

Applied Criminology and Forensic Investigation - Undergraduate -2021/22

Award Level: BA or BSc

UCAS Code: MF94

Start Date: September 2021

Mode of study: Full-time, Part-time

Duration: 3 years, 6 years

Location: Canterbury

Main quote

Studying at Canterbury Christ Church University has opened my eyes to a whole new field of learning. Not only are the modules well-structured and thought out, they also simulate the working conditions for everyday life as a CSI. The lecturers themselves are approachable and kind mannered, which makes the whole experience enjoyable and rewarding.

Main quote source

Luke

Course overview

Take a step towards a career that really makes a difference to people in a society where crime is a part of everyday life.

Criminologists study crime and criminal behaviour and forensic investigators are key players in investigating and solving crime. They often provide the evidence that ensures that offenders are brought to justice.

Studying these two subjects together gives you the opportunity to access a wide range of exciting, challenging and remarkable careers in the criminal justice sector.

This degree allows you to explore the true nature, extent and causes of a range of crime types and the methods used to manage crime and criminal behaviour. You will do this by exploring key criminological and forensic theories and applying them to specific types of crime (e.g. violence, hate crime, terrorism, drug crime and sexual crime). The varied expertise of the teaching staff and our guest lecturers will allow you to explore these themes from a range of perspectives.

Why study (course name)

Why study Applied Criminology with Forensic Investigation?

81% of our Applied Criminology students were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of teaching on their programme (NSS 2021)

96% of our Applied Criminology students were in jobs or further study 15 months after completing (Graduate Outcomes survey 2021)

If you want a career involved in bringing offenders to justice, then this is a great choice. Our Criminology with Forensic Investigation course offers an exciting combination of modules allowing you to study crime and criminal behaviour, as well as exploring crime scenarios and developing skills in our forensics labs, so that you can investigate and solve crimes.

As you progress in your studies you will use your enquiring mind and a methodical approach to explore key areas of criminology and forensic investigation in depth.

From crime and criminals to victims and criminal justice, you'll learn about, analyse and research these key areas from a range of perspectives alongside gaining a solid grounding in core areas of forensic investigation, such as crime scene investigation, volume and serious crime scene investigation & accident, disaster and terror scene investigation.

As you delve into the course, you'll gain a solid grounding in key criminological & forensic concepts, before selecting optional modules covering areas of criminology and forensic investigation that most interest you.

Text after read more tag

Through our 'insights from practice' initiative and our close links with local, national and international criminal justice agencies, you'll have plenty of opportunities to hear from and connect with experts in the sector. You'll be able to probe them on specific topics to gain a deeper understanding of criminal justice, which you can apply your studies.

All through the course, you'll build your research skills and cast a critical eye over the processes of criminalisation and crime control, exploring them within wider social, economic and political contexts. You'll also be able to gain valuable work experience to help build your confidence and resilience, and enhance your CV through volunteering, paid work and project work with external partners. This could be in areas such as prisons, the probation service, the police service, victim support and charities.

Our expert teaching team have worked as practitioners or researchers within criminology, or its related fields. They have an excellent understanding of the core knowledge, skills and personal qualities required for careers in criminology. They will help you to understand yourself as a professional and provide you with opportunities to develop your personal and professional skills, such as problem solving, critical evaluation, communication and presentation skills, and the ability to work independently as well as in teams.

Entry requirements

A typical offer would be 88-112 UCAS Tariff points.

For more information on the IELTS (International English language Testing System) requirements for this course, [\[please click here to visit our dedicated web page.\]\(https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/study-here/international/english-language-requirements\)](https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/study-here/international/english-language-requirements)

[\[More information about entry requirements.\]\(/study-here/applying/entry-requirements\)](/study-here/applying/entry-requirements)

All about the course Year 1 text

You'll gain a strong grounding in core criminological themes, concepts, debates and perspectives by studying a range of modules. These could include topics such as crime and social control, psychology and criminal justice, sexual and

domestic abuse, victimology and cybercrime. You'll learn how to apply theories to a range of crime problems and understand how they relate to real life problems or scenarios.

Year 1 modules

Crime: Representations & Realities

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will explore key concepts relating to crime, crime control and the social construction of criminal problems. This will help you develop your knowledge and understanding of the relationship between crime and society, and you'll learn key skills needed to evaluate different sources of knowledge about crime and crime control.

Crime: Punishments & Societies

Core module - (20 Credits)

This module is an opportunity for you to explore some of the contextual issues that arise when exploring academic areas of criminology, criminal justice and policing. In particular, this module is concerned with the different societal, historical, cultural, geographical and political contexts in which crime and justice occur.

Introducing Forensic Investigation

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the key concepts underpinning forensic investigation and you'll examine Locard's theory on transfer, Kirk's assertions regarding uniqueness and the divisibility of matter. You'll look at how these concepts are applied to the most common forms of evidence sought by forensic investigators, such as finger marks, DNA, marks and trace evidence. You'll then consider how these might be usefully employed in a criminal case.

Introducing Crime Scene Investigation

Core module - (20 Credits)

Crime scenes are sources of evidence and intelligence. In this module, you'll explore the key concepts underpinning the role of crime scene investigation (CSI), selected history and the theories which support this important subject. You'll begin by examining the role of the CSI (and some other scene attending personnel, such as police officers) before examining the CSI as an essential member of the local investigation team.

Crime: Narratives & Explanations

Core module - (20 Credits)

This module will introduce you to the ways in which notions of crime and criminality are constructed, explained and understood. You will explore the historical, social and cultural context of the development of criminology and the key shifts in criminological thinking about crime and the criminal justice system. You will discuss research issues in criminology, and how different theorists have reached their conclusions. The approach is to break down theories into manageable independent units but at the same time to recognise that theories overlap, develop over time and often

contradict one another. The focus is on applying these theories to crime and deviance and understanding the impact of theoretical explanations for crime on criminal justice policy and the criminal justice system.

Introducing Psychology & Crime

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the discipline of psychology and how psychological concepts can be used to understand crime and criminal behaviour. The module covers a range of psychological theories and encourages you to apply theory to common offences, and to critically evaluate the literature you read by examining the strengths and limitations of relevant research and literature.

Year 2 modules

Crime and Social Control

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will develop a comprehensive understanding of formal and informal modes of control in the context of crime and responses to crime. The module draws on a number of theoretical approaches, including social structure theories and social process theories.

Volume & Serious Crime Scene Investigation

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about the crime scene investigation-related activities used to investigate volume and serious crime from the viewpoint of the Basic Command Unit. You will investigate the mechanisms employed to link crimes and create crime series which, on many occasions, develop from volume series into serious crime such as sexual offences and robbery. This process is carried out by an analysis of links identified by forensic support staff, detectives and tactical meetings on volume crime, as well as using databases such as Ident1 and the NDNAD, and the more nuanced skills associated with comparing modus operandi by CSIs.

Crime, Power & the State

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will critically examine the relationship between crime, power, poverty and the State. You'll be introduced to perspectives that highlight the importance of recognising crimes of the powerful within society including the State. You will also examine the relationship between crime and social policy, and the role of politics and the State in influencing this. On completion of the module, students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of criminological and sociological research into the relationship between various areas of power, social policy and crime.

Accident, Disaster & Terror Scene Investigation

Core module - (20 Credits)

In this module, you'll develop an understanding of the multidisciplinary nature of critical incident accident, disaster and terror-related investigations. You'll learn about different investigation models and strategic approaches. You'll

also explore the specialist professionals (that do not work in core forensics roles) that may attend the scene. You'll learn about the roles and procedures of these professionals in the wider investigation, as well as the issues arising from this multidisciplinary approach. There is particular focus on the location, recovery and identification of evidence, and identification of the cause and manner in which mass disasters and critical incidents of both natural and deliberate origins occur.

Criminology for a Just Society

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will develop a broad and nuanced understanding of the relationship between criminology and ideas of harm, justice and equality. You will focus on environmental, social, cultural and economic spheres and you'll explore concepts such as sustainability and global citizenship as a way of understanding criminology's role in facilitating justice and equality.

Cybercrime and Digital Policing

Optional module - (20 Credits)

The aim of the module is to explore the multifaceted relationship between news media, crime and criminal justice. The module will provide students with opportunities to familiarise themselves with key theoretical debates in different areas of news media criminology. More specifically, the module will consider how news media portrayals of crime, criminals, victims and the criminal justice system have changed over time and examine these within their broader social, economic and political context. The module will also explore the connections between news media portrayals of crime and criminal justice policy. Finally, the module will equip students with critical skills relevant to undertaking media analysis from a criminological standpoint.

Marks, Impressions & Pattern Evidence

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about the collection, analysis and interpretation of a number of evidence types including shoe print impressions, tyre tracks, tool marks, finger marks and handwriting marks. There will be practical sessions where you will practice applying the principles learnt in lectures to mock exhibits. This module includes extensive practical work, developing competency in laboratory work and completion of forensic documentation.

Mental Health & Violence

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the relationship between mental health and violent crime, and how this is responded to by the criminal justice system and other institutions. You will look at criminological and psychiatric research into the relationship between mental disorder and violent offending. You will also understand and critically evaluate how this is responded to by the criminal justice system and the forensic mental health system, and the ideologies and practices that are central to the management and treatment of mentally disordered and violent offenders.

News, Media, Crime & Justice

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the multifaceted relationship between news media, crime and criminal justice. You'll have opportunities to familiarise yourself with key theoretical debates in different areas of news media criminology. You will also consider how news media portrayals of crime, criminals, victims and the criminal justice system have changed over time by examining them within their broader social, economic and political context. You will also explore the connections between news media portrayals of crime and criminal justice policy. The experience you gain will help you to undertake media analysis from a criminological standpoint.

Research Methods for Criminology

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will be introduced to a range of methodologies that are used to generate and analyse information in the social sciences. This will include qualitative and quantitative research, as well as more practical aspects such as the challenges of fieldwork and ethical considerations.

Sexual & Domestic Violence

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about the psychology of offences of sexual and domestic abuse and the unique complexities they cause in the criminal justice system (CJS), including why it is often not possible to get a conviction in these cases. The impact, scope and issues of sexual and domestic abuse will be explored, highlighting the difficulties of investigating these complex crimes, the problem of consent in sexual violence and of witnesses in domestic abuse. Discussion will be made of the need for specialist conditions for individuals who choose to report these serious offences, and the role and value of psychology to help them do this. There will also be discussions about how psychology has changed procedures in the CJS, impacted on practice across the CJS, and given a better understanding of sexual and domestic abuse with a focus on conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder. This module also covers perpetrators and treatment programmes for domestic and sexual abuse.

Crime & Social Harm

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about the harm associated with behaviours that are not necessarily controlled by the criminal justice system. This will include behaviour that causes individual and wider harm and how these behaviours are explained and controlled. You will consider why it is that some harms are considered criminal and others are not or are dealt with through civil sanctions. Topics covered include environmental harm, workplace harm and financial harm.

Psychology & the Criminal Justice System

Optional module - (20 Credits)

In this module, you'll develop an understanding of forensic psychology and its impact on the criminal justice system. You will explore how psychology has changed criminal justice procedures, impacted on police practice and given a better understanding of people involved in the criminal justice system such as: perpetrators, victims and witnesses. Special attention will be paid to vulnerable people and there will be lectures on addiction and mental health. You will also explore the psychology of the court process and the prison system to understand trial proceedings, the impact of psychological processes on sentencing and the application of psychology to the treatment of offenders.

Reconstructing Crime

Optional module - (20 Credits)

In this module, you'll develop an understanding of the processes used to reconstruct events of a crime and critical incidences such as fires, explosions, road traffic collisions and accidents/disasters in order to determine how they occurred and the actions of those who were involved. You will explore modelling methods and apply them to mock and real-life examples.

Researching Forensic Investigation

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about a range of methodologies that can be used to generate and analyse information in a forensic investigation context. The module aims to provide you with a clear overview of the purpose, nature and procedures that must be followed in forensic research settings.

Youth, Crime & Justice

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the notion of 'youth' in relation to issues of crime, deviancy and criminal justice. The module introduces you to issues of youth in relation to the roles of offender and victim, and you'll explore changing public and political discourse of youth offending and state responses to youth crime and deviancy.

Year 3 modules

Victimology

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about the theory of victimology, together with the policy and practice of victim orientated initiatives within criminal justice. You'll look at debates about the impact of crime on victims. You'll also be encouraged to think critically about the relationship between victim, offender and the criminal justice system while considering alternative approaches to conflict resolution between victim and offender.

Expert & Professional Witnesses

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about the English legal system and the law, structure and processes that an investigator/scientist is must adhere to when presenting their evidence in court. You will explore in detail the roles, responsibilities and scope of both professional witnesses and expert witnesses. You will take part in moot court exercises that will build your confidence and practical experience.

Contemporary Issues in Criminology

Core module - (20 Credits)

In this module, you'll apply your criminological skills and the 'criminological imagination' you've developed earlier in the course to a range of current problems of criminological interest, both in Britain and internationally. You will be able to further develop the skills of independent critical thought and analysis and you'll analyse changing patterns of crime and contemporary developments in criminal justice policy and practice. The content will reflect current debates and developments and will closely follow the political developments that drive 21st century ideas of criminal justice.

Fire & Explosion Scene Investigation

Core module - (20 Credits)

You will learn how typical scene procedures must be adapted when the scene is damaged or destroyed by fire or an explosion. The module aims to develop your theoretical understanding of the chemistry and physics of fires and explosions. You'll look at the methods employed in order to investigate such scenes, particularly those that are of unknown cause. This includes an understanding of the motives for setting explosives or committing arson, an understanding of the causes of accidental fires, and knowledge of the origin of fires caused by biological, mechanical and chemical reactions.

Applied Criminology Individual Study

Optional module - (40 Credits)

The aim of the Individual Study is for you to develop your ability to carry out in-depth research on a specific aspect of applied criminology, crime and the criminal justice system. Supported by an academic supervisor, you will identify a specific topic that you wish to study and you'll produce a research proposal before carrying out in-depth research/review of the literature and sources in order to prepare a dissertation.

Forensic Investigation Individual Study

Optional module - (40 Credits)

You will carry out research on a topic that you chose according to your own interests and career aspirations. You can select whether to do a literature-based project or a practical project, and you'll work alongside an academic supervisor who will guide you through the process. Forensic employers consider an independent research project to be desirable experience for potential employees, as successful completion of such a project indicates independent thinking, problem solving, research abilities, resilience, and communication skills.

Crime, Deviance & Popular Culture

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will examine theories and issues in criminology through the lens of popular culture. This will include the role of popular culture in reflecting and shaping public views on crime and criminal justice. Through studying a wide range of crime-related popular culture products (films, TV shows, music, novels, comic books, video games etc.), you will develop an in-depth understanding of the cultural processes through which crime is constructed as a social problem. This will enable you to apply and further develop your criminological knowledge. It will also enable you to think critically about fictional representations of crime and justice and understand how pertinent social trends and anxieties manifest themselves in popular culture.

Major & Critical Incident Scene Investigation

Optional module - (20 Credits)

This module builds on the knowledge and understanding from the earlier module Volume and Serious Crime Scene Investigation. There is focus on the the senior crime scene investigator (CSI) as a strategist whose role it is to meet the investigative needs of the senior investigating officer and forensic management team. The module continues the theme that crime scenes and people are sources of forensic evidence and intelligence but provides more in-depth experience of the management of personnel and scientific resources in support of major crime enquiries. This will include the employment of strategic plans to identify the resources required to meet investigative problems and gaps in knowledge as described, for instance, by the Murder Investigation Manual and other sources of literature.

Police, Cultures & Societies

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the role that sociology has had in examining the role, work and symbolism of police work. You'll explore the broad area of 'police culture' and, in particular, tackle themes such as the part that culture plays in late modernity, the relationship between culture, behaviour and language and the challenges of changing occupational culture.

Psychology of Serious & Prolific Offending

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will explore specialist areas of research within criminal and forensic psychology, particularly in relation to serious and prolific offending behaviours and ways to address them. You will critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of the featured research and literature.

Punishment and the Prison: Reimagining Incarceration

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will develop your theoretical and practical understanding of contemporary penal policy, specifically in relation to imprisonment. This will entail an examination of the aims and objectives of the prison system and the experiences of different groups within the prison. You will consider how there has been both change and continuity in relation to imprisonment over time, and you'll look at the enduring nature of tensions relating to the aims and purpose of imprisonment. You will consider how prison itself can be seen as a social problem and the complex relationship between imprisonment and harm, as well as considering alternative ways in which prison regimes could be constructed.

Criminal Justice in Practice

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will have the opportunity to apply the theory you have learned by undertaking a work placement in criminal justice or a related field.

Cybercrime: Ethical, Professional & Legal Issues

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the ethical considerations surrounding technology, the roles of professional bodies in the development of careers in public service, industry and commerce, and the ethical obligations of a professional.

Gangs & Serious Youth Offending

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about how theory and research contribute to the development of initiatives and what the challenges of this are. There will be focus on serious offending and gangs as these are often at the forefront of contemporary policies. Within this context, you will learn to successfully analyse difficult topics and literature and extract specific information.

Investigating Sexual & Domestic Abuse

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will explore the police investigation of rape, serious sexual assaults and domestic abuse, looking at all aspects of the police response to sexual and domestic abuse. You'll explore the criticism that such investigations have received in the past and you'll analyse the improvements that have been made and how the police conduct their modern investigations in the wider criminal justice setting, and in partnership with other agencies. All content will be discussed against the backdrop of research relating to sexual and violent offending, case studies and case law.

Mental Health & the Criminal Justice System

Optional module - (20 Credits)

This module will give candidates an understanding of the impact of mental health conditions on an individual's ability to manage involvement with the criminal justice system; how mentally ill people need specialist treatment when they come into contact with the criminal justice system as victims/witnesses/offenders; how the role and value of psychiatry and psychology helps in delivering such treatment; and how psychology has changed criminal justice procedures, impacting on police practice and giving a better understanding of people with mental health conditions. The module will also explore the community, prison and inpatient psychiatric care schemes, MARAC and MAPPA programmes, and joint working between mental health services and the criminal justice services. It will also look at the effects of policing on officers such as stress and PTSD.

Strategic Applications to Major Crime

Optional module - (20 Credits)

You will learn about the interdisciplinary nature of forensic investigations by exploring how crime scene investigators and forensic scientists work together to determine the events of a crime. You will look at the collection, analysis, interpretation and prioritisation of a wide range of evidence from different disciplines by undertaking practical exercises and analysing case studies.

Learning and teaching quote

Our degree is taught by forensic practitioners who offer an informative, innovative, practical and rigorous course that will open up a vast range of career opportunities for you.

Learning and teaching quote source

Niamh Smith

Learning and teaching quote job title

Senior Lecturer in Forensic Investigation

Learning and Teaching tab 1 label

Teaching

Learning and teaching tab 1 text

You will be taught through a combination of lectures, workshops and tutorials and you will typically have contact time of around 14 hours per week, supported by additional online materials. Your actual contact hours depend on the optional modules you select.

Key knowledge is provided through lectures, guided reading and online materials, and this is supported by class activities and discussion, which help you to apply theory to real life scenarios and problems. Some teaching is also delivered through workshops which blend knowledge delivery with discussions or activities, as well as helping with key skills development. Teaching sessions are interactive, allowing you to engage with material on a deeper level. Tutorials are available to provide one-to-one support.

You will have the opportunity to use a range of specialist methods and equipment in our dedicated forensic suite, which includes a workshop and a range of crime scenes. Here you will develop your practical skills in sessions that are designed according to real life scenarios.

All courses are informed by the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy 2015-2022.

Learning and teaching tab 2 label

Independent study

Learning and teaching tab 2 text

When not attending lectures, seminars, workshops or other timetabled sessions you'll have access to a range of resources to help you continue learning through self-study. This typically involves reading journal articles and books, undertaking research in the library, working on projects, and preparing for coursework assignments/examinations, workshops and seminars.

Your lecturers will direct you towards specific readings and/or activities, where appropriate, to complete before/after class and they will provide tutorials where necessary to support your learning.

We also recommend that you set up student study groups and support each other with your studies as research shows that we learn much better in communities.

A range of additional study skills and employability workshops are available within the University to help you reach your full academic and career potential.

Learning and teaching tab 3 label

Overall workload

Learning and teaching tab 3 text

Each 20 credit module requires approximately 200 hours of learning, of which approximately 50 hours of this is taught class contact time with the remaining being independent study.

You will study six modules per year and this is typically 1200 hours of study per year (37.5 hours per week).

Learning and teaching tab 4 label

Academic input

Learning and teaching tab 4 text

The teaching team have academic expertise across a range of criminological issues, including mental health, philosophy and crime, the history of crime and punishment, migration and crime, drug related crime and drug treatment, youth justice and victimology. They are also involved in research activities in these and other areas, and they bring this research expertise into their teaching. Many staff have published in these areas and have practical experience in them too.

Staff use their research expertise to inform teaching, and they provide you with opportunities to be involved with research to help develop you academically and personally.

Our criminology staff and students were central to a pilot of the Bystander Initiative, which aims to support students and staff to identify and prevent sexual harassment, assault and coercive behaviour. The pilot was successful, and a modified version of the initiative is now available university-wide.

Assessment text

Assessments are a core part of the course and each module has 1-3 assessments that contribute to the 4000 word assessment quota. The course is designed to ensure that each assessment is well supported by written guides, study skills sessions and staff guidance and the course provides you with a range of assessment types to allow you to develop skills that are required in forensic professions and opportunities to repeat each assessment type in each year of study so that you can hone your skills. We also provide opportunities for you to gain formative feedback informally before you complete the formal assessments that count towards your final mark by providing developmental practice assessments or opportunities to gain feedback on assessment plans.

There are formal or 'summative' assessments during each of the modules and assessment methods include written examinations and a range of coursework assessments such as essays, reports, forensic paperwork, forensic statements, portfolios, oral presentations and final year dissertations. The grades from formal assessments count towards your module mark and feedback is provided to ensure that you can improve future assessments.

Feedback

The team is dedicated to providing high quality feedback on all assessments to enable you to understand what action you need to take to improve your work/marks. We try to ensure that feedback is student focused and constructive. Tutorials also enable you to discuss your work. We aim to provide you with feedback within 15 working days of hand-in for all assessments and use a range of feedback methods to meet the needs of our students.

Careers text

Through the study of this course you will have the opportunity to gain the core knowledge and skills required for many criminal justice careers, and transferable to other related careers. Graduates of the course typically secure posts within the police, the prison service, the probation service, youth work, forensic organisations, medical laboratories and third sector organisations working in crime control and victim support.

Further postgraduate study is also an option and you will be encouraged to make the most of the volunteering and networking opportunities available throughout your degree course in addition to your studies in order to enhance your employability.

Careers quote

I just wanted to say a huge thank you for all your help and support in my endeavours to do well in Criminology. I have just received a job offer to train as a Probation Service Officer, which I have accepted.

Careers quote source

Adrian Hukin

Careers quote job title

Graduate in Applied Criminology