Module Specification

Forensic Project

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Contents

Part 1: Information

Module title: Forensic Project

Module code: USSJUQ-30-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2021-22

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

Faculty: Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences

Department: HAS Dept of Applied Sciences

Partner institutions: None

Delivery locations: Frenchay Campus

Field: Applied Sciences

Module type: Standard

Pre-requisites: Forensic Analysis 2021-22

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: Not applicable

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: The Forensic Project is the capstone experience of the BSc Forensic Science degree. Students take a criminal case from 'crime scene to court' and in doing so meet the accreditation requirements of the Chartered Society of

Forensic Sciences. Students also enhance their graduate prospects through undertaking an independent research project.

Outline syllabus: Crime Scene Investigation

Current procedures, documentation and quality assurance QA for crime scene investigation and production of a statement for court.

Laboratory Analysis:

Selection of appropriate examinations and analysis and strategy for casework examinations.

Application of the full range of laboratory methods and techniques for the examination and analysis of a wide range of evidence types, as recovered from a mock crime scene.

Theoretical and practical aspects of forensic DNA analysis.

Issues regarding the application of advanced analytical techniques (chromatographic, spectroscopic and mass spectrometric) to the forensic examination of materials. Sample preparation and instrumental aspects of forensic analysis. Evidence types typically to include drugs and fire accelerants.

Current procedures and standards for the examination and reporting of mark comparison.

Interpretation, Evaluation and Presentation of Evidence:

Interpretation of results from laboratory examination with consideration of issues of uncertainty and avoidance of bias.

Evaluation of the strength and significance of evidence in particular circumstances, frequency of occurrence of evidential materials, availability and robustness of

databases to support interpretation. Statistical evaluation of forensic results – application to DNA and glass analysis. The Bayesian approach for the evaluation and interpretation of evidence.

Quality assurance and ethics in forensic science – quality standards and regulation including codes of conduct and practice and current legal issues.

Communication and presentation of evidence for court - reports and oral presentation. The need for comprehensive, comprehensible, logical and impartial written reports. Communication of complex scientific information and conclusions regarding forensic evidence to a lay audience such as a jury.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: Students will undertake an in-depth forensic research project on a topic negotiated between student and supervisor. Students will carry out practical work to evaluate alternate propositions, collate data, draw conclusions from their findings and suggest further research that could be done in their chosen area.

Following on from this students having a mock case to investigate in the role of various forensic professionals; as a crime scene investigator; a laboratory forensic scientist and finally as a reporting officer in court, undergoing examination-in-chief and cross-examination. Students also have a viva examination on experimental work and strategy in the laboratory.

These activities are supported by lectures and tutorial classes, which address key aspects of forensic analysis and professional standards as indicated in the syllabus outline.

Module Learning outcomes:

MO1 Design and undertake independent research to address hypotheses pertaining to a forensic research question.

MO2 Critically evaluate the results of independent research in the context of contribution to the current knowledge in the field.

MO3 Prepare a witness statement for court based on the appropriate interpretation and evaluation of the results of the laboratory examination of evidence in a mock criminal case.

MO4 Present forensic evidence in a mock courtroom situation with examination-in-chief and cross-examination, demonstrating an ability to convey complex scientific procedures and results to a lay jury.

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Total = 300

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/ussjuq-30-3.html

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Component A:
A presentation of findings in court in the role of an expert witness under examination-in-chief and cross examination (20 minutes).
This assessment underpins the Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences Interpretation, Evaluation and Presentation of Evidence Component Standard. Students are prepared for this assessment by practice assessments, for which they receive formative feedback from staff. This assessment scaffolds from the viva assessment undertaken in USSKAU-30-2 Forensic Analysis.

Component B:
B1 is a Streamlined Forensic Report MG22b Witness Statement (1000 words). This

is an industry standard document, used by expert forensic witnesses in court. This assessment therefore prepares students to apply for graduate forensic science careers and underpins accreditation.
This assessment is supported through bespoke lectures and tutorials. Students are familiar with the Streamlined Forensic Reporting procedures from underpinning assessments in USSJRV-30-1 Scientific Investigation of Crime and USSKAU-30-2 Forensic Analysis.

B2 is a forensic research project (3000 words). This assessment will develop independent and practical laboratory skills, which are essential for employment in a broad range of practical laboratory careers, within and without of the forensic sector and for postgraduate level study or research. Students are supported in this assessment through frequent project group tutorials and regular one to one meetings with their project supervisor. This assessment scaffolds from a critical essay in USSKAU-30-2 Forensic Analysis.

Assessment components:

Presentation - Component A (First Sit)
Description: Oral presentation of results in a courtroom situation (20 minutes)
Weighting: 40 %
Final assessment: Yes
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO4

Written Assignment - Component B (First Sit)
Description: MG22B Witness Statement
Weighting: 10 %
Final assessment: No
Group work: No
Learning outcomes tested: MO3

Project - Component B (First Sit)
Description: Forensic Research Project

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Presentation - Component A (Resit)

Description: Oral presentation of results in a courtroom situation (20 minutes)

Weighting: 40 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO4

Written Assignment - Component B (Resit)

Description: MG22B Witness Statement

Weighting: 10 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO3

Project - Component B (Resit)

Description: Forensic Research Project

Weighting: 50 %

Final assessment: No

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Forensic Science [Sep][FT][Frenchay][3yrs] BSc (Hons) 2019-20

Forensic Science {Foundation} [Sep][FT][Frenchay][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2018-19

Forensic Science [Sep][SW][Frenchay][4yrs] BSc (Hons) 2018-19

Forensic Science [Sep][SW][Frenchay][5yrs] MSci 2018-19