



Programme Specification

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

1	Programme Title	International Criminology
2	Programme Code	LAWT105 (Full-time), LAWT86 (Part-time)
3	JACS Code	M200
4	Level of Study	Postgraduate
5a	Final Qualification	MA
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	None
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Sciences
9	Department	Law
10	Other Department(s) involved in teaching the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time or Part-time
12	Duration of the Programme	1 year or 2 years
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	None
14	Date of production/revision	February 2024

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The School of Law at Sheffield is one of the largest in the country and has a strong and long-standing reputation for excellence in both teaching and research. In the most recent Research Excellence Framework (2021), 91 per cent of the School's research was rated as world-leading or internationally excellent. The School's research outputs were rated 2nd nationally by quality (58 percent achieved the highest possible score).

The School has a well-established international reputation for both teaching and research within the fields of criminology, criminal justice, penology and restorative justice, its criminology staff being drawn from a wide variety of academic backgrounds, including law, criminology, psychology and sociology and a research grouping, the Sheffield University Centre for Criminological Research, specialising in criminology. The School's criminology staff have carried out work for the Council of Europe and the United Nations, as well as for the UK government. (Further details of staff and their interests can be found on the School's web site at www.shef.ac.uk/law).

In recent years the School has actively participated in a number of international projects in the field of criminology. The School is also a member of GERN (Groupe Européen de Recherche sur les Normativités), which is a European network of university departments and research centres specialising in criminal justice and criminology, and currently provides the UK representative on GERN's governing council. This internationalisation of the School's criminology activities reflects the general tendency within the discipline of criminology. There is ever greater collaboration on the part of European criminal justice agencies and policy-makers in response to shared concerns over the threats posed by many criminal activities, for example in the fields of organised crime, drugs, terrorism etc. At the same time, globalisation is prompting unprecedented interest in comparative research and analysis, for example in the fields of criminal justice, restorative justice and penology, and cultural and theoretical criminology.

As a result of these trends future criminologists will need to be much more conversant with criminological theory, practice and policy developments in an international context. Criminology has been taught continuously at postgraduate level in the School since the 1960's but the **MA in International Criminology programme (MAIC)** was introduced in 1999-2000 as a specialist programme to address growing internationalisation of criminology and to draw on the School's strengths in criminology and the multi-disciplinary expertise of the School's criminology staff. There is the possibility for students who wish to undertake part of their programme of study at the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven in Belgium.

The programme is aimed at students from the EU and overseas as well as those from the United Kingdom. It is also directed at practitioners and policy-makers in the fields of criminal justice and restorative justice who may wish to deepen their knowledge and understanding of recent international developments in the fields of criminology, criminal justice and restorative justice.

MAIC is normally a full-time, one-year programme, but can be studied over two years part-time. It is a taught Master's programme for students with university degrees in law, the social sciences or humanities who are interested in criminology, criminal justice and crime prevention, with a particular emphasis on developments at a European and International level. It will also be useful for professionals wishing to develop their understanding of trans-national developments in criminology and criminal justice. For all students, the Masters combines a number of 'foundational' social science skills and methods courses with a selected range of subjects focusing on different aspects of contemporary comparative criminology.

16. Programme aims

The programme aims to:

1. to provide all students with an adequate grounding in the relevant social science-based research skills and training which they will need in order to complete the programme.
2. to provide all students with expert, relevant and up-to-date information about contemporary and emergent theoretical, empirical and policy-related developments in the fields of criminology and criminal justice with a particular emphasis on the comparative aspects of these developments.
3. to acquaint all students with the problems inherent in undertaking comparative research in the fields of criminology and criminal justice.
4. to equip all students with the knowledge and skills which will enable them to critically evaluate 'leading edge' findings drawn from the fields of comparative criminology and related disciplines.
5. to offer professionals and practitioners who may already have appropriate qualifications and experience in the field of criminal justice the opportunity to enhance or update their existing professional or vocational qualifications.
6. to provide students who wish to undertake research degrees in the field of comparative criminology or criminal justice the relevant research training and assistance they will require before embarking on their own research programmes.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

K1	of the problems of international crime and responses thereto in Europe and the wider international community.
K2	of expert, up-to-date information about contemporary and emergent theoretical, empirical and policy-related developments in the fields of criminology and criminal justice, with a particular emphasis on international and comparative developments.
K3	of a range of criminological research methods and techniques, and especially of comparative research methods and techniques.
K4	of the particular problems inherent in undertaking comparative criminological research.

Skills and other attributes:

S1	Undertake criminological research using relevant primary and secondary sources and using paper and electronic materials.
S2	Evaluate and critically analyse current, "leading edge" research and scholarship in the areas of international and/or comparative criminology and related disciplines.
S3	Communicate effectively orally and in writing, using language accurately and effectively.
S4	Make appropriate use of information technology including for communication and research.
S5	Work effectively without direction; organise work and manage time effectively.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

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

All modules are taught by means of workshops and tutorials. The workshops may be staff or student-led. Students are also provided with individual supervision for their dissertation, as well as workshops in groups intended to provide them with guidance in undertaking assessed essays (for the modules) as well as their dissertation.

The knowledge base (**K1 – 4**) is developed through preparation for and participation in workshops and tutorials.

Skills of critical analysis and evaluation (**S2**) and oral communication (**S3**) are developed through participation in workshops and tutorials.

Research and written communication skills (**S1**, **S3** and **S4**) are developed through preparation of written coursework and the course dissertation.

Skills of personal organisation and time management are not formally taught but are developed through preparation of written coursework and the course dissertation.

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

Taught modules are assessed by coursework essay, comprising one or more pieces of work totalling not more than 3,000 words in length for a 15-credit module. Such coursework assesses knowledge and understanding, skills of **critical analysis**, **research skills** and **written communication** skills.

Research skills, written communication skills and skills of legal analysis are further assessed by the programme dissertation.

Oral communication and skills of **personal organisation** and **time management** are not formally assessed, but the latter are indirectly assessed in the preparation especially of assessed coursework and the course dissertation.

19. Reference points

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

[Subject Benchmark Statement for Criminology](#)

[Subject Benchmark Statements](#)

[Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

[University Strategic Plan](#)

[Vision and Strategic Plan – Education](#)

The research interests of members of the Centre for Criminological and Legal Research.

20. Programme structure and regulations

The programme has one pathway and can be studied either full-time over one year or part-time over two years..

In order to obtain the degree students must obtain 180 credits. All students must study taught modules worth, in total, 120 credits, and complete and submit a dissertation of up to 12,000 words in length, worth 60 credits. All students must study certain foundational modules in criminology and social sciences – *Responding to Crime in Europe*, *Issues in Comparative Penology*, *The Cultures of Criminology* and *The Research Process*, worth, together, 60 credits, which provide an introduction to the trans-national problems facing criminology today and to criminological research. Students must then choose modules worth a further 60 credits from a range of optional modules.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available on-line at www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar.

21. Progression through the programme structure

The full-time programme is designed to be taken over one year of study.

All students within the full-time programme progress from a compulsory programme of study– comprising *Responding to Crime in Europe*, *Issues in Comparative Penology*, *The Cultures of Criminology* and *The Research Process*, taught in the Autumn semester, which together introduce the themes of the programme. In the second semester, they have a large degree of optionality, including a range of research methods modules.

Substantive criminological knowledge is developed over the duration of the course, many of the modules offered in semester 2 building on knowledge acquired as a result of study in semester 1.

Research skills are developed throughout the programme. They are introduced in *The Research Process* in semester 1. All students have the chance to develop their study of research methods by studying *Qualitative Methods in Criminological Research*, *Introducing Quantitative Methods for Criminologists* and/or *Criminological Research in Policy and Practice* in semester 2. The skills developed through these modules and practised in preparation of assessed coursework for taught modules are utilised in preparation of the programme dissertation, which allows students to demonstrate their enhanced ability to work at postgraduate level utilising the skills and knowledge acquired during the preceding two teaching semesters.

Students are enrolled in the graduate semester module *Dissertation* beginning in semester 1, work more intensively on their research project in semester 2 and have the summer available to write up their project. Dissertations are due for submission in late August.

The part-time programme is designed to be taken over two years of study. However, in order for the 60 credit dissertation to be completed in year 2 the balance of coursework modules must be shifted so that the degree's 180 credits are evenly split across years 1 and 2. Students take two compulsory modules in Year 1 - *Responding to Crime in Europe* and *The Cultures of Criminology*. They then select four optional modules for semester 2. They take the compulsory modules *The Research Process and Issues in Comparative Penology* and begin the graduate year module *Dissertation* in semester 3.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available in the University's On-Line Prospectus at www.shef.ac.uk/prospective.

23. Additional information

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.