

University of Chester

Programme Specification

Criminal Justice FDA

2023 - 2024

1. Final Award

Foundation Arts Degree

2. Programme Title

Criminal Justice

3. Internal Programme Title

Criminal Justice

4. Intermediate / Exit Awards

4a. Award

Certificate of Higher Education

4b. Title

5. Awarding Institution / Body

University of Chester

6. Programme Delivered By

St Helens College

7. Location of Delivery

St Helens College

8. Framework

Undergraduate Modular Programme

9. Mode of Study

Full-time and Part-time

10. Forms of Study

Classroom / Laboratory,

11. Normal length of study

2 years

12. Maximum length of study

5 Years

13. Frequency of intake / starting month

Annual - September

14. UCAS Code

M900

15. JACS and/or HECoS Code

L900

16. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check Required?

Yes

17. Faculty & Department

17a. Faculty

Social Science

17b. Department

Social and Political Science

18. Subject Benchmarking Group

Law (March 2023); Criminology (March 2022); Social Policy (December 2019)

19. Professional Recognition By (if applicable)

Not applicable

20. Name of Module Assessment Board (MAB)

Social and Political Science

21. Date of Approval

Friday 1st June 2012

22. Educational Aims of the Programme

The purpose of the Criminal Justice programme is to enable students to:

- Undertake a rigorous interdisciplinary study of criminal justice drawing on disciplines including, criminology, law, socio-legal studies, sociology, social policy, history and related professional practice.
- Provide students with an understanding of policy and experience of practice in the criminal justice system and so improve their employability in criminal justice and allied areas.
- To provide students with the theoretical knowledge and the opportunity to apply that knowledge and achieve operational effectiveness.
- To create an awareness of the changing requirements of the criminal justice sector.
- To provide an educational foundation for a range of operational, administrative and management careers in the criminal justice sector.
- To enable students to acquire intellectual, practical and transferable skills and to enable them to use these skills in the move to independent learning.
- To develop a range of skills and techniques, personal qualities and attitudes essential for a successful career in the criminal justice sector.

23. Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Students to gain knowledge and understanding of: Level 4: • Describe, identify, and construct client case profiles and assessments relating to a range of criminal justice agencies (SO4811, SO4812). • Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of how the law (SO4812, SO4813), criminology (SO4814), politics and social policy (SO4815) inform professional practice within the field of criminal justice (all modules). • The relationship between theories of crime and how they influence both state and individual perspectives within the criminal justice system (SO4810, SO4814, SO4815).

Level 5: • Apply theory to practice and demonstrate the influence of research, government policy and legislation on professional practice (all modules). • Explain, evaluate and reflect on inter-agency working between all elements of the criminal justice system (SO5810, SO5813, SO5814/5). • Explain and evaluate the public, private and third sector influences on the workings of criminal justice (SO5810, SO5813, SO5814/5). • Analyse, evaluate, reflect and critically review the operation of criminal justice within a professional setting (SO5814).

Cognitive Skills

B. Thinking or cognitive skills that will enable the student to:

Level 4 • Appreciate the complexity of crime and victimisation and be able to analyse and assess competing theories and explanations (SO4810, SO4814). • Identify improvement strategies to develop professional practice within criminal justice and related areas of practice (SO4811).

Level 5 • Assess, evaluate and apply ethical considerations arising within criminal justice research situations (SO5812). • Recognise and apply social and psychological approaches relating to interventions used to reduce identifiable risk (SO5810, SO5812).

Practical and Professional Skills

C. Practical skills that will enable the student to:

Level 4 • Ability to investigate and establish culpability in relation to the criminal law with reference to appropriate legal defences (SO4812) • Demonstrate the ability to explain criminality in relation to a range of perspectives including psychological, social, criminological and biological concepts (SO4810, SO4814, SO4815).

Level 5 • Explain and critically evaluate the multi-agency approach within criminal justice along with its effects on political and social outcomes (SO5810, SO5813). •

Successfully complete a work-based learning activities and/or placement within a criminal justice related agency (SO5814)

Communication Skills

Communication skills are prioritised within all level 4 and 5 modules, but particularly in Professional and Academic Development (SO4811) at level 4 and the Work-Based Learning module (SO5814) at level 5. These modules aim to develop key, transferable skills of problem-solving, improving students own learning and performance and working with others. These skills are underpinned by the skills of communication, IT and numeracy. At Level 5 students are encouraged to develop their communication skills in written submissions (all modules) and through seminar based tutorials (all modules) and literature reviews in relation to research proposals (SO5812). Communication skills are the central focus of both formative and summative assessments where planning and writing assignments, gathering information, use of IT, written and spoken communication and group work are prioritised (all modules).

24. Programme Structure and Features; Levels, Modules, Credits and Awards

24a. Programme Structure and Features (levels, modules, credits, awards)

The programme has been designed with direct reference to feedback from academic advisors, employers, professionals within the field of criminal justice, former Foundation Degree students and the delivery team at St Helens College. The Foundation Degree in Criminal Justice builds upon knowledge, skills and experience acquired from experienced practitioners involved in the delivery of Foundation Degrees since 2002.

At Level 5 there are two 40 credit modules (SO5814 and SO5815). Module SO5815 has been developed as an optional module to SO5814 due to work placement restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The course has been devised so that the content will fulfil the requirements of the Skills for Justice Foundation Degree Framework, the Foundation Degree Qualification benchmark, subject skills benchmarks and the FHEQ. Additionally, the National Occupational Standards (NOS) have also been referred to in the compiling of this programme.

Level 4 -

120 credits required to complete Level 4

SO4810 - Victimology (20 credits)

SO4811 - Professional and Academic Development (20 credits)

SO4812 - Criminal Law: theory and practice (20 credits)

SO4813 - English Legal System (20 credits)

SO4814 - Introduction to Criminology (20 credits)

SO4815 - Political and Social Justice (20 credits)

Level 5 -

120 credits required to complete Level 5

SO5810 - Inside the Criminal Justice System (20 credits)

SO5811 - Criminal Law in Action (20 credits)

SO5812 - Researching Crime and Justice (20 credits)

SO5813 - Psychology, Mental Health & Crime (20 credits)

SO5814 - Work-Based Learning (40 credits)

SO5815 - Career Development and Employability (40)

Part-time route

The recommended part-time route would normally take 3 years to successfully complete. However, students may elect to follow a 4 year route in order to achieve the full FD Award.

3-year route

Part-time students may select their options within the maximum of 80 credits per year or minimum of 20 credits per year to complete their qualifications. (All modules are compulsory)

Examples of 3 and 4 year part time routes are as follows:

Year 1

SO4811 – Professional and Academic Development

SO4812 – Criminal Law: theory and practice

SO4813 – English Legal System

SO4814 – Introduction to Criminology

Year 2

SO4810 – Victimology

SO4815 – Political and Social Justice

SO5811 – Criminal Law in Action

SO5812 – Researching Crime & Justice

Year 3

SO5810 – Inside the Criminal Justice System

SO5813 – Psychology, Mental Health & Crime

SO5814 – WBL

80 credits

80 credits

80 credits

Year 4 Part-time route

80 credits(yr 1) 80 credits (yr 2) 40 credits (yr 3) 40 credits (yr 4)

Combinations of these routes can be approved within the lower 40 credits and higher 80credits (All modules are compulsory).

24b. Module Structure

Mod-Code	Level	Title	Credit	Single
SO4810	4	Victimology	20	Comp
SO4811	4	Professional and Academic Development	20	Comp
SO4812	4	Criminal Law: theory and practice	20	Comp
SO4813	4	The English Legal System	20	Comp
SO4814	4	Introduction to Criminology	20	Comp
SO4815	4	Political and Social Justice	20	Comp
SO5810	5	Inside the Criminal Justice System	20	Comp
SO5811	5	Criminal Law in Action	20	Comp
SO5812	5	Researching Crime and Justice	20	Comp
SO5813	5	Psychology, Mental Health and Crime	20	Comp
SO5814	5	Work-Based Learning	40	Optional
SO5815	5	Career Development and Employability	40	Optional

24c. Credit Accumulation

The programme is offered by a full-time route of 2 years and in 3-4 years of part time study. The programme is in two levels each corresponding to a year's full-time attendance. Students may interrupt their study (with the credits they have accumulated

at HE Certificate level when 120 credits have been obtained). The programme is based on a 2 semester academic year with modules being delivered and assessed at specific identifiable points as reflected in the assessment schedule table. The modules are rated as 20 credits (equivalent to 200 hours of student effort). There is also a 40 credit module reflecting the importance of Work-Based Learning.

All modules are compulsory elements of this programme. Level 4 = 120 credits, Level 5 = 120 credits (providing a total of 240 credits). Credits are linked to modules and are awarded for the achievement of the learning outcomes of the module. The credit value for each module reflects 1 credit representing 10 hours of learning.

The variety of programmes have differing requirements:

- Certificate in Higher Education creates an exit route with 120 credits.
- Progression Requirements to Criminal Justice (Hons) requires 240 credits that meets the FD award criteria.

Classification of the final award will be based on Level 5 credits only (mean average)

24d. Details of any derogation from University Regulations (if applicable)

N/A

25. Professional Body Requirements (if applicable)

26. Admission Requirements

The programme intends to recruit students from a varied range of backgrounds and experience. Application for admission to the programme will normally be through UCAS and all suitably qualified applicants will be considered. Offers of a place on the programme will not be based solely upon academic qualifications alone and skills gained in the workplace will also be considered. The final decision in terms of acceptance into the programme will lie with the programme leader.

Applicants should possess a minimum of 5 GCSE's grades A, B or C including English Language. For students whose education has not been English, evidence will be required of proficiency in English. Typically applicants will need to have achieved Band 6.5 in the IELTS (International English Language Testing Scheme) and/or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of 589 or above.

All students will be advised at the entry stage that they must undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to assess their suitability for access to a range of criminal justice careers. In the event of a disclosure this must be discussed with the Programme Leader prior to entry who will then provide advice relating to placement and future employment criteria within the Criminal Justice Sector.

Equivalent or one or more of the following:

Access to Higher Education Applicants should have (or expect to obtain) the full award in a relevant course.

Successful completion of related 'A' level study with a minimum of two subjects passed or equivalent to 48 UCAS Tariff points.

Equivalent qualifications such as Scottish Cert of Education or International Baccalaureate

National Diploma in Public Services or related field

NVQ Level 3 and related occupational experience

A UCAS tariff score of 48 including at least 40 points from Advanced GCE and or Vocational 'A' Levels (6 or 12 Unit awards), National Diploma or NVQ in related area is required for standard entry to this programme. (Functional Skills points are accepted).

27. Subject Benchmark Statements

The subject benchmarks used as a foundation for the design of this programme are Law; Criminology; Social Policy and Administration. The QAA – Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (February 2020) are incorporated as follows:

In terms of employer involvement, accessibility, articulation and progression, flexibility, partnerships, knowledge, understand and skills, assessment, monitoring and review.

“Foundation Degrees integrate academic and work based learning through close collaboration between employers and higher education providers. They build upon a long history of design and delivery of vocational qualification in higher education, and are intended to equip learners with the skills and knowledge relevant to their employment, so satisfying the needs of employers and employees” (QAA FD Qualification Benchmark Document 2020 fourth revised edition).

It is this rationale that has been one of the drivers in developing this Foundation Degree in Criminal Justice, along with reflections on our experience and outstanding success in

the high percentage of past students successfully operating in a professional capacity within the whole range of criminal justice roles.

Knowledge and understanding integrate with, and support the development of, vocational skills and competences, taking into account the need for academic rigour.

During the design we have made reference to FHEQ, the QCF, Subject Sector – Skills for Justice Framework for the Justice Sector. Subject benchmark statement in Criminology, Law, and Social Policy. National and Occupational Standards, Sector Skills Council Framework and HEFCE Prospectus.

The Foundation Degree is targeted at both local and national employment needs and intended to link with the new BA (Hons) top-up in Criminal Justice delivered at St Helens College.

28. Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

St Helens College Higher Education Strategy reflects an institution-wide Learning, Teaching and Assessment that embraces the value placed by the College on being learner-centred, having widening participation, including work-based learning and employability skills.

The following range of teaching and learning methods will be employed:

Lecture - This is used to impart a specific body of knowledge to students. In most cases, theoretical concepts generated by lectures will be developed through supporting seminars or through research practice.

Teaching Workshop - This is where a lecturer or visiting lecturer introduces and demonstrates practically based technology, working methods and skills, potential of materials, within a short period of intensive study.

Seminars – Used for the discussion and debate of ideas. The primary function is the exchange of opinion between staff and students, or students and students. A seminar may be initiated and led by staff or maybe focussed around a student presentation.

Self-Directed Learning - The concept of independent study is an integral part of the programme. It refers to the idea of student centred learning, whereby the student takes responsibility for setting his or her own goals and creating his or her own pathway of study within the framework of the course.

Written Work - The course involves a range of written assignments. These include essays, critical reviews, written discussions, project proposals, applications, letters of introduction, CV's, reflective logs, contextual reports, and problem-solving scenarios.

Oral Presentation - Throughout the programme the student is required to use the spoken word to support their work in both formal and informal situations.

Group Work - Certain assignments may require students to work together or in pairs, to practice or demonstrate learning or to initiate investigation and / or deliver presentations.

Visits - Throughout the programme the students are required to attend a series of visits that will be pre-planned. These visits will take the form of court visits, police control rooms and professional organisations.

Visiting Lecturers - Students benefit from contact with a wide range of professional activities through direct contact with industrial specialists. The schedule of VL's is intended to introduce the students to a variety of different professional practitioners and working methods.

Individual Tutorials - This system is an extremely important element linked to the rationale of teaching, learning and assessment at St Helens College. The individual needs of the student are effectively analysed with the aim to provide a clear pathway of learning to incorporate the style which most suits the student. These tutorials can be activated at the request of the tutor or individual student, and can be utilised in addition to the mandatory tutorials afforded to each and every individual student on the course. This process has also been informed by feedback from past and current students who have identified how advice relating to achieving learning outcomes and utilising appropriate study techniques has been invaluable in supporting them towards achieving independent study and the results associated with this.

The systems therein to support individual learning needs include: Learner Support to respond to individual student needs Functional skills workshops Evening Tutorials to provide flexible support and guidance All methods of assessment will follow current University of Chester Assessment Regulations and Code of Assessment Practice, including the arrangement of Module and Programme Assessment Boards.

All students are introduced to the methods of assessment and assessment deadlines during the induction programme. The programme is modular in design, with each module having a credit value based upon taught hours and expected hours of

independent private study, practical and research work necessary to complete the module. The programme is divided into two levels of study. Each level represents study to the value of 120 credits, giving a total of 240 credits for the full award. The basic functions for assessment are as follows: Achievement against learning outcomes Written & verbal feedback to students on progress Measure achievement against specified assessment criteria Identify student strengths and areas for improvement Ensure national academic standards are met in comparison to other awards. Students work is assessed in order to ensure the programmes standards are met.

All modules contain assessed work that is normally in the form of an 'Assignment Brief'. All assignment briefs will contain both evidence requirements for submission and a series of weighted assessment criteria that tells the student what they are being marked against. The assessment criteria will reflect the learning outcomes of the module and it is with these outcomes in mind that the external examiner can make a judgement on an individual student's performance. All assessed students work also needs to meet a national standard consistent with the award being offered. It is for this reason the programme requires an external examiner that remains impartial to the internal assessment process. The External Examiner ensures that all students have been dealt with in a fair and consistent manner and that the academic standards of the award are maintained.

Methods of Assessment

Two methods of assessment are employed throughout the three levels of the programme. They are as follows:

Formative Assessment – This is conducted through group and individual critiques, allowing the programme team to offer on-going feedback to students according to standards commensurate with the requirements of the programme. There will be a formal process of formative assessment prior to the end of the 1st semester and students will be provided with both written and verbal feedback in relation to their performance at this stage of their studies.

Summative Assessment – This is conducted through formal assessment records containing individual grades for specific individually weighted assessment criteria and written feedback. This form of assessment happens after work has been submitted to deadline and provides the students with a clear indication of their strengths and weaknesses, detailing how they might improve their performance.

Formative assessments are varied and may include: presentations, case studies, essay plans, question and answer sessions, discussions, and literature reviews. Summative assessments are varied and include: essays, exams, reflective logs, PowerPoint presentations, poster presentations, reports, research proposal, case studies, and portfolio.

29. Careers and Employability

Students who graduate with this Foundation Degree in Criminal Justice will have developed comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the criminal justice system and the work associated with it, such as public service departments, including the police, prison service, youth service, probation service and the courts. The role of politics, law and social policy will have also played an influential element of the student's learning experience. Analytical abilities and critical thinking skills will have been developed throughout the programme and will complement wider transferable skills of research, IT, problem-solving, teamwork, and communication.

Foundation degree students will find the programme a useful grounding for entry to a range of criminal justice and related careers. The police, prisons, youth offending service, national offender management service, and teaching are career paths taken by previous graduates, but the knowledge, abilities and skills developed throughout the programme of study will prove valuable in a wide range of central and local government areas. Some graduates use the criminal justice foundation degree as a stepping stone to the BA (Hons) Criminal Justice (top-up) degree at St Helens College where their skills, knowledge and understanding are further developed through specialist subjects.

30. Equality

St Helens College respects diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity. St Helens College strives to ensure that no student receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of social background, age, disability, gender, sexuality, marital status, race, religion, colour, nationality, or ethnic or national origin.

St Helens College will take positive steps to eliminate discrimination, reduce the effects of past discrimination, continue the drive to increase levels of under-represented groups and promote equality in students' admissions and your experience in College. No student should be disadvantaged by unjustifiable conditions or requirements.

It is the responsibility of all students to implement and support this policy. All students of St Helens College are expected to treat each other with respect, as well as staff and visitors. Action will be taken in the case of unlawful and/or unacceptable behaviour by students.

The monitoring of progress against the policy is the responsibility of the Equality & Diversity Committee.

31. Additional Information

The programme has links with numerous criminal justice agencies across the North West, for example, Merseyside Police, Victim Support, Community Safety Teams, Youth Offending Teams, Probation Services and Prisons. In addition to the contribution to full-time members of staff, part of the programme delivery will be supported by visiting speakers and professional practitioners from a range of criminal justice and social agencies.