

**Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences**

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| **Proposed Title:****Prevent within the public sector: Exploring public sector staff perceptions of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015** |
| **School:****Social Sciences**  |
| **Proposed Supervisory Team:**Dr Imran AwanDr Andrew Whiting Dr Keith Spiller |
| **Abstract:**The aim of the proposed PhD is to generate insights and awareness into the role and significance of the new Counter-Extremism Strategy (2015) with particular reference to the statutory Prevent duty on all public sector workers that has come about through the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015). Following the terror attacks in London and Manchester there is an urgent government review of counter-terrorism measures and the effectiveness of strategies such as Prevent. The Prevent strategy has been a source of contention between the government, ministers, the media, academia and the public (Awan, 2015). On the one hand Prevent is viewed as a vital aspect of the broader CONTEST counter-terrorism strategy and something that is necessary to ensure national security. On the other hand critics argue it disproportionately impacts upon individual liberty and has a particularly stigmatising effect on particular communities (Miller, 2015). Media reports have served to highlight the misunderstanding that may pervade around the Strategy, examples of which include: a student who was questioned by his University for reading a book entitled: ‘Terrorism: A Reader’ because it created suspicion despite the student claiming this was a recommended reading text (The Guardian, 2015) and speakers being banned on University campuses because they are deemed to be ‘risky’ speakers. A qualitative study, using semi-structured interviews or other suitable means, to engage with the following public sector workers highlighted within the Strategy; Mental health practitioners; University academic staff across different departments and institutions; School teachers; Doctors and School administrators and security staff.  |
| **Research Environment:**The project will be based in the Centre for Applied Criminology and within the CREST criminology cluster.  |
| **Applicant Requirements:**The successful candidate will meet the following essential criteria: * Undergraduate degree (minimum 2:1 classification) in Criminology or another closely related social sciences subject.
* Awareness of the process of criminological research, preferably through an independent project or dissertation in an area related to the studentship topic.

Desirable criteria include: * Master’s degree in Criminology or another closely related social sciences subject.
* Experience of conducting qualitative research methods.

The student will be expected to obtain the PG Cert in L&T as part of their development. |
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