

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



University of the
West of England

Programme Specification

Section 1: Basic Data

Awarding institution/body	University of the West of England
Teaching institution	University of the West of England
Faculty responsible for programme	Health and Life Sciences
Programme accredited by	The Forensic Science Society Recognised by Royal Society of Chemistry (conditional on module choices)
Highest award title	BSc (Hons) Forensic Science
Default award title	
Interim award title	Cert.HE in Forensic Science Dip.HE in Forensic Science
Modular Scheme title (if different)	
UCAS code (or other coding system if relevant)	F410
Relevant QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	Chemistry, Biosciences
On-going/valid until* (*delete as appropriate/insert end date)	On-going
Valid from (insert date if appropriate)	September 2011

International Variant

Variant delivered via Bachelor of Science, Forensic Science programme, College of Humanities and Sciences. Virginia Commonwealth University, USA

Latest Committee Approval: Quality and Standards Committee

Date: May 2011

Version Code: 7

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Section 2: Educational aims of the programme

The BSc (Hons) Forensic Science programme provides an opportunity for students to explore the theory and practice of forensic science. In addition to offering the basis of vocational careers in forensic science, this programme provides a wider base of scientific skills, together with important generic graduate skills, particularly in an analytical approach to problems.

The design of the programme enables the students to

- i) study the breadth of forensic science from scenes of crime issues to court room presentations, and
- ii) pursue the analytical themes in chemical and biological science which are both appropriate to forensic science and which also underpin a variety of other emerging areas of scientific work.

The specific aims of the programme are to:

- Provide the educational and resource environment which will enable students with a science background to develop
 - a practical and theoretical understanding of forensic science,
 - the skills of a literate and numerate student capable of independent learning, and
 - the ability to engage in constructive critical analysis
- Create a friendly and supportive atmosphere that will enable individual students to use the learning experience at UWE to create a graduate foundation, on which they can develop their future careers and on-going social and educational development.
- Provide a curriculum that is enhanced by a balance of experience from both consultancy and research.

In addition to the above, the International Variant of this programme provides the opportunity for study abroad with general and specific benefits. The experience of a different educational as well as social culture and the contacts made with professionals in another country are of great potential value to students. The UK and the USA are two of the countries using the most advanced technology in Forensic Science, and the complementary specialist expertise of academics at VCU to those at UWE provide additional educational benefit to students on this programme.

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Section 3: Learning outcomes of the programme

The award programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

A Knowledge and understanding

Learning outcomes

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies

A Knowledge and understanding of:

1. The scope and nature of scientific evidence, its value to society and the roles and responsibilities of forensic scientists.
2. The techniques used in crime scene investigation (ForSciSoc component standard 1).
3. The theory and application of the principal laboratory methods used routinely in forensic science (ForSciSoc component standard 2).
4. Principles and procedures relating to the interpretation, evaluation, and presentation of evidence (ForSciSoc component standard 3).
5. Wider aspects of science associated with forensic science and studies.
6. Methodology of scientific inquiry and research.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies:

Acquisition of 1- 4 is through the specific forensic science compulsory modules . Mini projects with a forensic theme at level 2 also contribute to the specific forensic science related learning outcomes.

Learning outcome 5 is addressed through modules at all levels, in the biological and chemical sciences.

Acquisition of 6 is developed through a 'data analysis and research methodology' spine of modules from level 1 through to level 3 giving a mixture of lectures, instruction, tutorials, practical work and coursework in mathematical, statistical, IT, and information skills, integrated with lectures and tutorials on research methods, and leading to an individual project.

In the international variant all the key knowledge should be acquired by study at the 2 universities, but study at VCU would give, in addition, exposure to US Forensic Science procedures.

The teaching and learning methods employed are a combination of lectures, practical classes, tutorials, discussions, computer-based activities, workshops, coursework and student-centred learning. The practical component is strong, with a large proportion of the contact time on taught modules being spent in the laboratory. Some modules employ 'problem centred learning', such as mini-projects and individual case-

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

	<p><i>based crime scene investigations. Guest lectures ensure topicality and conformity with professional practice. Teaching is widely informed by research, consultancy and scholarly activity.</i></p> <p><i>Additional support is provided through extensive use of a Virtual Learning Environment to enable access to on-line learning and support, both at UWE, and off-campus. Other e-learning resources include, 'forensicnetbase', and the journals and abstracts on 'science-direct'. Throughout, the student is encouraged to undertake independent reading both to supplement and consolidate what is being taught/learnt and to broaden their individual knowledge and understanding of the subject.</i></p> <p><i>To increase the effectiveness of their learning, students may approach academics directly for advice and assistance, but also have access to dedicated student advisers, who are available full-time to give general advice, assist with access to the facilities and help with personal difficulties and special needs.</i></p> <p><i>Assessment: Knowledge and understanding is assessed using a variety of methods, including: formal examinations, tests and assignments, essays and different styles of reports, computer-based assessments, problem solving exercises and data analysis, presentations, case studies, research assessment.</i></p>
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PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

B Intellectual Skills

<p>B Intellectual Skills</p> <p>A successful graduate will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Select appropriate strategies, techniques and procedures for the examination of a scene of crime (ForSciSoc component standard 1)2. Select appropriate strategies, techniques and procedures for the examination of forensic evidence (ForSciSoc component standard 2)3. Interpret and evaluate evidence and report on it appropriately (ForSciSoc component standard 3)4. Recognise and apply subject-specific theories, paradigms, concepts or principles (intellectual skills standard biosciences)5. Critically analyse, synthesise and summarise information, including published research or reports, and use several lines of information to form and test hypotheses (intellectual skills standard biosciences)6. Recognise the moral and ethical issues of investigations and appreciating the need for ethical standards and professional codes of conduct (intellectual skills standard biosciences, implied standard for all ForSci Soc components)	<p>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</p> <p><i>Intellectual skills are developed through the range of teaching and learning strategies outlined under section A above. They are developed in all modules, partly through examples of the 'academic approach' but mainly through student activities such as discussions, essay writing, case studies, problem solving sessions and practical/ project planning. Intellectual skills 1, 2 and 3 are initially taught and practised separately, but brought together in a mini-project like exercise as part of the level 3 compulsory forensic science module.</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p><i>Assessment of Intellectual Skills is through the full range of methods identified in section A. In particular, the wide range of different types of coursework, case studies, various forms of report/essays, problem-solving, and presentations, is important in assessing the student's ability to demonstrate generic intellectual skills. The Faculty has an agreed procedure for formative feedback, which is incorporated into the coursework submission sheet, and provides timely and helpful feedback outlining strengths and weaknesses in the student's intellectual approach to a set task. For assessment in skills 1-3 students will be required to recover evidence, select appropriate analytical techniques, write a report, and give oral and written presentations.</i></p>
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PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

C Subject, Professional and Practical Skills

C Subject/Professional/Practical Skills	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
<p>A successful graduate will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Plan and safely execute scientific investigations, including a programme of independent research, which may involve primary or secondary data (practical skills standard biosciences; implied standard for ForSciSoc components 1 and 2)2. Obtain, record, collate and critically analyse data using appropriate techniques in the field and/or laboratory, working independently or in a group, as is most appropriate for the subject under study (practical skills standard biosciences; standard for ForSciSoc components 1 and 2)3. Handle, analyse, and report forensic samples with awareness of validity and contamination issues.4. Communicate results and their interpretation clearly and unambiguously.5. Synthesise a variety of appropriate skills to meet the requirements of forensic analysis.6. Adhere to safe working practices (practical skills standard biosciences; standard for ForSciSoc components 1 and 2)7. Comply with ethical, legal and quality assurance principles, such as animal protection legislation, the data protection act or the requirements of the chain of custody (practical skills standard biosciences; standard for ForSciSoc component 3)	<p><i>Subject, professional and practical skills are developed through practical and project activities, within the range of teaching and learning strategies outlined under section A above. A large proportion of contact time on taught modules is spent on practical work, emphasising the philosophy of 'learning by doing'.</i></p> <p><i>Set practicals, particularly at levels 1 and 2, place emphasis on developing practical, data analysis and interpretation skills and train adherence to safe working practices without deep reflection on ethical, legal and health and safety issues. Project work requires more planning and reflection from the students and incorporates a detailed analysis of ethical and health-and-safety issues associated with the project. The compulsory investigative focussed forensic modules prepare students for their roles as initially guided and later independent researchers. At level 3, the project supervisor provides individual guidance and assistance as and when required. The project includes a progression report, project work, a report and a presentation.</i></p> <p><i>Skill 4 is developed in a specific forensic science context through lectures, tutorials and coursework relating to the communication of science in a legal environment, and is underpinned by the development of communication as in section D below.</i></p> <p><i>Skill 5 is developed through the spine of specifically 'forensic' modules which use case studies throughout the course to develop the overview of understanding that is required in forensic science. Forensic practical and professional skills are developed through a mock-case, which trains all skills from scene examination to analysis of evidence and</i></p>

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

	<p><i>reporting.</i></p> <p><i>All of these skills will be developed and enhanced by study for one year at VCU due to experiencing a second cultural and legal setting for the practice of Forensic Science.</i></p> <p>Assessment</p> <p><i>Assessment is through a range of methods as in section A.</i></p> <p><i>The practical skills, in particular, are assessed through practical work and resulting practical reports, leading to the independent project. Reflection on a Health-and-Safety assessment and an ethics form are prerequisite for the commencement of practical work on the level 3 project.</i></p> <p><i>The subject skills relating to forensic science are primarily assessed in the specifically 'forensic' modules using examinations, case studies, practical reports, contemporaneous notes, presentations, including a courtroom exercise, and a practical exam on processing a crime scene. See also skills 1 & 2 in B above.</i></p>
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PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

D Transferable Skills and other attributes

D Transferable skills and other attributes	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
<p>A successful graduate will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Evaluate their own academic performance and plan work accordingly (interpersonal skills standard biosciences, part)2. Study independently in a variety of learning styles (self-management skills standard biosciences, part)3. Work effectively as a team member (teamwork skills standard biosciences; implicit standard for all ForSciSoc components)4. Practise good time management, prioritise workloads and recognise deadlines (self-management skills standard biosciences)5. Communicate effectively in a variety of media and contexts; in particular, express the interpretation of results in a manner comprehensible to the intended recipient such as lawyers or a jury and write comprehensive, comprehensible, rational and impartial reports (communication skills standard biosciences; standard for ForSciSoc component 3).6. Use mathematical and statistical methods effectively in problem solving (numeracy skills standard biosciences)7. Use a variety of IT skills for data processing, communicating and supporting scientific research (numeracy and IT skills standard biosciences).	<p><i>Support for Skill 1 is provided through the availability of an online Personal Development Record programme for all students, and the Graduate Development Programme. This also encourages an appreciation of the importance of the other skills.</i></p> <p><i>Skill 2 is developed through the wide spread of theoretical and practical science on this programme, in which the students are required to employ a diversity of study styles, and are exposed to a wide range of assessment procedures. Study at VCU further enhances skill 2 in particular.</i></p> <p><i>Skill 3 is developed through small group work in laboratory exercises and larger discussion groups in various modules. In particular, joint crime scene investigations and forensic casework encourage teamwork. The importance of the role of the forensic scientist as part of the investigative team is stressed throughout the curriculum.</i></p> <p><i>Skill 4 is not taught explicitly, but the variety of subjects, classes and assessments, encourages the development of these skills.</i></p> <p><i>Skill 5 is developed through a spread of assessment methods on this programme: essays, seminars, use of IT, practical reports, project proposal presentation and report, in addition to the specific communication of science in a forensic context in C above.</i></p> <p><i>Skills 6 and 7 are taught using lectures, training, tutorials, practical workshops, in specifically designed modules, and are practised in a variety of contexts across the full subject range of the programme.</i></p>

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

	<p>Assessment</p> <p><i>All of these skills contribute to the general performance across the programme and, as such, performance is evidenced by the overall grade of award. The wide range of different forms of assessment and coursework (as in B above) requires the students to demonstrate the full range of transferable skills.</i></p> <p><i>Skill 5 is assessed in a forensic science context by written reports and oral presentation. See also skills 2 & 3 in B above.</i></p> <p><i>Skills 6 and 7 are also specifically assessed through worked assignments and short tests.</i></p>
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PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Academic Programme 2011-12

BSc (Hons) Forensic Science

Level 1 four 30 credit modules

Interim award: **Certificate of Higher Education** 120 credits

Chemistry in Context USSJRT-30-1	Human Biological Systems USSJRU-30-1	Scientific Investigation of Crime USSJRV-30-1	Scientific Skills USSJRW-30-1
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Level 2: six 20 credit modules

Interim award: **Diploma of Higher Education** 240 credits

Science in Court UJUTD5-20-2	Scientific Research Methods USSJ7T-20-2	Instrumental Analytical Science USSJ7P-20-2	Forensic Examination of Materials USSJN6-20-2	Drugs and Toxicology USSJNG-20-2
Applied Genetics USSJ4Y-20-2 Or Molecular Genetics USSJ4C-20-2	JPCS Students at L2 entry ONLY Forensic Analysis USSJR7-20-1 To replace Drugs and Toxicology			

Level 3: two 40 credit and two 20 credit modules

Degree with Honours 360 Credits

Project USSJ73-40-3	Interpretation Of Forensic Evidence USSJRS-40-3			
Applied Genomics USSJJV-20-3	Cancer Biology and Genetics USSJJU-20-3	Advanced Analytical Science USSJ8G-20-3		
Metals & Living Systems USSJGP-20-3	Pathophysiology of Brain & Body USSJJQ-20-3	Applied Pharmacology USSJJR-20-3	Environmental Forensics USSJH5-20-3	Controversial Science and Society USSJGR-20-3
Professional Practice USSJFL-20-3 <small>taken during placement year</small>				

Compulsory	OPTIONS Max of 1 (level 3)	CORE Min of 1 (level 3)
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PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Alternative Year 2 – study at Virginia Commonwealth University, USA

Genetics BIOL 310 (3 credits)	Genetics Lab BIOZ 310 (2 credits)	Forensic Microscopy FRSC 365 (4 credits)	Forensic Serology FRSC 385 (3 credits)	Basic Practice of Statistics STAT 210 (3 credits)	Quantitative Analysis CHEM 309 (3 credits) 1 st sem
Forensic Chemistry FRSC 401 (3 credits) 2 nd sem					

Plus ONE of

Forensic Anthropology FRSC 310 (3 credits)	Forensic Fire Investigation FRSC 320 (3 credits)	Professional Practices in Forensic Science FRSC 490 (3 credits)	* Forensic Evidence, Law and Criminal Procedure FRSC 375 (3 credits)
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* If Forensic Evidence, Law and Criminal Procedure is not taken at VCU, Science in Court must be studied in the final year at UWE in place of a core module

Students will be given a document summarising the key differences between the legal systems and procedures in the USA and the UK, and teaching materials from the Science in Court module. The legal systems are substantially similar and the benefit of learning about the US system makes this a suitable equivalent module for study. Students will have teaching and practical experience of preparing documentation for a UK court and giving evidence in court in their 3rd year at UWE.

Important note:

Any variation to the above courses studied at VCU may only be undertaken with the prior written agreement of the Programme Leader and VCU Exchange Tutor at UWE after consultation with colleagues at VCU. A minimum of 24 VCU credits must be studied to be equivalent to 120 UWE credits.

Interim Awards:

Certificate of Higher Education: Forensic Science

Credit requirements: 120 (of which 100 are level 1 or above)

Diploma of Higher Education: Forensic Science

Credit requirements: 240 (of which not less than 100 are level 2 or above and 120 are at level 1 or above). Exchange students will have results converted into UWE credits.

Award/s:

Degree with Honours: Forensic Science

Credit requirements:

360 (of which not less than 100 are level 3 or above, and 100 are at level 2 or above, and 140 are level 1 or above)

Degree: Forensic Science

Credit requirements:

300 (of which not less than 60 are level 3 or above, and 100 are at level 2 or above, and 120 are level 1 or above)

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Section 5: Entry requirements

Admissions into the BSc (Hons) Forensic Science programme are administered within the Undergraduate Programmes in FACS (Forensic, Analytical and Chemical Sciences). The standard UCAS entry/Tariff Points for the programme at UWE are as appropriate for the year of entry. Successful application to the programme must also meet one of the following minimum requirements:

- GCE A2 level at grade E or above in two science subjects including either Chemistry or a Biological Science (including Human Biology), plus grade C or above in three GCSE subjects, including Mathematics and English Language. (Two GCE AS level passes are considered to be equivalent to one A2 level).
- National Certificate or Diploma in an appropriate science.
- Higher National Certificate or Diploma in an appropriate science.
- Pass in a recognised Access or Foundation course.

Additionally applicants may be admitted to the award provided they meet one of the following requirements and can demonstrate to the Faculty that the GCE A level and GCSE subject areas specified above have been studied at an appropriate level:

- The Advanced General National Vocational Qualification (AGNVQ) or Advanced General Scottish Vocational Qualification (AGSVQ), a twelve unit or full AGNVQ award being equivalent to two GCE A levels, a six unit or single AGNVQ award being equivalent to one GCE A level and a three unit award or part AGNVQ award being equivalent to one GCE AS level.
- The Irish Leaving Certificate at Higher level grades BBBC.
- The Scottish Leaving Certificate of Education at Higher level grades BBBC.
- National Vocational Qualifications or Scottish Vocational Qualifications at level III.
- The European Baccalaureate 68%.
- The International Baccalaureate 26pts.
- Other European or International qualifications which the University considers to be of equivalence to the above.

Section 6: Assessment Regulations

Academic Regulations and Procedures (Academic Registry)

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Section 7: Student learning: distinctive features and support

This programme offers a distinctive combination of training in forensic science techniques and an appreciation of the legal system and the role of expert witnesses in court. In addition, the wider study of sciences underpinning forensic issues promotes greater understanding and the development of intellectual reasoning. All areas have essentially a problem-solving nature, and the experience of the different subject styles further stimulates the students' development.

In both the chemical and biological areas of this programme, the students will study with other students whose specialisms are in those particular areas, and will benefit from the support, resources, experience and excellent facilities provided by the Faculty for these subjects. The Faculty has undergone a complete refurbishment since 2004 and has state of the art teaching facilities and well-equipped general and specialist laboratories to match its commitment to excellence in teaching.

The core forensic modules are directly supplemented by modules on chemical and biological analysis. Recent and important case studies are used extensively to develop the necessary practical understanding, coupled with guest lectures by a range of professionals.

Forensic science at UWE is well established and has benefited from recent and ongoing large investment: facilities include a fully equipped Scenes-of-Crime house and vehicle examination facility. Specific forensic instrumentation includes a Video Spectral Comparator, microspectrophotometer, electrostatic document analysers (ESDA), Infra-Red microscope and golden gate attachment, comparison microscopes, glass refractive index and breath alcohol instrumentation. Forensic DNA analysis facilities include a filtered cabinet for sample preparation, a real-time DNA amplification instrument, capillary electrophoresis for DNA analysis and ancillary equipment.

The students make extensive use of Blackboard, a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), both as a source of information and lecture notes, and for on-line tutorials and self-assessment. The WWW is also widely used for access to services, such as library catalogues and facilities and web-based learning resources such as 'science-direct'. Email is used as an important means of communication between students and staff and within the student community.

The programme is administered within the FACS (Forensic, Analytical and Chemical Sciences) subject group which establishes common and mutual support for students across a range of overlapping programmes.

A Student Handbook is provided during Induction to year 1 that includes information on the Faculty, the University, its regulations and procedures, and is supplemented at a programme level by a FACS Handbook and Guides for each module. Students are supported during their time at UWE by student advisers, with the backup of central student support services for students with needs that cannot be dealt with directly within the Faculty.

The Graduate Development Programme, centred around groups of approximately 15 students with a tutor, provides support and encourages reflection on learning and skills development leading to consideration of careers and employability.

Part-time attendance of the programme is possible, and part-time students will be advised by a part-time study tutor to optimise their timetable and assist with any

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

specific problems.

The International Variant in which year 2 of the programme is studied at Virginia Commonwealth University, USA, is an exciting distinctive development. The programmes in Forensic Science at VCU and UWE are well matched and students will gain all the key knowledge and practical skills in Forensic Science that they would have gained by completing year 2 at UWE. In addition, students will have the opportunity to study aspects of Forensic Science (such as Forensic Anthropology and Forensic Toxicology) in which academics at VCU have particular expertise. The benefits of studying in another educational and social environment are potentially very great. Students will be selected for this scheme during the first year of study at UWE, following application and interview.

Section 8 Reference points/benchmarks

- **Qualification descriptors used in the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications**

The learning outcomes for the programme have been developed with reference to the qualification descriptors used in the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. In particular, the learning outcomes for modules at level one and level two have been considered to be consistent with the award of a Certificate in Higher Education and a Diploma in Higher Education respectively. Graduates of the award achieving an Honours classification will develop an understanding of a complex body of knowledge related to forensic science. In addition, the graduate will develop skills in analytical techniques, problem-solving skills and communication skills that can be applied to a range of employment opportunities.

- **Subject benchmark statements**

Owing to its interdisciplinary nature, this programme draws on several subject benchmark statements for guidance.

Forensic Science Benchmarking

The specific requirements for forensic science have been informed by the knowledge and experience of staff who have been trained, and are professionally active, in this rapidly developing field. Benchmarking for forensic science has however been derived from the accreditation standards of the Forensic Science Society. In addition, elements of the chemistry and bioscience benchmarks are relevant for the analytical aspects of forensic science.

Chemistry Benchmarking

As chemistry only forms part of the programme, only some of the Main Aims of chemistry benchmarking are relevant:

- To develop in students the ability to apply their chemical knowledge and skills to the solution of (*theoretical and*) practical problems in chemistry.
- To develop in students, through an education in chemistry, a range of transferable skills, of value in chemical and non-chemical employment.

The focus of this programme is on the practical application of chemistry to forensic science, and hence does not develop the same depth of theoretical understanding (*italicised above*) as a full chemistry course.

Likewise this programme covers a sub-set of the Subject Knowledge expected of a chemistry degree:

- Major aspects of chemical terminology, nomenclature, conventions and units.
- The principles and procedures used in chemical analysis and the characterisation of chemical compounds.
- The principal techniques of structural investigations, including spectroscopy.
- The nature and behaviour of functional groups in organic molecules.

Most of the Abilities and Skills, Chemistry-related Practical Skills and Transferable Skills, identified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education for chemistry are equivalent to the Subject/Professional/Practical and Transferable Skills that define this programme.

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Bioscience Benchmarking

Bioscience benchmarking for Subject Knowledge adopts more inclusive statements implying a broad knowledge across the whole subject, which does not mirror the more focussed and practical approach in this programme. The programme draws on the following statements:

- ...together with specialised in-depth study (often career-related) of some aspects of the discipline or subject area.
- understanding of information and data, and their setting within a theoretical framework.....;
- Familiarity with the terminology, nomenclature and classification systems as appropriate;
- Methods of acquiring, interpreting and analysing biological information with a critical understanding of the appropriate contexts
- Knowledge of a range of practical and presentational techniques and methodologies relevant to the particular discipline, including data analysis and the use of statistics.

The Generic, Intellectual, and Practical Skills, that are not strongly subject-dependent, also map well to the Intellectual Skills and Subject/Professional/Practical Skills of this programme, e.g.

- The capacity to give a clear and accurate account of a subject, marshal arguments in a mature way and engage in debate and dialogue both with specialists and non-specialists;
- The ability to employ a variety of methods of study in investigating, recording and analysing material.

The Bioscience benchmarking of Transferable Skills mirrors the main issues identified in the other subject areas.

- **Requirements of Professional Bodies**

The Forensic Science Society is the professional body which operates an accreditation scheme for university courses in forensic science, and this course has been accredited (UWE being one of the first four universities to have been recognised in this way) in all three component standards – (1) Crime Scene Investigation, (2) Laboratory Analysis and (3) Interpretation, Evaluation, and Presentation of Evidence. Students may join The Forensic Science Society as student members. The programme is also “Recognised” by the Royal Society of Chemistry if students undertake a Chemistry based project and study chemical science modules at level 3. Graduates may then become Associate Members of the RSC.

- **University’s Mission Statement**

Students with a science background will have an educational opportunity to establish a career foundation in forensic science, together with the development of an analytical approach to science that will further enhance their career and further study opportunities. The programme builds on subjects in UWE which have a high reputation for teaching excellence, and makes extensive use of advanced learning strategies which build on the successes of consultancy and research.

- **University’s teaching and learning policies**

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

In line with the University's teaching and learning policies, this programme takes a student centred approach to learning by allowing students to take control of aspects of their learning and providing a learning environment that stimulates active participation and engagement in the learning process. The programme seeks to create an environment that will stimulate students to take responsibility for aspects of their learning, while lecturers take responsibility for facilitating that learning. Module learning outcomes have been designed to ensure that students meet the overall programme learning outcomes on completion of the programme. In addition, the FACS (Forensic, Chemical and Analytical Science) section of the Faculty has been active in developing and strengthening the key skills aspects of the programmes.

A variety of assessment methods is incorporated within the programme to cater for a diversity of student strengths and abilities. Although this document focuses on summative assessment, the course team recognise the importance of both summative and formative assessment activity as an integral part of the learning and teaching process. All assessments will comply with the University Assessment Policy and Academic Regulations.

- **Research carried out by staff**

Research and consultancy is undertaken in the following areas of particular relevance to forensic science:

- forensic entomology
- statistical methods and databases for the estimation of evidential value
- design of crime scene related equipment
- genealogy using DNA profiling
- improvements of MSMS methods used in the detection of illicit drugs
- elemental composition of soil
- forensic image analysis
- chemical sensors for drugs and arson accelerants

Some projects are carried out with regional forensic science companies or police forces.

Research specifically in forensic science topics is also supported by a wide range of other research interests across numerous biological and chemical fields.

Using the world-class research facilities of the Bristol Genomics Research Institute, and the Centre for Research in Biomedicine, the bioscience research is excellent and of international standard. Current research projects include

- Genomics research into molecular diagnostic methods for non-invasive prenatal diagnosis
- Neuroscience: the function of the blood-brain barrier
- In vitro toxicology
- Cancer and ageing
- Red cell membrane molecular biology and red cell antigen expression
- Magnetic detection systems for biological interactions.

- **Employer feedback/interaction**

The faculty has excellent links with the forensic science practitioners in the area. The Avon and Somerset Constabulary are very supportive of the forensic science teaching at UWE, and collaborates for research projects. The Chief Constable

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

launched the BSc (Hons) Forensic Science in 2001 and commented on the value such a degree would have for recruits to his force. Local Home Office Forensic Pathologists have also been involved with the faculty for many years - one is involved in teaching the level 3 compulsory forensic science module.

A local independent laboratory has strong links with the Forensic Science team at UWE – staff assist with statistical evaluations required for court presentations and some students undertake their independent research project with this company.

- **Conclusion**

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in module specifications. These are available on the University website.

Programme monitoring and review may lead to changes to approved programmes. There may be a time lag between approval of such changes/modifications and their incorporation into an authorised programme specification. Enquiries about any recent changes to the programme made since this specification was authorised should be made to the relevant Faculty Academic Registrar.