



MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice (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 Criminology and Criminal Justice

2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C1920P

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 2016

8. Effective Session

2017-18

9. Author

Tom Ellis

10. Faculty

FHSS

11. Department

ICJS

Curriculum

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 students' 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. 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 Competing explanations of crime and apply them in specific contexts

- A.2 The criminal justice process and agencies and policies within that process in England and Wales
- A.3 The role and function of the penal process in England and Wales
- A.4 The impact of diversity issues in the criminal justice process
- A.5 The application of criminological and criminal justice theories to law enforcement/criminal justice agencies in England and Wales.

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

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

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

- C.1 Apply a range of generic and criminal justice specific concepts to crime and offending behaviour
- C.2 Locate, evaluate, synthesise and summarise evidence from a wide range of relevant national and international criminological and criminal justice studies
- C.3 Present an informed opinion on the appropriateness of prison policy and criminal justice systems within diverse contexts
- C.4 Undertake independent criminal justice research on complex matters relevant to own practice
- C.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.

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 appropriate Key Skills particularly in communication, information technology skills and problem solving
- D.3 Communicate through a range of forms of written work and online communication
- D.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.
- D.5 Manage, plan, 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

A1-A5 are delivered by distance learning using interactive online learning materials (in Moodle), backed by telephone and e-mail support, twice weekly online seminars within the postgraduate centre, a study support information pack, together with optional attendance at annual Study School.

The open learning materials provided will encourage ongoing analysis and reflection on course content, competing interpretations and experiences and will enable B1-B4 to be achieved. Example activities include email and telephone tutor interaction and online interaction.

Open learning materials encourage students to relate the concepts and theories in question to their workplace and experience. Online seminars will provide opportunities for the exploration of the relationship between course content and practical situations with other students in diverse contexts around the world, as well as on-campus and will enable C1-C5 to be achieved.

All students on the course will be encouraged to network with each other via their Course level Moodle site, and within other unit-based Moodle sites, and to develop informal student study-groups. This will provide opportunities for direct exchange of information and experiences from a diverse range of agencies and countries.

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).

17. Assessment Strategy

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

B1-B4 will be assessed through an exam, 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.

C1-C5 are assessed through coursework assignments which will expect the application of theory to real and contemporary situations and require an opinion about the appropriateness of the application of principles such as human rights and ethics to practical counter fraud and counter corruption contexts.

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).

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

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

- 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 2 or 3 year basis
- Units are 30 credits (with the exception of the 60 credit dissertation).
- One credit is equivalent to 10 notional learning hours.

19. Employability Statement

Many students/candidates are employed before they are accepted on this course. ICJS has a range of links with local and national employers within the security and criminal justice sector which enhance our teaching, research and knowledge transfer activities. Our curriculum is also informed by the contributions of former practitioners on our academic staff. Personal Development Planning is made available to all students through the personal tutoring.

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

¹ www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

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. These are open to distance learning students.

All these activities will be supported by the Tutoring 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.

Course Management

20. 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.

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

RPL Tariff

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

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.

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.
- University Contact 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.
- 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 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

Students who enter this course with the award of Accredited Counter Fraud Specialist maybe entitled to the award of Graduate Counter Fraud Specialist.

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 2015³](#)*).

D. Others

None.

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth⁴](#) and [Institute of Criminal Justice Studies⁵](#) websites

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

⁴ www.port.ac.uk/

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