

# **University of Plymouth**

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Business  
School of Society and Culture

## **Programme Specification**

**MSc Criminology (4813 and 6351)**

Approved Final Version for

September 2022

1. **Final award title** MSc Criminology

**Intermediate award title(s)**

PgDip Criminology  
PgCert Criminology

**UCAS code:** N/A

**HECoS code:** 100484 / Criminology

2. **Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth

**Teaching institution(s):** University of Plymouth

3. **Accrediting body(ies)** NA

4. **Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience**

The MSc in Criminology combines the accumulation of the knowledge and practical experience necessary to conduct criminological research, and an awareness of and interaction with criminological theory at the forefront of the discipline.

**Blended Learning:** Feedback from our students reflects the need for increased levels of flexibility to be incorporated into the teaching and learning experience. Finances and concerns around time management have the potential to contribute to elevated levels of anxiety for a number of students. Therefore, the MSc in Criminology offers students the opportunity to study either full time or part time, with a combination of distance learning and face-to-face contact. This is achieved through the use of Internet support via Moodle in order to listen to or view podcasts, partake in online discussions and access a wide range of materials and resources. Face to face contact also forms part of the process through conference-style opportunities for students to attend University of Plymouth, meet peers and engage with academic staff.

**Problem- Based Approach:** The Programme will be delivered by means of a problem-based approach to learning. Students will have the opportunity to undertake modules that are developed in association with our regional, national and international partners in the police, youth justice, probation and equalities (for example) that requires students to learn from a 'problem-based' approach. Students are therefore able to engage with a real problem or issue in the criminal justice system in order to develop their knowledge and skills in criminology. Undergraduate students have reported deriving a high level of motivation and engagement from this aspect of their degree, and it is hoped to transpose this onto the Masters Programme, resulting in increased employability.

**Diversity of Learning and Research-Led Teaching:** The MSc in Criminology is designed so that students gain a diverse learning experience from the full range of topics that are of interest to criminology. These diverse topics are 'streamed' down three core themed modules which reflects the broad range of research interests

and expertise. This reflects University of Plymouth's *Plymouth Strategy 2020* which encourages the nurturing of student learning by excelling in research-informed and led teaching. Unlike other programmes students will not have to choose between a variety of interesting options or restrict their study to more academic or vocational routes. The streamed approach incorporates all of these academic and vocational criminological avenues into these three themed modules. These modules focus upon global perspectives on crime, society and culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; issues of race, gender, inequality and criminalisation; and issues of governance, policing and penalty. This broad range of topics is reflective of the diversity of students that we recruit in line with the Equality Act 2010, and offers students preparation for further academic study or more vocational and professional routes upon completion.

These modules provide students with an opportunity to learn from research-active staff members who are internationally recognized experts in their field. Furthermore, the Dissertation component matches the student with a supervisor who is methodologically and theoretically positioned to maximize the benefit to the student. This process ensures that students are likely to be more engaged, and directly see how the discussions in the classroom reflect the core debates within criminology.

**Agency Collaboration:** Students benefit from the close ties that staff have with local, national and international criminal justice agencies, which provides them with opportunities to create professional networks and to provide focus for dissertation projects, contributing toward their Personal Development Profile and employability.

**Applied Knowledge:** Students are provided the opportunity to engage with a range of criminal justice and related third sector organisations such as the Probation Service and The Howard League. They therefore are able to align their studies and knowledge to working in criminal justice and related fields of employment.

**International perspectives:** The utilization of comparative modules within the programme means that students are able to contextualize their studies within an international perspective, an attribute that enables us to increase the attraction and relevance for international students.

## 5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)

- Criminology

## 6. Programme Structure:

Component	Module Code and Name	Timing/ Duration	Credits	Total Credits
2 Compulsory Core modules	<b>CRIM745</b> / Criminology Theory	Semester 1	30	<b>60</b>
	<b>CRIM746</b> / Criminological Research	Semester 1	30	
2 Compulsory Core Modules	<b>CRIM747</b> / Global Inequality, Vulnerability and Justice	Semester 2	30	<b>60</b>
	<b>CRIM748</b> / Crime, Culture and Control	Semester 2	30	
Dissertation	<b>CRIM732 / Dissertation</b>	Summer	60	<b>60</b>
				<b>180</b>

Full-time MSc Criminology Pathway (One Year)		
Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer
<b>CRIM745</b> / Criminology Theory (30cr.)	<b>CRIM747</b> / Global Inequality, Vulnerability and Justice (30cr.)	
<b>CRIM746</b> / Criminological Research (30cr.)	<b>CRIM748</b> / Crime, Culture and Control (30cr.)	
		<b>CRIM732</b> / Dissertation (60cr.)

Part-time MSc Criminology Pathway (Two Years)			
	Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer
Year One	<b>CRIM745</b> / Criminology Theory (30cr.)	<i>Pick 1 module from the list below:</i>  <b>CRIM747</b> / Global Inequality, Vulnerability and Justice (30cr.)  <b>CRIM748</b> / Crime, Culture and Control (30cr.)	
Year Two	<b>CRIM746</b> / Criminological Research (30cr.)	<i>Choose remaining module still to be completed:</i>  <b>CRIM747</b> / Global Inequality, Vulnerability and Justice (30cr.)  <b>CRIM748</b> / Crime, Culture and Control (30cr.)	
		<b>CRIM732</b> / Dissertation (60cr.)	

## **7. Programme Aims**

The MSc in Criminology aims to inspire students to critically engage with criminological theory, policy, research and practice at the forefront of the discipline and re-imagine the potentialities of criminological thinking in the new globalised era.

Specifically the programme is intended to:

- (1) Map and critically evaluate current criminological theory, policy, practice and research.

**(knowledge and critique)**

- (2) Facilitate students to adopt a problem-based approach to criminological issues and consider how transformative solutions could be applied in policy and practice;

**(problem-based learning approach)**

- (3) Review and challenge the ethical parameters that currently guide criminological thinking and consider how the programme's underlying principle of social justice could be realised in research, policy and practice;

**(ethical base)**

- (4) Engage students in contemporary relevant applied criminological research through strategic partnerships with regional (e.g. equalities; police; youth justice; probation), national (e.g. Howard League for Penal Reform; Children's Rights Alliance; Prison Reform Trust) and international (e.g. Amnesty International; United Nations High Commission on Human Rights) criminal justice agencies and rights organisations;

**(research partnerships)**

- (5) Foster the development of a range of personal and professionally relevant skills suitable for use as a policy maker, practitioner and/or researcher in the field of criminology and criminal justice;

**(personal and professional employability skills)**

- (6) Adopt a blended learning approach to programme delivery which facilitates a flexible and autonomous learning environment that can be accessed locally, nationally and internationally by students in partnership with the teaching team.

**(blended learning and an autonomous, international learning environment)**

## **8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for participants to develop and demonstrate the general outcomes listed below. The learning outcomes are referenced to Level 7 Descriptors (SEEC, 2010) and adapted for the discipline. These will be contextualised within each participant's coursework. In addition the following referents have been used in drawing up the programme outcomes:

- The QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

- The QAA Benchmark Statement for Criminology (2007 and consultation 2013)

By the end of the programme, participants will be expected to:

### **8.1. Knowledge and understanding**

1. Demonstrate an in-depth and systematic understanding of the criminological theories and perspectives that underpin criminal justice policy, practice and research
2. Work with theoretical and research-based knowledge at the forefront of the discipline of criminology
3. Show a comprehensive understanding of the current methodological approaches to the study of criminological theory, policy and practice

### **8.2. Cognitive and intellectual skills**

1. Develop the ability to critically analyse criminological theories, policies, practice and research and suggest innovative conceptual approaches based on these critiques
2. Design and implement research to investigate a significant issue in criminological theory, policy and/or practice
3. Select an appropriate advanced methodological approach to conduct this research and critically evaluate its effectiveness
4. Critically analyse complex criminological issues and evaluate their evidence base
5. Synthesise theory, policy and practice to create innovative and transformative solutions to complex criminological issues

### **8.3. Key and transferable skills**

1. Adapt knowledge and skills to work in a range of criminal justice settings
2. Independently recognise problems and issues arising in these settings and formulate and implement practical solutions
3. Interact effectively in teams both as a leader and member. This includes initiating and engaging in problem solving and task centred activities, and facilitating conflict resolution within the team
4. Demonstrate a critical awareness of the ethical dilemmas surrounding criminological issues and work with others to formulate solutions

### **8.4. Employment related skills**

1. Critically reflect on one's own academic and professional attributes and consider areas for self development

2. Communicate and interact effectively in a range of academic and professional contexts

#### **8.5. Practical skills**

1. Operate in complex criminal justice settings, selectively accessing and applying a wide range of IT techniques and resources
2. Engage independently in decision-making, recognise when support is needed, and accept responsibility for actions

### **9. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS arrangements**

The admissions policy for the MSc Criminology complies with the University Policy for Admissions to Postgraduate Taught Programmes of Study. Admissions to the course will be determined by the Programme Manager who will require evidence to support applications (e.g. academic transcript, degree certificate).

The normal entry qualifications are:

- an Honours degree in a social science or cognate discipline with a minimum of a 2:2 classification from a UK university, or
- an equivalent award from an overseas institution, or
- an equivalent professional qualification.

Applicants who do not have English as a first language are required to provide proof of proficiency in English, in which case they are required to attain minimum test scores of 6.5 (and minimum 5.5 in writing) for IELTS or 575 paper-based, 90 internet-based and 232 computer-based for TOEFL.

Applicants who do not have appropriate Higher Education qualifications may be admitted to the programme on the basis of relevant prior experience if they can demonstrate the potential to successfully complete the programme. The Programme Leader may require such applicants to provide further evidence to support their application and undertake an interview.

### **10. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards**

There are no specific progression routes other than those outlined in Entry Requirements above.

11. **Non-Standard Regulations:** none

12. **Transitional Arrangements**

### 13. Mapping and Appendices

#### 13.1. Intended Learning Outcomes against Modules Mapping

Programme Specification Mapping (PGT): module contribution to the meeting of Award Learning Outcomes

Tick those Award Learning Outcomes the module contributes to through its assessed learning outcomes. Insert rows and columns as required.

Module	Credits	C core E electiv e	Award Learning Outcomes contributed to (for more information see Section 8)																Compens ation Y/N	Assessment element(s) and weightings [use KIS definition] E1 - exam E2 - clinical exam T1 - test C1 - coursework A1 - generic assessment P1 - practical
			Knowledge & under- standing 8.1			Cognitive & intellectual skills 8.2					Key & transferable skills 8.3				Employment related skills 8.4		Practical skills 8.5			
			1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	1	2		
CRIM745 Criminology Theory	30	C	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	N	C1
CRIM746 Criminological Research	30	C		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	N	C1
<b>Learning Outcomes 60 credits</b>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
CRIM747 Global Inequality, Vulnerability and Justice	30	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		Y	C1
CRIM748 Crime, Culture and Control	30	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	Y	C1
<b>Learning Outcomes 120 credits</b>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
CRIM732 Dissertation	60	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N	C1
<b>Learning Outcomes 180 credits</b>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>Confirmed Award LOs</b>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

