

Programme Specification: BA Single (Hons) Criminology

NOTE: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detail on the specific learning outcomes, indicative content and the teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found (1) at <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/elss>, (2) in the Module Specifications and (3) in the Student Handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked within independent review processes undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency.

Awarding Institution / Body:	Birmingham City University
Teaching Institution:	Birmingham City University
Interim Awards and Final Award:	Certificate in Higher Education; Diploma in Higher Education; BA BA Single (Hons)
Programme Title:	Criminology
Main fields of Study:	Criminology, Victimology, Punishment
Modes of Study:	Full time and part time
Language of Study:	English
UCAS Code:	M900
JACS Code:	

Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external reference points used to inform programme outcomes:

The programme has been developed against the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Benchmarks for Academic Standards for Criminology (2007). These benchmarks are informed by the acknowledgement that criminology has developed and continues to evolve from a range of human and social science disciplines. This degree programme, therefore, reflects the QAA's recognition of Criminology's broad base by introducing students to a range of perspectives and the debates to which they give rise. It also provides students with an appreciation of the ways in which different theoretical perspectives have influenced empirical research and policy responses. On completion of the programme learners will not only be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of key concepts and debates in the areas of criminology, victimisation and the official and unofficial responses to these issues but they will also be able to evaluate this knowledge and apply it in a variety of settings.

Programme philosophy and aims

The overall approach of the degree is to develop critical appreciation of the relationship between the individual and social aspects of crime and victimisation. The course will utilise a variety of teaching and learning techniques in order to develop a range of transferable academic and practical skills, which will be attractive to employers in the public and private sectors.

The aims of the programme therefore are to provide learners with:

- A theoretical framework drawing on disciplines which contribute to the understanding of criminology as an academic subject.
- A curriculum which offers a varied yet focused choice of subjects, to develop interests and debates within the specialised field of criminology and related disciplines.
- A range of opportunities to develop knowledge and critical understanding of criminology and related disciplines both in theory and in practice.
- A range of analytical skills and an ability to undertake independent project work.
- A variety of personal transferable skills which will enhance career prospects and be an asset to any employer.

Intended learning outcomes and the means by which they are achieved and demonstrated:

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course learners will have:

- Knowledge and understanding of the core schools of criminological thought, their history, contemporary relevance and applications as well as their relationship to other key social science disciplines.
- An appreciation of the social, historical, cultural and political contexts in which crimes are committed and constructed and in which policy responses to offenders and victims are produced.
- The ability to construct arguments in relation to criminological and justice issues.
- The intellectual and cognitive skills to critically evaluate and apply theoretical knowledge to a range of criminological contexts, justice issues and research projects.
- The ability to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in a high security penal environment.
- The ability to apply basic skills of practical research.
- The ability to make effective use of relevant information technology, including a word-processing package, a spreadsheet package, the World Wide Web, e-mail, and electronic information retrieval systems.
- Developed transferable skills that provide a foundation for successful transition into employment and/or higher level studies.

Learning, teaching, and assessment methods used

Birmingham City University (BCU) is committed to the provision of a '...educational experience of the highest quality with a strong commitment to employability and to flexible and practice-based learning'. To this end the University has mechanisms in place which encourage student and staff development. The University learning and teaching strategy embodies the following key goals:

1. To facilitate a smooth transition to and through BCU for all students;
2. To gain a high level of student engagement with the learning process;
3. To offer flexible approaches to learning;
4. To meet the needs of a diverse student group;
5. To develop highly employable students who are aware of their responsibilities to their profession and to society;
6. To develop and support staff to achieve high academic and professional standards in learning and teaching and recognise excellence.
7. To provide the most appropriate and effective learning environment.

The University ensures that all new staff, who do not have a qualification in teaching, enrol on the Postgraduate Certificate (Education): Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. Staff are actively encouraged to enhance their subject knowledge and qualifications to PhD level; to share good practice in teaching through peer observation; to apply for University and National Teaching Fellowships.

The Faculty responds to the University strategy by formulating a strategic plan of how it will achieve the above goals at a local level, ensuring that this strategy involves a dynamic process which enhances the student experience. At the programme level we are focused on ensuring that we meet these broad goals in a number of ways and the following illustrates how the course team engages with the learning and teaching strategy:

- Induction is seen as a key priority of the learning and teaching strategy and within the programme it is key to ensuring that students are able to experience a smooth transition during their first months at our institution. Induction runs throughout all three terms for Level 4 students and at Level 5 and 6 students are provided with the opportunity of gaining careers advice and securing voluntary work whilst studying (*Goals 1, 2, 4 and 5*).
- As well as employing traditional forms of teaching via lecture and seminar provisions, we also make a significant use of the intranet resources via the University Virtual Learning Environment, Moodle. Teaching staff include a range of material on this website, from lecture notes, web links, video programmes and extracts from academic sources to improve student access to learning aids for their benefit (*Goals 2, 4 and 7*).
- In addition to the support the programme team provide, the University provides student support via the Academic Skills Centre and Student Services including a dedicated member of staff supporting personal development planning (PDP). The University Central Moodle module provides additional materials and resources to support PDP (also refer to the PDP section of the Student Handbook) (*Goals 2, 4 and 5*).
- By offering a flexible approach to learning, we make provisions for full time as well as part time students. This enables some students to work (paid and / or

voluntary) as well as to take responsibility for their childcare/family commitments. Consequently, we are able to meet the needs of a diverse student group (*Goals 3, 4, 5 and 7*).

Our assessment strategy is designed to ensure that, as a teaching team, we are able to offer our students stimulating and challenging experiences. The Course Team are keen to continue to provide a varied diet of assessment to facilitate the achievement of knowledge, intellectual, practical and transferable skills development, whilst also being mindful of the need to minimise opportunities for plagiarism.

The assessment strategy we employ is also intended to address the broad goals within the University Learning and Teaching Strategy outlined above.

Listed below are examples of the type of assessment methods to be utilised in the proposed programme, indicating the range of approaches to be used:

- Reports and Case Studies.
- Assignments.
- Presentations.
- Seen Examinations.
- Short Tests (including multiple choice and short answer quiz approaches).
- Book Reviews.
- Project work (which use primary and secondary source materials).
- Reflective reviews.

By providing a variety of assessment tools we are able to give students a range of assessment strategies that engages learners, as well as challenging them to excel in the areas where they can develop and improve. Such assessment strategies meet the needs of a diverse pool of students and the range of learning outcomes. We also provide anonymous marking to ensure that we are treating everyone fairly when it comes to assessing work.

The core modules emphasise the importance of relating theory to practice through both the teaching and assessment methods employed. A combination of academic rigour and transferable skills gained during the student experience adds strength to PDP planning. PDP features on several modules (core and optional) throughout the programme, notably on Introduction to Criminology (Level 4); Criminological Research (Level 5); Applied Criminology; Extended Project and Working in Criminal Justice (Level 6).

Programme structure and requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards

The BA Single (Hons) programme is normally studied over three years full-time or five years part-time, and students may, if they wish, move between full- and part-time modes of attendance. The academic year is 30 weeks running from September to June over three terms. The course is divided into study units called modules, and these are either double (30 credits) or single (15 credits). Students complete 120 credits at each of Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6. Each 15 credit module represents 150 hours of student learning and assessment. Students follow a scheme of compulsory study of Criminology modules supplemented by option modules chosen from Criminal Investigation, Policing, Psychology, Security Studies, or Sociology. Level 6 options also include the Extended Research Project (Dissertation) and Working in Criminal Justice modules.

The structure of the course, the modules, levels and credit ratings, and the awards which can be gained are shown below.

BA (Hons) Criminology

Level 4

Term 1	Introduction to Criminology (30 credits)	Introduction to Psychology (15 credits)	Introduction to Policing (15 credits)	Legal Processes (15 credits)
Term 2/3		Introduction to Security Studies (15 credits)	Crime Analysis (15 credits)	Social Construction of 'Deviance' and Social Control (15 Credits)

Award: Cert HE (120 credits)

Level 5

Term 1	Core Issues in Crime and Punishment (30 credits)	Criminological Research (15 credits)	Addiction and Criminality (15 credits)	option
Term 2/3		Criminal and Forensic Psychology (15 credits)	Crime and the Media (15 credits)	option

Award: Dip HE (240 credits)

Level 6

Term 1	Theories of Rights (30 credits)	Crime Prevention (15 credits)	Victimology and Restorative Justice (15 credits)	option
Term 2/3		Applied Criminology (15 credits)	Transnational Organised and Corporate Crime (15 credits)	option

Award: BA (Hons) (360 credits)

Support for Learning including Personal Development Planning (PDP)

Students are encouraged to identify and, with guidance, to reflect on their own learning needs and are offered the following support as appropriate to meet those needs:

- An induction programme dealing with orientation and the dissemination of essential information.
- A programme of study skills as part of the year one core.
- A Personal tutor group system at level 4.
- A year tutor system at levels 5 and 6.
- Sessions on revision and examination techniques.
- Student Handbook containing information relating to the University, the Faculty, the Department of Social Sciences, the course and modules, assessment regulations.
- Access to administrative staff and to academic staff, at clearly notified times.
- Access to faculty resources including the University Learning Zones and a range of IT equipment.
- Access to the services of a Faculty Librarian.
- Assistance and support for learning skills from the Faculty Support Tutors and University Central Services.
- Access to the University's Student Services, including careers advice, financial advice, medical centre, disability service, crèche, counselling service and chaplaincy.

Criteria for admission

Candidates must satisfy the general admission requirements of the programme.

The current admission requirements can be found under the 'Entry Requirements' tab of the web page for this course.

Methods for evaluation and enhancement of quality and standards including listening and responding to views of students

Committees:

- Board of Studies.
- Examination Board.
- Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee.
- Learning and Teaching Committee.
- Student Experience Committee.
- Faculty Board.
- Senate.

Mechanisms for review and evaluation:

- Individual module evaluation by students, staff and, where appropriate, stakeholders.
- Annual review of modules by module leaders.
- Annual course evaluation reports and action plans.
- Annual monitoring process.
- Observation of teaching.
- Individual performance reviews.
- External examiners' comments and formal reports.
- Student representatives' feedback to Boards of Studies.
- Consideration of the minutes of Boards of Studies by Student Experience Committee.
- Approval and review and re-approval events.
- National Student Survey.
- Birmingham City University Student Experience Survey.
- Course Development Day.