



Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin
a taught programme of study leading to an award from
The University of Sheffield

1	Programme Title	Criminology
2	Programme Code	LAWU17
3	JACS Code	L611, L311
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Bachelor of Arts (BA)
5b	Position in the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications	Honours
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	None
6b	Position in the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications	Not applicable
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Sciences
9	Department	Law
10	Other Department(s) involved in teaching the programme	Department of Sociological Studies
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	3 years
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Not applicable
14	Date of production/revision	February 2024

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The BA in Criminology is owned by the School of Law. The School of Law at Sheffield is one of the largest in the country. The School's research has been rated as being of international quality in the last 5 Research Assessment Exercises (RAE/REF). In the most recent assessment (2021), the quality of our research outputs were ranked second best in the UK and best in the Russell Group of Universities.

Criminology has long constituted a major specialism and area of research activity within the School. The Centre for Criminological Research is the focal point for criminology and criminal justice research at the University of Sheffield. It is one of the four original criminological centres of excellence in the UK. Reaching across the University to bring together experts from a wide range of excellent departments, it forms a multi-disciplinary Centre conducting high quality research about key criminological subjects.

The BA in Criminology draws on the School's research strengths in criminology. The programme also seeks to draw on the strengths of other departments in the University, particularly the Department of Sociological Studies where modules with a criminological focus are taught. Criminology at the University of Sheffield seeks to place crime and the criminal justice system in its social, economic, political, historical and philosophical context. The BA in Criminology introduces students to the systematic study of criminology. This helps students to develop a critical understanding of, and a systematic grounding in, definitions and explanations of criminality, criminal justice, perceptions of crime and punishment and other responses to the phenomena of crime and harm, both nationally and globally. The BA in Criminology is informed by and expresses the principles of education for sustainable development which, as described by UNESCO, "empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity".

In the first year of the BA in Criminology, students study foundation modules introducing criminology/criminal justice, criminological research methods and criminal law. In the second year, students continue their studies of core subjects in criminology, and have a choice from a range of options. In the final year, students will prepare a dissertation across both semesters as well as choose from a range of optional modules. The optionality built into the programme in second and third years allows students to have considerable freedom to develop a programme tailored to their interests from a range of criminology options, within the School of Law, the Department of Sociological Studies and beyond, by drawing on modules from other departments in the University. Students also have the option to study abroad in their third year, providing them with an excellent opportunity to gain an insight into crime and criminal justice

in another country.

The BA in Criminology will attract students who wish to pursue a career in a variety of institutions within the criminal justice system, academia, NGOs, and a range of other employment allied to the criminological field. However, the critical and analytical skills developed by the programme are also valuable in many other contexts. Indeed, criminology is inherently interdisciplinary, which means students will be provided with many opportunities to broaden their knowledge and analyse crime and criminal justice from different perspectives. The BA in Criminology is therefore suitable for students intending to seek careers in many areas.

Further information is available at <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/2024/criminology-ba>

16. Programme aims

AIMS

1. Develop students' critical understandings of the different conceptual, theoretical and methodological approaches to criminology, including the historical foundations of the discipline.
2. Increase students' awareness of local and global issues of crime and justice by using comparative and international perspectives to explore key issues in criminology.
3. Provide students with an understanding of, and ability to reflect critically and comparatively upon, the workings and practices of various forms of social control, particularly state responses to crime but also alternatives to the criminal justice system.
4. Equip students to identify and critically reflect upon processes of criminalisation and victimisation, whether by or of individuals, groups, families, communities, institutions or the state.
5. Develop students' understanding of the impacts of crime and other harms upon victims and the way their impacts may fall unevenly based on race, gender, where one lives in the world, and on the environment itself.
6. Equip students with the methodological skills to collect, analyse, interpret and present data using a wide range of research methodologies and dissemination techniques.
7. Enable students to develop and reflect on their own values, experiences and aspirations in relation to criminological practice and diversity.
8. Engage students in applied learning, including opportunities to conduct research, develop professional skills and interact with professionals, organisations and communities.
9. Enhance students' employability by providing opportunities to reflect on and develop self-confidence, self-awareness and self-belief.
10. Equip students with transferable skills in critical and strategic thinking, communication, leadership, collaborative practice and digital literacy.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge	
K1	The history and development of criminological ideas regarding relationships between individuals, groups and social institutions, and the processes underpinning or explaining change.
K2	The diversity of conceptual, theoretical and methodological approaches to criminology.
K3	Diverse research strategies and how to appropriately deploy them to understand the social world, and to explore crime, deviance, victimisation and responses to these and other phenomena.
K4	Social, environmental, political and economic concerns which impact on or are impacted by crime and the workings and practices of the criminal justice system and its institutions.
K5	An understanding of criminology as a distinctive social science discipline as well as its relationship to other disciplines and crucial contribution to interdisciplinary knowledge.
K6	The applications and uses of criminological knowledge across a variety of contexts, including public, private, national and global.
K7	The importance of values and ethics in criminological inquiry, research and practice.

Skills and other attributes:

S1	Design, implement, evaluate and report research using appropriate social science research methods.
S2	Synthesise and communicate complex ideas, arguments and research findings in ways suitable for diverse audiences using a variety of communicative styles and media.

S3	Demonstrate the professional values and skills of engaged and critically thoughtful citizens, including sensitivity to the values and interests of others, working respectfully across differences, and understanding the importance of diversity, the relevance of context, and the impacts of humans upon the environment.
S4	Reflect upon, identify and articulate personal skills and attributes, and opportunities for continual critical learning, development and reflection.
S5	Work collaboratively to bring together different perspectives to analyse and contribute to criminological debates and ideas.
S6	Demonstrate digital literacy through the use of information and digital technologies to find, evaluate, create and communicate knowledge, and the capacity to adapt to developing technologies.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

The knowledge base (**K1–K7**) is developed through a combination of lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, coursework, group work, directed/self-directed reading and one-to-one supervision. Different modules utilise different combinations of these methods.

Lectures provide an overview and/or framework of the area of study and of the key issues and arguments.

The knowledge base is then developed through **directed and self-directed reading** of primary and secondary source materials, building on the framework provided by lectures.

Seminars, tutorials and workshops provide an opportunity to test knowledge and understanding of key substantive areas and clarify any areas of uncertainty.

Group Work will provide an opportunity for students to engage in collaborative learning, team-building, presentation and real-world skills.

One-to-one supervision is provided for students undertaking dissertations. These sessions are arranged between student and supervisor and it is here that the intellectual and methodological issues of independent study are discussed, and where students get help and support in planning and undertaking their project.

Skills are developed through a combination of methods but principally within seminars, tutorials, workshops and completion of written and oral coursework.

Skills for criminological analysis (S1–S3) are primarily developed through **seminars, tutorials and workshops**, where students undertake problem solving and critical analysis exercises. **Lectures** also contribute to the development of these skills by providing examples and demonstrations of their application. The balance between these different methods varies from module to module. **One-to-one supervision** during dissertations also supports students in developing these skills in practice.

Criminological research skills (S1) are developed through preparation for workshops and tutorials and in the completion of coursework. **Criminological research skills (S1)** are further developed through **workshops, seminars and presentations**. This allows students to use their range of skills and apply them to a series of research activities. They are encouraged to use these skills creatively in the preparation of materials for the range of activities and assessments.

Communication skills (S2) are developed by **coursework** requiring students to provide written and/or oral answers to essay questions (requiring critical analysis of arguments and propositions). **Communication skills (S2)** are also developed through participation in **seminars, tutorials and workshops**.

Professional values and skills (S3) are developed through engagement with **seminars, tutorials and workshops**, all of which require students to work with their peers, allowing for the development of understandings of diversity and sensitivity to others.

Reflective skills (S4) are developed through **one-to-one supervision** during which students are supported to consider their personal development. Reflective skills are also ongoingly developed through **seminars, tutorials and workshops** where they have opportunities to engage in critical learning and reflection.

Skills in collaborative working (S5) are developed via **group work** which takes place during **seminars, tutorials and workshops**. Collaboratively produced outputs as part of **coursework** also develop skills on collaborative working.

Digital literacy skills (S6) are developed in preparation for seminars, tutorials and workshops as preparation requires engagement with a range of digital platforms. Digital literacy is further developed via coursework requiring the production of digital artefacts.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

A range of assessment methods is used across the curriculum. The aim is to balance the use of different assessment methods both throughout the programme and at each level. The principal methods used are assessed coursework, often in the form of an essay but other written outputs are also used (e.g. policy analysis; care plan; book review), examinations, presentations and reflexive practice. A combination of assessment types may be used in some modules. In the final year, students can apply the skills they have learnt through the preparation of a dissertation.

- **Knowledge and understanding** are tested by a variety of assessments including coursework, essays and examination and presentations.
- **Research skills** are demonstrated by assessed coursework, examination questions, and assessments in the criminological research methods modules. In their final year, students undertake a dissertation.
- **Problem solving** skills are tested by essay questions in examinations and assessed coursework.
- Skills of **critical analysis** are tested by essay questions in assessed coursework and examinations.
- Skills in **collaborative working** are tested in coursework necessitating group work.
- **Written** skills are tested generally through coursework and examination.
- **Oral communication** and skills of **personal organisation** and **time management** are not formally assessed, but the latter are indirectly assessed in the preparation of assessed coursework including presentations and also in examinations.
- **Reflective skills** are tested in coursework involving forms of reflective practice.
- **Digital literacy** skills are tested through coursework, all of which requires some engagement with digital resources and some of which requires the production of digital artefacts (e.g. creating a website; vlog).

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

[QAA Subject Benchmark Statement](#)

[QAA Education for Sustainable Development Quality Code](#)

[Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

[University Strategic Plan](#)

[Vision and Strategic Plan – Education](#)

[British Society of Criminology Code of Ethics](#)

[UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives](#)

The research interests and expertise of the criminology staff of the School of Law and Department of Sociological Studies.

20. Programme structure and regulations

The programme requires students to study criminology at all levels.

At **Level 1**, all students follow a prescribed programme of study comprising Comprehending Criminology, Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice, Situating Crime, Introducing Criminological Research, Criminal Law and Justice, and Representations of Deviance and Social Control. Students will also undertake the Skills for Criminologists 1 (S4C1) course across both semesters.

At **Levels 2 and 3**, students have a degree of freedom to choose from a range of optional modules in criminology. At **Level 2**, all students must study Responding to Crime, Punishment and Penal Policy, Analysing Crime Data, and The Value of Criminology: Policy & Practice. They will also select one option per semester from a range of optional modules, selecting 40 credits worth of modules from either within, or outside of, the School of Law. Students will also undertake the Skills for Criminologists 2 (S4C2) course across both semesters.

At **Level 3**, students will prepare a dissertation in criminology and/or criminal justice (40 Credits). Students then undertake modules to the value of 80 credits from a range of other modules. Optional modules may be taken from within the School of Law and the Department of Sociological Studies without restrictions so long as they remain within the 80-credit limit.

Please refer to the [General University Regulations](#) and the [On-line Directory of Modules](#) for detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules.

21. Student development over the course of study

Level 1: Students are introduced to:

- Basic principal theories in criminology, as well as contemporary criminological debates (*Comprehending Criminology*).
- An introduction to the key institutions of the criminal justice system and key theories of criminal justice, as well as contemporary issues in criminal justice (*Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice and Criminal Law and Justice*).
- Essential foundations in criminological research skills and develop their research skills and expertise (*Introducing Criminological Research*).
- Other key areas of criminological study (*Situating Crime, Criminal Law and Justice, Representations of Deviance and Social Control*).

It is expected that students at Level 1 will require substantial direction and tuition is more intensive than at later stages of the programme.

Level 2: Students continue their study of the core areas of criminology and criminal justice.

- Students continue their study of the core criminal justice elements of the programme (*Punishment and Penal Policy and Responding to Crime*).
- Students will further develop their empirical research skills (*Analysing Crime Data*).
- Students will develop an understanding of the link between academic research and evidenced-based policy making and shaping practice (*The Value of Criminology: Policy & Practice*).
- Students will widen their areas of study of criminology by studying optional subjects.

It is expected that students at this level will have begun to develop their skills of problem solving and critical analysis and to develop their potential for self-directed study. Tuition in some modules is therefore less intensive than at Level 1.

Level 3: Students expand the breadth of their criminological study by exploring a range of options, all of which are specialist research-led modules delivered by experts in the respective subject-matter. Alongside optional modules, students carry out a dissertation (core). It is expected that students at this level will demonstrate the level of skills expected of an Honours level graduate in accordance with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and will be able to engage critically with discussions about developments in criminology.

Students are expected to have cultivated a degree of self-direction in their study and tuition at this level will therefore be less intensive than at Level 2, with a reduced emphasis on lectures and a greater emphasis on self-directed reading and on seminar and workshop sessions. Students will be expected to build upon their oral and written communication skills which have developed during Levels 1 and 2, so that a greater degree of critical analysis is expected in seminars and in written examinations and coursework at Level 3.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/undergraduate/>

23. Additional information

None

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at www.shef.ac.uk/ssid.