

Criminology Departmental Curriculum Statement

Curriculum Intent Statement

The purpose of the WJEC Level 3 Applied Certificate in Criminology is to provide students with an introduction to criminal justice through a scientific study of criminal behaviour and to give a context for humanities learning. It is a qualification with elements of psychology, law and sociology that complements studies in humanities. It has been designed to offer exciting and interesting experiences that focus learning for students through applied learning, i.e. through the acquisition of knowledge and understanding in purposeful contexts linked to the criminal justice system.

An understanding of criminology is relevant to many job roles within the criminal justice sector, social and probation work and sociology and psychology. This insight will enable students to make informed decisions about potential future career routes. It also helps students to understand the criminal justice system which impacts on their own behaviour and conduct in UK society. It requires students to consider how the use and application of their learning impacts on themselves, other individuals, employers, society, and the environment. Ultimately students will develop a critical and focused criminological mind.

The staff's commitment and enthusiasm for the subject ensures that high standards are set which fuel students' aspirations through their own conduct, support of the Cowleian values and the expectations for all students.

Curriculum Implementation Statement

The Criminology course is designed to give the opportunity for students to be awarded either the WJEC Applied Certificate or Applied Diploma. It is accessible for all students as it is graded A*-E. The first unit (1: Changing Awareness) will enable the students to demonstrate understanding of different types of crime, influences on perceptions of crime and why some crimes are unreported. The second unit (2: Criminological Theories) will allow students to gain an understanding of why people commit crime, drawing on what they have learned in Unit 1. Students only completing these two units will be awarded the Applied Certificate. To gain the Applied Diploma students study a further two units and draw upon their knowledge developed in the first year of the course. The third unit (3: Crime Scene to Courtroom) will provide an understanding of the criminal justice system from the moment a crime has been identified to the verdict. Students will develop the understanding and skills needed to examine information in order to review the justice of verdicts in criminal cases. In the final unit (4: Crime and Punishment), students will apply their understanding of the awareness of criminality, criminological theories and the process of bringing an accused to court in order to evaluate the effectiveness of social control to deliver criminal justice policy.

Unit 1 and 3 are assessed through controlled assessment tasks and Unit 2 and 4 are assessed through a two-hour external examination. This means the course is suitable for different types of learners. For the controlled assessment units each assessment criteria is marked over a series of mark bands allowing accessibility for all learners.

The applied nature of the course allows students to learn in such a way that they develop skills required for independent learning and development, a range of generic and transferable skills such as critical thinking, and report writing and time management, the ability to solve problems, the skills of project based research, development and presentation, the ability to work alongside others and the ability to apply learning in vocational contexts. Throughout the course students will be expected to work independently as reading/researching around topics areas is vital to further develop knowledge and understanding. This is encouraged through keeping up to date with the latest news and watching television documentaries. Many students do this anyway as they have a personal interest in this genre to start with. Criminology is a popular subject with the media so there is always a wealth of information to be gained from these sources and students are keen to do this in their own time. They are also eager to discuss what they have learned in lesson. Students will complete work outside of lesson, through designated homework tasks to meet stringent deadlines. Using the remote log on system will allow this to take place.

Curriculum Beyond the Classroom

Guest speakers are used to contextualise some topics - National Crime Agency employee with experience working within British Transport Police, a local knife crime campaigner and a local experienced magistrate. This element of the course is always being developed as are the opportunities for visits to build on what is already offered such as a visit to Liverpool Crown Courts and London taking in the Houses of Parliament, Courts of Justice and Supreme and the London Dungeon.

Subject Expertise

This course was introduced in 2014 and over that time it has grown in popularity and the team has expanded. Alongside the experienced Criminology staff with teaching experience of Public Services and Sociology, there is also a Law and Psychology specialist together with an ICT/Media specialist. Both of whom bring experience and skills to help develop various topic areas across both Y12 and Y13 units. A key advantage to this multi-disciplinary team is the opportunity to teach Criminology students across several different subjects. This proves vital in creating strong working relationships with the students and enables connections to be made across different subjects. This helps consolidate students' subject knowledge.

Destinations

The Applied Diploma attracts UCAS points and allows students to access higher degree courses in Criminology alongside other areas such as criminal justice, law, psychology and sociology. Alternatively, the qualification allows students to gain the required understanding and skills to be able to consider apprenticeships or employment within the criminal justice system, e.g. the Crime Prosecution Service, the National Probation Service and the Courts and Tribunals Service.