Module Specification

Criminal Psychology

Version: 2025-26, v3.0, Approved

Contents

Part 1: Information

Module title: Criminal Psychology

Module code: UZSNNC-30-2

Level: Level 5

For implementation from: 2025-26

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Health, Science & Society

School: CHSS School of Social Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Field: Sociology and Criminology

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: This module will explore offender motivations and the range of background characteristics that can influence offending behaviours, as well as societal and criminal justice responses to offenders in terms of punishment and treatment. Students will be able to apply this knowledge to real life situations by developing an offender profile of a known serial killer, which draws upon the content covered across the module.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: Drawing upon a multi-disciplinary approach to understanding the aetiology of offending and the psychology, treatment and management of offenders, this module aims to provide students with a comprehensive introduction to criminal psychology and the role that psychology plays within the criminal justice system (CJS).

Outline syllabus: Whilst the specific lecture programme may vary year to year to reflect current issues, legislative changes and research developments, the main topics that are typically included are:

The mass media and social constructions of violent and/or dangerous offenders

Key perspectives in understanding and explaining violent crime (including biological, personality, psychopathological, social/developmental theories)

Psychology and the CJS (including offender profiling, eyewitness testimony, police interviewing, jury decision-making, and psychology in the courtroom)

Specific types of offenders and forms of offending (including serial killing, sexual offending, stalking and domestic abuse)

Key issues and challenges relating to treatment, risk management, reoffending and rehabilitation.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: This module is delivered through weekly lectures and seminars, alongside supplementary sessions including tutorials and drop-ins. Seminar sessions will build on the lecture, with activities centred on relevant academic readings (or other core source materials), current issues and real-world examples. Students will work both independently and collaboratively to develop and critically apply their knowledge and understanding of module content, to the topics, issues and questions presented in seminar sessions.

All module materials are provided in advance to students. In addition, focused sessions on each of the two assessment tasks will provide guidance and advice to help students prepare for their module assessment.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Demonstrate a sound awareness of the multi-disciplinary nature of criminal psychology by identifying and evaluating a range of criminological and psychological theories of crime.

MO2 Recognise and discuss key debates regarding the role of psychology in the criminal justice system.

MO3 Identify and evaluate appropriate forms of treatment for offenders with reference to their specific treatment needs.

MO4 Demonstrate effective written and oral communications skills.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at readinglists.uwe.ac.uk via the following link https://uwe.rl.talis.com/modules/uzsnnc-30-2.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Summative Assessments:

Assessment Task 1: A 3000 word (maximum) case study profiling a selected serial killer.

Assessment Task 2: A 15 minute (maximum) viva presentation based upon the case

study chosen for Assessment Task 1.

This assessment task comprises of a five minute presentation, where students must describe the offender, their offences, and the impact of their crimes. This is followed by ten minutes of question and answer, where students will need to address pre-set questions relating to their case study.

Students have the opportunity to choose their method of delivery/submission for this assessment task. That is, they can opt to submit this as a pre-recorded item, or conduct a 'live' presentation (in person or online).

Formative assessment opportunities will be made available to students over the duration of the module.

Assessment tasks:

Case Study (First Sit)

Description: Case study (3000 words)

Weighting: 70 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO4

Presentation (First Sit)

Description: Presentation and viva based on case study (15 minutes maximum).

Students may choose whether to submit a pre-recorded presentation or deliver the presentation live (in person or online)

Weighting: 30 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Case Study (Resit)

Description: Case study (3000 words)

Weighting: 70 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO4

Presentation (Resit)

Description: Presentation and viva based on case study (15 minutes maximum).

Students may choose whether to submit a pre-recorded presentation or deliver the presentation live (in person or online)

Weighting: 30 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Criminology with Law {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Law with Criminology {Foundation} [Frenchay] LLB (Hons) 2023-24

Criminology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2023-24

Criminology and Law {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Criminology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Criminology and Sociology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Law with Criminology [Frenchay] - WITHDRAWN LLB (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Law [Frenchay] - WITHDRAWN BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology with Law [Frenchay] - WITHDRAWN BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2023-24

Criminology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology {Foundation} [Sep][PT][Frenchay][8yrs] BA (Hons) 2020-21

Criminology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2022-23

Criminology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology with Psychology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2023-24

Criminology with Psychology {Foundation} [Sep][PT][Frenchay][8yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Criminology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Psychology with Criminology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Psychology with Criminology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Criminology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2022-23

Criminology with Psychology [Frenchay] BSc (Hons) 2022-23

Criminology with Psychology {Foundation} [Sep][PT][Frenchay][8yrs] BSc (Hons) 2020-21

Criminology {Foundation} [Sep][PT][Frenchay][8yrs] BA (Hons) 2020-21