

MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice (FT Campus)

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose:

Course management, monitoring 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 and believes it to be correct. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification but reserve the right to change the content, timetabling and administration of the course whilst maintaining equivalent academic standards and quality.

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Programme Specification

1. Named Awards

MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice.

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C2627F

To view units and course structures please visit www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch and enter the 'C' code above to find the correct course.

3. Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth.

4. Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth.

5. Accrediting Body

NA

6. QAA Benchmark Groups

N/A.

7. Document Control Information

August 2016

8. Effective Session

2016-17

9. Author

Tom Ellis

10. Faculty

FHSS.

11. Department

ICJS.

12. Educational Aims

- To develop students' understanding of criminological theories of offending and the extent of crime
- To enable students to critically examine the role and function of criminal justice and the criminal justice policy-making context in England and Wales
- To develop student's awareness of the penal process
- To examine the treatment of disadvantaged communities and groups discriminated against, by and within, the criminal justice context
- To provide an opportunity for students to develop an understanding of the application of criminological and criminal justice principles to law enforcement and criminal justice agencies
- To provide opportunities for students to study a range of criminal justice subjects and to write a substantial piece of academic work

13. Reference Points

The programme and outcomes have been developed taking account of:

- The University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in HE
- Framework for the Higher Education Qualifications
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of ICJS staff
- Subject Benchmark Statements for Criminology
- ICJS 'Core Values'.

14. Learning Outcomes

The Learning Outcomes have been developed in conjunction with the Educational Aims stated above.

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

1. Competing explanations of crime and apply them in specific contexts.
2. The criminal justice process and agencies and policies within that process in England and Wales.
3. Complex social problems and the relationships between them in terms of criminological and psychological theory and empirical evidence in relation to crime, victimisation, and responses to crime and deviance.
4. The impact of diversity issues in the criminal justice process.
5. The application of criminological and criminal justice theories to law enforcement/criminal justice agencies in England and Wales

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

A1-A5 are delivered through: taught core and optional units. The basis of curriculum delivery will be via larger and small group lectures. These will be augmented by student-led presentations of readings and case studies at seminars. Access to essential knowledge is structured via preparatory readings within structured weekly reading lists and the use of open learning materials. There will be a considerable amount of visual material used in this course and students will be encouraged and assisted to learn how to critically read and evaluate visual media as well as written.

Virtual Learning Environments (Moodle) will provide opportunities to use online resources and interaction with course subject matter.

Study for the dissertation will be supported through regular individual meetings with the dissertation supervisor, one-to-one online tutorials or email-based exchanges to guide and direct students to relevant literature to provide the essential knowledge for the research project and to enable A5 to be achieved.

Assessment

A1-A5 will be assessed through a range of essays, short assignments, case studies and a research-based dissertation.

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

1. Engage critically with competing criminological theories and approaches and apply them to the criminal justice context in England and Wales.
2. Apply relevant frameworks or approaches to understand criminal policy-making in England and Wales.
3. Examine the nature of diversity and apply to practical criminal justice action in diverse communities.
4. Engage with a range of other associated criminal justice issues.

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

B1-B4 will be achieved through a range of structured activities throughout the programme of studies which will encourage and prompt critical engagement with course materials, competing interpretations and experiences. Example activities include tutor and student-led seminars, student presentations, discussion, questioning and interaction. These activities may be face-to-face or online (asynchronous).

Assessment

B1-B4 will be assessed through essays, short assignments, presentations and case-study coursework, which will require deployment of a range of critical analytical skills and bibliographic research and evaluation skills. Dissertation criteria will require demonstration of B1-B4.

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

1. Apply a range of generic and criminal justice specific concepts to crime and offending behaviour.

2. Locate evaluate, synthesise and summarise evidence from a wide range of relevant national and international criminological and criminal justice studies.
3. Present an informed opinion on the appropriateness of prison policy and criminal justice systems within diverse contexts.
4. Undertake independent research on complex matters relevant to criminal justice.
5. Demonstrate an ability to research independently, to evaluate different kinds of evidence, and to synthesise and evaluate material from a wide range of different sources in producing a research based dissertation.

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

C1-C5 will be delivered through lectures and seminars. The programme of studies will make frequent use of group discussions to encourage application of general theories to relevant specific strategic and operational criminal justice issues grounded in the students' own experience.

Assessment

C1-C5 will be assessed through coursework assignments, which will expect a demonstration of an understanding of current cultural criminological issues and the application of theory to contemporary contexts. C5 will be assessed by a research based dissertation.

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

1. Select and effectively use a range of strategies and resources to explore problems, research different options and formulate valid proposals.
2. Develop a broad range appropriate Level 3 Key Skills particularly in communication, information technology skills and problem solving.
3. Communicate through a range of forms of written work and online communication.
4. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of ICTs, including word-processing, presentation preparation, use of email, online discussion tools, web searching and evaluation of sources, online bibliographic database searching, etc..
5. Manage, plan, implement and write up a dissertation.
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).

Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

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-D6). 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).

Assessment

D1-D6 will be assessed through the coursework requirements for each unit. D5 is assessed through the dissertation. The system of deadlines and associated penalties for late submission ensures student planning of time and academic tasks and encourages personal responsibility for own learning (D6).

15. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

- 180 credits are required to achieve a Masters degree. Standard University rules apply and the regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.
- The programme operates on a 1 year full time basis.
- Units are 30 credits (with the exception of the 60 credit dissertation).
- One credit is equivalent to 10 notional learning hours.

16. Employability Statement

Employability skills are delivered (and assessed where applicable) throughout the curriculum. We provide structured support to enable students to develop their employability skills throughout the course. **Career management skills** specifically (as a subset of employability skills) will be embedded throughout the curriculum.

Students are introduced to career management skills (self-awareness, professional development planning, CV development etc.) in order to get them thinking about their existing skills and career plans at our annual study

school. There are plenary sessions for students on the further development of career management skills and this is supported by interactive online exercises and website resources related to the subject area. Students also have access to an interactive, online Employability Hub and the ICJS LinkedIn network.

As part of Induction personal tutorials and PDP, we provide further guidance and activities for students (as part of what are currently termed 'Pathfinder Exercises'). This is linked to individual research/project skills related to the core 60 credit dissertation/project and group research/project skills in core units.

For all students we also run 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.

All these activities will be supported by the Personal Tutor system and a refocused PDP – developing students as professionals - **Professional Development Planning**.

We also provide opportunities for students to engage in work-related learning through active learning and the application of skills in work-related environments. This consists of an understanding of working environments and the impact of globalisation on career goals.

17. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- 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 course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.

18. 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

or

a social science/humanities degree with successful completion of International College Portsmouth pre-Masters in Social Science

or

a social science/humanities degree with successful completion of Kaplan International College (London) Graduate Diploma in Law and Social Sciences (Law Pathway).

B. RPL Tariff

Candidates with appropriate qualifications and experience will be eligible to apply for Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) on this course. All recognised courses are recorded on the ICJS RPL database.

C. English Language Criteria

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

D. 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.

19. 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, Associate Head (Academic), Associate Head (Students).
- 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.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.
- University 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 Pacer Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.
- 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.

20. Assessment Strategy

Units include a wider range of innovative coursework assignments, formative and summative, including the writing of reports and reviews of different types of research literature. At this level, assessments are designed to encourage students to draw on a wider range of information sources and to develop a more evaluative and critical approach to materials. Formative assessments undertaken during seminars and/or online seminars, involving small group work and in-class tests, will assist students to develop critical thinking skills and the feedback provided will help students' understanding in how to apply this analysis to their later summative assessments during the consolidation and assessment period.

All students undertake a dissertation or extended research study which requires independent research study and management, supported by a tutor. The Research Methods and Research Management unit includes a more challenging range of formative and summative assessments designed to assess students' critical and analytical skills, and develop their familiarity with a range of primary sources. Some of the formative assessments will include work-related skills, such as report writing and writing presentations.

21. Assessment Regulations

Standard university rules apply (see [Assessment and Regulations](#)).

22. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:

- oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards;
- approve 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.

23. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

n/a

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

The review took place on 2nd February 2015

The Periodic review 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 2015\[1\]](#)).

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

D. Others

None.

24. Other Sources of Information

Other sources of information may be found in

- Course Approval Document.

- Student Handbook.
- University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework.
- University of Portsmouth Undergraduate Prospectus.
- Assessment Regulations.
- University of Portsmouth (<http://www.port.ac.uk/>) and (<http://www.port.ac.uk/institute-of-criminal-justice-studies/>) website.