

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Honours Degree programme in Criminology and Sociology**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2008**.

The aims of the programme are:

- to develop a sound and extensive knowledge base in criminology and sociology;
- to develop the research literacy of students including training in research techniques;
- to enable students to acquire the knowledge which will enable them to understand complex social problems;
- to foster the capacity for independent learning which is essential to continuing personal development;
- to equip students with key communications and IT skills;
- to deliver teaching within a flexible and progressive structure which will enable students to acquire knowledge, understanding and appropriate skills relevant to criminology and sociology;
- to provide a firm foundation for postgraduate study or research in criminology and sociology.

The programme is delivered in three stages, each of which comprises one year of full-time study during which the student must follow courses to the value of four units (one unit is equivalent to 30 national credits). It is characterised by strong progression and opportunities for specialisation through the programme. The programme also has a strong compulsory spine running into stages two and three, with research training in stage two informing the production of an independent dissertation in stage three.

Stage one is core and provides a broadly based introduction to the subject. Students take lecture-based courses up to the value of four full units, which encourage critical thought about the nature of social problems and social policy and the criminal justice system, and provide an introduction to sociology, criminology and the psychology of morality and behaviour. In stage two, the units strongly emphasise research methods. Students are introduced to a range of social research methods and the different ways in which knowledge about contemporary society and criminal behaviour can be gathered. They are also provided with an opportunity to engage with theoretical debates in both disciplines. One unit (or two half unit equivalents) in this stage is selected from a range of options.

In Stage three the core ideas acquired previously are developed through specialist units and a research or literature review-based dissertation. Of the four units in this stage only the dissertation is core. The remaining courses can be made up of three optional units or half units amounting to three full units. Students may choose to substitute up to one course unit for courses outside the Department. The strong research profile of staff is utilised in this stage to develop research literate undergraduates who are able to think critically about evidence.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are

therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff, particularly in the areas of: gender, risk and violence; race and probation; youth crime and the criminal justice system; policing; psychology of morality; childhood and families; race and mental health; health and illness; health care organisation. In general terms, the programmes provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- knowledge of key concepts and theoretical approaches that have been developed and are developing within criminology and sociology and the ability to critically evaluate their application;
- an understanding of the value of comparative analysis;
- an understanding of the relationship between individuals, groups and social institutions;
- an understanding of the role of culture in social life;
- an understanding of the social processes underpinning social change and the criminal justice system;
- an understanding of the nature and appropriate use of diverse research strategies and methods in developing criminological and sociological knowledge;
- an understanding of the relationship between sociological argument and evidence;
- an awareness of the distinctive character of both criminology and sociology in relation to other forms of understanding, such as the relation to other disciplines and to everyday explanations.

Skills and other attributes

- the ability to identify criminological and sociological problems, formulate questions and investigate them;
- the ability to appraise critically political and social processes of victimisation and criminalisation in the light of criminological theories;
- the ability to provide an analytical account of social diversity and inequality and their effects in relation to crime, victimisation and responses to crime and deviance;
- the ability to evaluate policing practices and developments in terms of changing values and relationships between individuals, groups, and public and private agencies in different locations;
- the ability to examine critically the values, practices and processes of governance, including human rights, that underpin youth and criminal justice and agencies which administer sentencing and alternatives;
- clear and concise presentation of complex information, both orally and in writing;*
- critical and independent thinking, including evaluation of oral and written evidence;*
- team working, negotiation and collaboration;*
- investigative skills, including literature and database searches;*
- reading skills: the ability to identify the most important arguments and evidence in a text and to record and/or to represent these;*
- research skills needed to plan and execute a project on a defined topic, present a coherent, reasoned argument in an oral presentation or an extended piece of written work;*
- information technology (including spreadsheets, databases, word processing, e-mail, and the world wide web);*
- computing skills in relation to both text and the presentation of basic research data;*
- independent and reflective learning;*
- good time management.*

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of lectures, seminars, small group tutorials, group work, coursework essays, oral presentations, guided independent research and guided independent study. Particular training in criminological and sociological skills is given in the skills and research training courses in the degree programme (compulsory courses SO2011, SO2012, CR3011), while other courses in the

programme also develop and assess these skills in specialist contexts. The College Computer Centre provides IT training and students are expected to meet basic standards in information technology.

Assessment is typically by formal examinations, coursework essays and other exercises, and the independent dissertation. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

Please note that the list of available courses offered is subject to change and not all courses run each year. A full list of courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department](#).

Single Honours Degree programmes

Stage one:

Students must take:

CR1011 Introduction to Criminology (½ unit) Core

CR1012 Psychology of Morality and Behaviour: Truth, Lies, Crime and Justice (½ unit) Core

CR1013 Criminal Justice System (1 unit) Core

SO1014 Introduction to Sociology (1 unit) Core

SO1015 Social Problems and Social Policy (1 unit) Core

Stage two:

Students must take:

SO2011 Research Methods for Social Scientists (½ unit) Core

SO2012 Data Analysis for Social Scientists (½ unit) Core

CR2013 Key Perspectives and Debates in Criminology (1 unit) Core

SO2014 Sociology of Contemporary Society (1 unit) Core

and choose options equal to the value of 1 full unit from a list of Stage two courses offered by the Department.

Stage three:

Students must take:

CR3011 Dissertation (1 unit) Core

plus choose options equal to the value of 3 full units from a list of Stage three courses offered by the Department.

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Progression and award requirements

The progression and award requirements are essentially the same across all Honours Degree programmes at Royal Holloway. Students must pass units to the value of at least three units on each stage of the programme. On some programmes there may be a requirement to pass specific courses in order to progress to the next stage, or to qualify for a particular degree title (see programme structure above). Students are considered for the award and classified on the basis of a weighted average. This is calculated from marks gained in courses taken in stages two and three, and gives twice the weighting to marks gained in stage three. In order to qualify for the award, students must gain a weighted average of at least 35%.

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Student support and guidance

- Personal Advisors: All students are allocated a personal tutor who meets with them regularly through the programme. The advisors role is to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues.
- The Academic Co-ordinator, course leaders, faculty administrators and Departmental Educational Support Officer provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All staff available and accessible through dedicated office hours system.

- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- Detailed student handbook and course resources available on Moodle.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College libraries and Computer Centre.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Adviser.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre, Students' Union and the Education Support Office for students with special needs.

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Admission requirements

The Department's standard conditional offer is available on the Course Catalogue web page. However, the Department also has considerable flexibility in its admissions and offers policy and strongly encourages applications from non-standard applicants. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. It may also be helpful to contact the Admissions Office for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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Further learning and career opportunities

As well as providing a firm foundation for postgraduate study and research in criminology and sociology, the degree programme will provide students with skills that are transferable to a wide variety of employment opportunities. The programme forms an excellent basis for a career in criminal justice agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service, police, probation service, youth custody and the prison service. It also equips students for careers in the voluntary sector, local government, the civil service and the private sector, including work in the media. The Department also offers a variety of Masters Programmes and more information can be obtained from the [Department](#). For more details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. 45% of the Department's research profile is of 3* and 4* standard.

Departmental systems for monitoring and assessing quality include course and Departmental student evaluation questionnaires, staff-student committees, peer evaluation of teaching, the monitoring of curricula provision through the Departmental Teaching Committee, and annual review reports, including reports from visiting examiners.

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List of programmes

The programme is taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and lead to awards of the University of London. Programmes in Criminology and Sociology are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The QAA subject benchmark statements in Criminology and in Sociology describe the general features which one might expect from Honours Degree programmes in the subject, and can therefore be used as a point of reference when reading this document (see www.qaa.ac.uk). UCAS codes are given in parentheses (see www.ucas.ac.uk).

Single Honours Degree programmes in Criminology and Sociology

BSc Criminology and Sociology (LM39)

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