



Module Specification

Understanding Crime

Version: 2026-27, v4.0, Approved

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Understanding Crime

Module code: UZSST9-15-1

Level: Level 4

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 15

ECTS credit rating: 7.5

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 introduces students to criminological approaches to understanding crime in contemporary society. It examines the nature, extent, and distribution of crime across different areas and explores how crime is shaped by social characteristics such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, and social class. Students will engage with key criminological debates, research methods, and approaches to measuring crime. The module also explores topics such as media and crime, mental health, youth crime, and the relationship between crime and the criminal justice

system. The module aims to develop students' critical understanding of crime patterns, explanations of offending and victimisation, and the social context in which crime occurs.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: The module aims to provide students with a critical understanding of evidence relating to the nature, extent and distribution of crime and criminal victimisation in contemporary society.

Outline syllabus: Topics are likely to vary year on year depending upon contemporary actions and situations. The syllabus will typically include:

Official Statistics,
'Race', ethnicity and Crime,
Policy making,
Crime and the Media,
Fear of crime,
Crime and space and place,
Victims,
Hard to reach groups,
Young people and crime,
Property Crime,
Applied criminology.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: A variety of approaches will be used with the aim of maximising the active engagement of students. These may include:

Lectures
Seminars
Showcase events
Master Classes
Workshops
ICT Based Platforms

Problem Solving Approaches

Directed and Independent Learning

Formative Assessment Opportunity

Independent learning: Students will be expected to engage in substantial and focused independent work in this module. This will potentially include hours engaged with: essential reading, examination preparation.

Student cohorts will also be provided with a virtual meeting space that they will be able to fully utilise independently for the purposes of peer support, collaboration and discussion, in order to foster a sense of learning community.

Scheduled learning: The module will be delivered using interactive lectures combined with workshops and seminars. Lectures will be used to introduce main concepts and to guide and inform student centred learning while workshops/seminars will provide students the opportunity to discuss issues in-depth.

VLE: MyUWE and Blackboard, the university supported learning portal and virtual learning environment, will be used to support students' learning, conduct activities, organise and communicate learning materials. Students will be able to engage with the material, other students and members of staff through these systems and make use of the various functionalities built into them (e.g., blogs, journals, audio, video, discussion boards, wikis, etc.) as appropriate and useful for the module learning. A culture of continuous learning will be developed through the implementation of regular on-line discussion groups which discuss identified topics in-depth.

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

MO1 Demonstrate knowledge of key debates within criminology concerning the relationships between the social characteristics (especially age, gender, 'race' and ethnicity and) of victims and offenders, the social environment, and patterns and trends of offending and victimisation

MO2 Demonstrate an understanding of evidence relating to the nature, extent and distribution of crime and victimisation in society, and of different explanations of such patterns and trends

Hours to be allocated: 150

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 114 hours

Staff-guided learning = 36 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://uwe.rl.talis.com/index.html) via the following link <https://uwe.rl.talis.com/index.html>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: This module has one summative assessment.

Assessment Task: Written Assignment (1500 words maximum). The assessment is comprised of 3 questions of 500 words (maximum) each.

The Assessment Strategy has been designed to support and enhance the development of both subject-based and employability skills, whilst ensuring that the modules Learning Outcomes are attained, as described below. The assessment is designed to underpin students' learning and skills acquisition in the module and to provide for learning beyond the material delivered in the classroom.

Opportunities for formative assessment are embedded in the module teaching and take a variety of forms; students will have access to a range of examination samples and formative feedback regarding the assessment.

Assessment criteria will be made available to the students in the module guide at the start of the module.

Assessment tasks:

Written Assignment (First Sit)

Description: Three questions (500 words each - maximum)

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Written Assignment (Resit)

Description: Three questions (500 words each - maximum)

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

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

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

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

Criminology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

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

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Criminology and Sociology [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

Criminology {Foundation} [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2025-26

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