gaining advance standing APL against Issues in Transnational Policing (30 credits in total).

Or

Completed the assessment for the University of Portsmouth accredited the Police Ombudsman Northern Ireland training programme, gaining advance standing APL against Issues in Transnational Policing (30 credits in total).

Or

Completed the *Pg.Cert. International Policing (Peace Support Operations)* at University of Sterling, gaining advanced standing APL against International and Transnational Offending, and Issues in Transnational Policing (60 credits in total).

English Language Criteria

For those applicants where English is not their first language, IELTS 6.5 overall with no Reading and Writing component below 6.0. A formal exemption process is in place at Admissions stage for relevant cases.

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- National Student Survey.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department, and Associate Heads.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Online and face-to-face Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Online Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- The University also participates in external student surveys, e.g. National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB).

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.

- New academic staff required to undertake a Higher Education teaching qualification.
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations²](#)).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

None

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

The Review took place on 2nd February 2015 and confirmed:

- Fitness of Purpose of Curriculum
- Annual Monitoring and Review Processes Effective.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015³](#)*).

D. Others

None.

² www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

³ www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](http://www.port.ac.uk/)⁴ and [Institute of Criminal Justice Studies](http://www.port.ac.uk/institute-of-criminal-justice-studies/)⁵ websites

⁴ www.port.ac.uk/

⁵ <http://www.port.ac.uk/institute-of-criminal-justice-studies/>