

**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 Awan  Dr 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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