

Next Generation Higher National Unit Specification

Criminology B: Applied Criminology (SCQF level 7)

Unit code: J72J 47
SCQF level: 7 (16 SCQF credit points)
Valid from: session 2024–25

Prototype unit specification for use in pilot delivery only (version 2.0) August 2024

This unit specification provides detailed information about the unit to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year.

This unit specification is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information required to deliver and assess the unit.

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Unit purpose

This unit develops learners' knowledge and understanding of criminology. It introduces learners to theories, concepts and related research evidence.

The unit is aimed at learners who have a general interest in criminology, as well as those who want to use it as the basis for further study.

Entry to the unit is at your centre's discretion. However, we recommend that learners have one or more of the following:

- ◆ good communication skills
- ◆ previous study of criminology, for example, National Progression Awards or units at SCQF levels 5 or 6, or other similar qualifications
- ◆ other knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the unit

This unit works well alongside Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts.

Learners normally study the unit as part of HNC Social Sciences. They can also study it on a stand-alone basis.

If learners study the unit as part of HNC Social Sciences, they may be able to progress to HND Social Sciences or a degree programme in a related subject.

Unit outcomes

Learners who complete this unit can:

- 1 apply criminological theories, concepts and evidence to a related topic
- 2 evaluate key contributions of criminological theories and concepts to a related topic

Evidence requirements

Learners should provide written or oral evidence covering all unit outcomes, produced under open-book conditions. You should give the task at an appropriate point in the unit. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Written responses must consist of approximately 2,000 words, and oral responses must be 12 to 15 minutes in duration.

Learners must study three topics, selected from the following:

- ◆ victimology
- ◆ global crime
- ◆ cyber crime
- ◆ state crime
- ◆ policing and criminal justice
- ◆ green crime and eco-crime

You must apply at least three theories and three pieces of evidence to each of the chosen topics.

Learners are only assessed on one of the topics they study.

Learners' responses must include:

- ◆ three different criminological theories and supporting evidence applied to one topic
- ◆ an explanation of the similarities and differences between three different criminological theories in relation to one topic
- ◆ a holistic evaluation covering key contributions of the criminological theories and concepts in relation to one topic
- ◆ appropriate terminology and concepts relevant to the theories and topics

You can choose to use a mix of assessment methods across a group, depending on what is most suitable for each learner; for example, some could give a written response and others could give an oral response.

Learners must fully reference their assessment, using reliable sources appropriate for SCQF level 7. They must list all sources in a bibliography or reference list, in a recognised standard format such as Harvard or APA.

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The SCQF level of the unit provides additional context relating to the quality of evidence.
Learners should:

- ◆ contribute information that is complex, accurate and relevant to its purpose and audience
- ◆ present ideas clearly and coherently
- ◆ use a structure that is appropriate to the purpose
- ◆ provide supporting evidence or references

Knowledge and skills

The following table shows the knowledge and skills covered by the unit outcomes:

Knowledge	Skills
<p>Outcome 1 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ key criminological theories and concepts and how they apply to a related topic	<p>Outcome 1 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ apply different criminological theories, concepts and supporting evidence to a related topic◆ explain the similarities and differences between different criminological theories in relation to a related topic
<p>Outcome 2 Learners should understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ how to evaluate key contributions of criminological theories and concepts to a related topic	<p>Outcome 2 Learners can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ produce a holistic evaluation of key contributions of criminological theories and concepts in relation to a related topic

Meta-skills

Throughout this unit, learners develop meta-skills to enhance their employability in the social sciences sector.

The unit helps learners develop the meta-skills of self-management, social intelligence and innovation. Learners should develop meta-skills naturally throughout the unit. You should encourage learners to develop a minimum of one area in each of the three categories, but they do not need to cover all suggested subsections. The following suggestions may help shape delivery and assessment, and vary depending on the chosen topics and assessment method.

Self-management

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ focusing: completing assessments and project work to clear deadlines; producing appropriate work
- ◆ integrity: acting in an ethical way to complete assessments and carry out work for projects, for example, by not cheating; including citations and referencing for assessments
- ◆ adapting: acquiring new knowledge and skills; using different technologies to communicate and complete assessments; using a virtual learning environment (VLE); reflecting on performance to improve approach
- ◆ initiative: starting work as early as possible; decision making; self-motivation; reading and thinking about theories, research evidence and sources; using library facilities; setting own deadlines

Social intelligence

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ communicating: listening to information on theories, research and sources; explaining ideas; producing suitable, understandable assessment responses; sharing written or oral ideas and opinions on theories and topics
- ◆ feeling: discussing theories and expressing opinions; understanding other perspectives; respecting other viewpoints in discussions
- ◆ collaborating: working together to produce formative presentations and project work; taking account of others in planning and carrying out tasks; building relationships with peers
- ◆ leading: taking on responsibility; taking account of others; sharing information with peers

Innovation

This meta-skill includes:

- ◆ curiosity: seeking knowledge of theories and research; making the most of library research time; participating in class discussion and debates; questioning motives, ideas, information and research evidence
- ◆ creativity: developing new ways of working and approaching tasks; analysing case studies
- ◆ sense-making: participating in class discussions; blending a range of ideas; considering and evaluating different ideas
- ◆ critical thinking: making logical connections and reasoned judgements through discussion, debate and drawing conclusions based on evidence; reviewing and evaluating research evidence

Literacies

Learners develop core skills in the following literacies:

Numeracy

Learners develop numeracy skills by understanding facts and statistics related to crime. They can analyse data related to victimology, state crime or policing, and criminal justice.

Communication

Learners develop communication skills in formative and summative assessment. It is part of the evidence requirements for the unit to ensure learners convey complex ideas in a well-structured and coherent way, with academic references where appropriate. You can give learners opportunities to carry out oral presentations and engage in discussions.

Digital

Learners develop digital skills and computer literacy by using digital packages to complete assessments, and internet sources to research information on concepts, theories and ideas. You can give them guidance on appropriate sources. Using a VLE also supports digital skills.

Learning for Sustainability

Learning for Sustainability aims to build the values, attitudes, knowledge, skills and confidence needed to develop practices and make decisions that are compatible with a sustainable and equitable society. In this unit, there are opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of social sustainability while studying key topics and theories related to crime and deviance, with links to [the UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

This unit fits with the following UN Sustainable Development Goal:

- 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions: through discussing the processes for crime control and punishment, and exploring the impact of crime on victims, making reference to institutions involved in the justice system

Delivery of unit

This unit is in the 'named social sciences' section of HNC Social Sciences. You can deliver it as part of the group award or as a stand-alone unit.

It is one of two Criminology units within HNC Social Sciences. This unit works well alongside Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts.

The overall unit delivery time is a notional 80 hours of contact time for delivery and assessment. We expect learners to commit a further 80 hours of self-directed study.

The amount of time you allocate to each outcome is at your discretion. We suggest the following distribution of time, including assessment:

Outcome 1 — Apply criminological theories, concepts and evidence to a related topic (60 hours).

Outcome 2 — Evaluate key contributions of criminological theories and concepts to a related topic (20 hours).

Additional guidance

The guidance in this section is not mandatory.

Content and context for this unit

This unit aims to provide an interesting and engaging introduction to criminological theory and topics. You should introduce learners to theories, concepts and supporting evidence, and how they apply and contribute to understanding and explaining related topics. This should broaden and deepen learners' understanding of criminology.

The assessment model builds on the knowledge and understanding gained in Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts by applying criminological theories to specific topics. You can draw criminological theories from classical criminological theory, positivism, Marxism and social action theories such as symbolic interactionism, or from more contemporary criminological theories such as radical criminology, post-structuralism and feminism.

You should introduce learners to three topics from the list in the 'Evidence requirements' section, which is given again with more detail below, assessing only one of the topics. For each topic, you should make sure that you have at least three theories and three pieces of evidence. Choices can reflect your individual interests.

The topics are:

- ◆ victimology: the study of the relationship between a victim and an offender by exploring the causes and consequences of suffering
- ◆ global crime: crime in one country committed by people in another, which could include trafficking illegal substances, weapons and people; money laundering; sex tourism; and terrorism
- ◆ cyber crime: this could include identity theft (phishing); cyberterrorism; information warfare; spam; denial-of-service attacks; hacking and cracking; hacktivism; e-fraud; auction fraud; click fraud; scams; hate crimes; cyberbullying; illegal online gambling; extreme pornography; and viruses, worms and Trojan horses
- ◆ state crime: security forces' crimes, political crimes, economic crimes, and social and cultural crimes, committed with the co-operation of state agents
- ◆ policing and criminal justice: the ways in which policing has an impact on several different areas of academic, practitioner and public interest
- ◆ green crime and eco-crime: ecological and environmental harm, and related matters of speciesism and environmental justice and injustice; there is a common interest in the bio-physical and socio-economic consequences of different sources of threat and damage to the environment

Concepts covered depend on the topic chosen; for example, in green crime and eco-crime, concepts would include speciesism, bio-physical consequences or ecological harm.

Approaches to delivery

You should structure the learning and teaching programme to allow time for learners to develop meta-skills, and academic and other transferable skills. You should also allow for assessment practice within the notional hours suggested.

You can shape delivery and assessment to support learners to develop their academic skills, such as time management, multi-tasking ability, digital skills, essay writing skills and questioning ability. You can design formative and summative activities and assessments that encourage learners to practise the skills they need to progress to the next level of study.

Learners can benefit from a varied and active learning approach, where they engage in supported, independent and collaborative learning. You should encourage learners to take a participative and practical approach. Delivery methods could include:

- ◆ demonstration
- ◆ tutorial question and answer sessions
- ◆ debate
- ◆ individual and group research tasks
- ◆ presenting findings
- ◆ VLE
- ◆ digital tools and social media
- ◆ film and visual images
- ◆ close reading of sources

It would be useful for learners to have access to a laptop or other digital device.

You should deliver the unit in a learner-centred manner and always encourage a questioning approach. In doing so, you engage learners and encourage them to think like social scientists and be analytical and enquiring, rather than passively accepting facts. Developing essential transferable skills also helps learners access further study and employment.

You can support learners to develop skills that focus on explaining and evaluating and introduce them to a reasonably extensive body of knowledge.

The section on meta-skills provides further guidance on incorporating different skills into delivery and evidence.

Approaches to assessment

You can generate evidence using different types of assessment. The following are suggestions only. There may be other methods that would be more suitable for learners.

Learners can choose to submit their assessment in any format that meets each outcome. We recommend that you assess the unit holistically, as that is best to reduce the learners' assessment burden. You can decide to use a portfolio approach with two or more assessment tasks issued at different times in the unit delivery, if that is better for your learners.

The assessment could take the form of an open-book essay or a set of structured questions. Learners must provide a response of approximately 2,000 words, or an individual oral presentation or poster exhibition of 12 to 15 minutes in duration, or any other method that appropriately meets the evidence requirements. For example, learners could provide the evidence in the form of an individual blog or website, consisting of approximately 2,000 words.

You can choose to use a mix of methods across a group, as it may be more suitable for some learners to give a written response and for others to use an oral method. Whichever method learners choose, they must be able to access notes, textbooks and other materials, as it is an open-book assessment.

If learners choose an oral method, we recommend that you record this in some form or provide assessor notes on the presentation for external verification purposes. Learners must show evidence of meeting all evidence requirements. Ideally, they would complete oral presentations or poster exhibitions individually. If a group presentation is used, individual learners must show coverage of all evidence requirements. To do this, they may need to provide an essay or additional responses to structured questions. Learners should submit their work for marking on a date that you have provided or agreed with them.

Learners can combine a poster exhibition with an oral presentation. For example, a learner could produce a detailed poster outlining the topic, the three theories and the three pieces of evidence, and give more detail and an evaluation in an oral presentation. In this case, the total time across both outcomes and all evidence requirements would be 12 to 15 minutes. So, the learner would spend 12 to 15 minutes orally presenting the poster content.

Learners can use a range of sources to support theories in their assessment responses. These could include primary and secondary sources, and qualitative and quantitative sources. Learners are not limited to 'empirical evidence' in a narrow methodological sense. For example, documentary evidence, public inquiries and statistics help develop learners' critical thinking and writing skills. Sources of evidence can also include specific studies. Relevant evidence is any related and academically appropriate social scientific or criminological writing or communication.

You should make learners aware of the importance of good judgement in selecting appropriate academic sources. You should encourage them to choose academic sources rather than generic search engines, to enable them to be more confident of information and better equipped to progress to SCQF level 8 units.

If learners are creating a blog or website for their assessment, it should not be in the public domain. Rather, it should be on an intranet or private area of your VLE to reduce the likelihood of plagiarism.

Authenticating learners' work is essential. You could collect notes or visual presentation materials from learners as further evidence of meeting SCQF level 7. You should monitor learners' progress throughout to authenticate submitted work. Where possible, you should use plagiarism detection software.

It is important that learners' responses to the assessment are at SCQF level 7.

Opportunities for e-assessment

Assessment that is supported by information and communication technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software, may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit.

If your centre wants to use e-assessment, you must ensure that you apply the national standard to all evidence and that conditions of assessment (as specified in the evidence requirements) are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence.

Equality and inclusion

This unit is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should take into account the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page:

www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Information for learners

Criminology B: Applied Criminology (SCQF level 7)

This information explains:

- ◆ what the unit is about
- ◆ what you should know or be able to do before you start
- ◆ what you need to do during the unit
- ◆ opportunities for further learning and employment

Unit information

This unit introduces you to criminological topics, theories, concepts and evidence to broaden and deepen your understanding of criminology.

Before you start the unit, you should have good communication skills and an interest in criminology. It would also be helpful to have some basic digital skills.

On completing the unit, you are able to:

- 1 apply criminological theories, concepts and evidence to a related topic
- 2 evaluate key contributions of criminological theories and concepts to a related topic

You explore three key topics in criminology, although your assessment only covers one. The topics are chosen from:

- ◆ victimology
- ◆ global crime
- ◆ cyber crime
- ◆ state crime
- ◆ policing and criminal justice
- ◆ green crime and eco-crime

You are assessed using an open-book assessment covering both unit outcomes. This means that you have access to materials such as textbooks, notes and your virtual learning environment (VLE). You can give your assessment response in writing or orally. If your response is written, it must be approximately 2,000 words, and if it is oral, it must be between 12 and 15 minutes long.

During the unit, you develop academic skills such as time management, multi-tasking ability, digital skills, essay writing skills and questioning ability.

You also develop key literacies such as communication. You learn to convey complex ideas in a well-structured and coherent way, with references where appropriate. Your lecturer may also use oral presentations and discussions to help you improve your communication skills.

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You develop digital skills and computer literacy by using digital packages to complete assessments, and internet sources to research information.

The unit introduces you to Learning for Sustainability ideas, with links made to UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The unit can support learning in other related units, such as Criminology A: Introducing Theories and Concepts. You may be able to study HND Social Sciences or a degree programme in a related subject if you study the unit as part of HNC Social Sciences.

Meta-skills

Throughout the unit, you develop meta-skills to enhance your employability in the social sciences sector.

Meta-skills include self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

You develop these naturally as you take part in the range of learning and teaching activities and produce assessment responses. Improving meta-skills such as organising your time (self-management) and communicating ideas clearly (social intelligence) is useful for current and future study, and employment.

Administrative information

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Superclass: EE

History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Removed reference to the requirement to use holistic assessment in 'Evidence requirements', and in 'Information for learners'.◆ In 'Approaches to assessment' additional words that a holistic or portfolio approach can be used were added. Also, additional information allowing group presentations was added.	May 2024

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