

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	<b>MSc Criminology</b> <i>Pathway exit awards</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MSc Criminology (Criminology and Criminal Justice)</li> <li>- MSc Criminology (Gender, Sexuality and Criminal Justice),</li> <li>- MSc Criminology (Race, Crime and Justice)</li> <li>- MSc Criminology (Global Criminology)</li> </ul> (Level 7)
Name and title of interim exit qualification(s)	Postgraduate Diploma Criminology Postgraduate Certificate Criminology
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	School of Social Sciences (home); Law School
Location of delivery	Central London, online
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 year) September or January
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	Not applicable
<a href="#">QAA subject benchmark group(s)</a> <a href="#">Higher Education Credit Framework for England</a>	Criminology
Birkbeck Course Code	TMSCRIIP_C on campus route TMSCRIMX_C flexible route TMSCRION_C online route TMSCRYJN_C January start route
HECoS Code	100483 100484
Start date of programme	October 2012
Date of programme approval	January 2012
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2022
Valid for academic entry year	<b>2024-25</b>
Programme Director	Tanya Serisier
Date of last revision to document	05/04/24

## Admissions requirements

Generally for entry to our postgraduate programmes, the following is required:

- 2:2 honours degree in the humanities, social sciences or law. Degrees from overseas institutions must be equivalent to a second-class honours degree. Other relevant qualifications and appropriate professional experience and training are welcome.

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

## Course aims

This programme offers unique insights into crime, punishment and justice in today's world. It explores both cutting-edge criminological theory and current real-world phenomena related to crime and punishment. The programme provides a multidisciplinary platform for students to engage with the complexity of contemporary criminology, understand and critically assess the complexity of political, economic, social and cultural forces that affect crime and its control.

Students will be introduced to key theoretical debates that underpin understanding of the relationship between global, national and local questions of crime and punishment as well as race, gender, sexuality and migration. The diversity of the pathway options available aims to encourage students to think broadly and innovatively about questions of crime, punishment and the criminal justice system. Students will also learn about a range of research methods that are used to explore such questions.

The course will appeal to those with a keen interest in crime and criminal behaviour, as well as those seeking to develop a deeper appreciation and critical understanding of the key issues that currently play a major role in influencing criminal justice. It will also appeal to those who are seeking advanced knowledge and understanding of contemporary criminological theory and research methods, as well as those who wish to pursue a substantial research project in an area that is of interest to them. The programme enables students to grapple with critical questions about contemporary debates in criminology well as wider issues of violence, harm, inequality and social justice.

## Distinctive Features

The structure of teaching is designed for students who need to balance study with paid work, family or other commitments but desire to study in an environment led by academic staff with extensive research expertise and publications in the field of study. Key features include:

- Classes are standardly taught between 6pm and 9pm, Monday –Thursday
- This programme is offered as part of the Birkbeck Flexible Masters, meaning you can choose to study with us on online, on campus, or a combination of the two.
- The programme is designed so full-time students can arrange their timetable to study two evenings a week. Part-time students can arrange their timetable to study one evening per week.
- Students can choose from a wide range of optional modules across various topics, led by staff teaching their research specialism.
- Students can attend specialist research seminars, such as the *Criminology Seminar Series* and the *Race and Justice Seminar Series*, which feature national and

international scholars speaking to current issues and path-breaking interdisciplinary research.

- There are opportunities for students to have their research projects supervised by researchers who work at *The Institute for Crime & Justice Policy Research*, which is also home to the *World Prison Brief*.
- You will be taught by staff who are part of a proud tradition of critical scholarship in criminology and criminal justice, who address issues of crime through power and inequality, and are led by principles of social and racial justice.
- You can look forward to a stimulating learning environment, learning alongside students with diverse backgrounds and professional experiences.

## Course structure

This MSc programme is for students who wish to pursue advanced criminological study. The programme provides an interdisciplinary platform from which students will engage with the complexity of contemporary criminology, understand and critically assess the range of political, economic, social and cultural forces that affect crime and its control.

The pathway structure enables students to specialise in:

1. Criminology and Criminal Justice
2. Gender, Sexuality and Criminal Justice
3. Race, Crime and Justice
4. Global Criminology

All students are required to take the following compulsory modules:

- a) Research Methods in Criminology (30 credits)
  - b) Masters Research Project (Criminology) (30 credits)
- Students are required to choose a topic for the research project that reflects their chosen pathway.

All students are also required to take:

- c) A compulsory theoretical module designated for their chosen pathway (30 credits)
- d) One pathway-specific option (from a list of designated options) (30 credits)
- e) Two options (any option offered in law and criminology) (60 credits)

There is an extensive list of optional modules to choose from. The range of options available each year will vary but an indicative list includes:

- Critical Methods in Law & Society Research
- Drugs, Crime and Culture
- Equality & the Law
- Healthcare and Human Rights
- Influencing Public Policy
- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice
- Law, Post-Colonialism & Political Economy
- Policing, Race & Justice
- Psychology of Crime and Law
- Regulating Sex and Sexuality
- Youth Justice

When choosing options, students are encouraged to spread out their modules to achieve a manageable workload. Full-time students are advised to take no more than 90 credits per term. Part-time students are advised to take no more than 60 credits per term.

Schedules will be organised to enable student to choose options that will keep to 2 nights /week for full-time study and 1 night per week for part-time study. However, to access the full range of options, some selections may result in additional nights per week.

### **Pathway Details:**

Students apply to the MSc Criminology, and then depending on their choice of options as outlined on the pathways below are awarded an **MSc Criminology (Criminology & Criminal Justice)**, **MSc Criminology (Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice)**, **MSc Criminology (Race, Crime & Justice)** or **MSc Criminology (Global Criminology)** on successful completion of their programme.

Details of the theoretical compulsory module and pathway specific options for each pathway are as follows:

#### **Pathway 1: Criminology & Criminal Justice**

Compulsory Theoretical Module: Contemporary Criminological Theory

Pathway specific options are:

- Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice
- Global Perspectives on Crime Control
- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice
- Policing, Race & Justice
- Youth Justice

#### **Pathway 2: Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice**

Compulsory Theoretical Module: Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice

Pathway specific options:

- Regulating Sex and Sexuality
- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice
- Influencing Public Policy
- Selected modules from the MSc in Gender Sexuality and Culture, such as Theorising Gender

#### **Pathway 3: Race, Crime & Justice**

Compulsory Theoretical Module: Race, Crime and Justice

Pathway specific options:

- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice
- Policing, Race & Ethnicity
- Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice

#### **Pathway 4: Global Criminology**

Compulsory Theoretical: Global Perspectives on Crime Control

Pathway specific options:

- Issues in International Law and Human Rights
- Contemporary Criminological Theory
- Youth Justice

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
<b>Full-time – 1 year</b>					
7	LACN021S7	Contemporary Criminological Theory (Pathway 1)	30	Comp	T1
	LADD027S7	Gender, Sexuality and Criminal Justice (Pathway 2)			
	LACN014S7	Race, Crime and Justice (Pathway 3)			
	LALA149S7	Global Perspectives on Crime Control (Pathway 4)			
7	LALA173S7	Research Methods in Criminology	30	Comp	T2
7	LACN022S7	Masters Research Project	30	Comp	T3
7		Option 1: Pathway specific option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7		Option 2: Any option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7		Option 3: Any option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
<b>Part-time- 2 years</b>					
<b>Year 1</b>					
7	LACN021S7	Contemporary Criminological Theory (Pathway 1)	30	Comp	T1
	LADD027S7	Gender, Sexuality and Criminal Justice (Pathway 2)			
	LACN014S7	Race, Crime and Justice (Pathway 3)			
	LALA149S7	Global Perspectives on Crime Control (Pathway 4)			
7	LALA173S7	Research Methods in Criminology	30	Comp	T2
		Option 1: Pathway specific option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
<b>Year 2</b>					
7	LACN022S7	Masters Research Project	30	Comp	T3
7		Option 2: Any option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7		Option 3: Any option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3

Note: Students who complete sufficient compulsory modules and options but have not completed the specific pathway requirements may be eligible to graduate with a general **MSc Criminology**.

*Core: Module must be taken and passed by student*

*Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)*

*Option: Student can choose to take this module*

**Pathway 1: MSc Criminology (Criminology and Criminal Justice)**

	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>
Year 1	Contemporary Criminological Theory (L7, 30 credits)	Research Methods in Criminology (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)
Year 1 (FT) or Year 2 (PT)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Masters Research Project (L7, 30 credits)

At least one of your options must be pathway specific. On the Criminology & Criminal Justice pathway, this includes any of the following:

- Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice\*
- Global Perspectives on Crime Control\*
- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice\*
- Policing, Race & Justice
- Youth Justice\*

**Pathway 2: MSc Criminology (Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice)**

	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>
Year 1	Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice (L7, 30 credits)	Research Methods in Criminology (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)
Year 1 (FT) or Year 2 (PT)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Masters Research Project (L7, 30 credits)

At least one of your options must be pathway specific. On the Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice pathway, this includes any of the following:

- Regulating Sex and Sexuality
- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice
- Influencing Public Policy \*
- Selected modules from the MSc in Gender Sexuality and Culture, such as Theorising Gender

**Pathway 3: MSc Criminology (Race, Crime & Justice)**

	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>
Year 1	Race, Crime & Justice (L7, 30 credits)	Research Methods in Criminology (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)
Year 1 (FT) or Year 2 (PT)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Masters Research Project (L7, 30 credits)

At least one of your options must be pathway specific. On the Race, Crime & Justice pathway, this includes any of the following:

- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice
- Policing, Race & Ethnicity
- Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice\*

<b>Pathway 4: MSc Criminology (Global Criminology)</b>			
	<b>Term 1</b>	<b>Term 2</b>	<b>Term 3</b>
Year 1	Global Perspectives on Crime Control (L7, 30 credits)	Research Methods in Criminology (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)
Year 1 (FT) or Year 2 (PT)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Option (L7, 30 credits)	Masters Research Project (L7, 30 credits)

At least one of your options must be pathway specific. On the Global Criminology pathway, this includes any of the following modules:

- Issues in International Law and Human Rights
- Contemporary Criminological Theory
- Youth Justice\*

<b>Indicative List of Options Modules (note the range of options available each year will vary)</b>			
<b>Level</b>	<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
7	LALW065S7	Critical Research Masterclass	30
7	LACN021S7	Contemporary Criminological Theory	30
7	LADD059S7	Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice* ( <i>expected as hyflex – online and in-person</i> )	30
7	LALA139S7	Drugs, Crime and Culture	30
7	LALA096S7	Equality and the Law	30
7	LADD027S7	Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice*	30
7	LALA149S7	Global Perspectives on Crime and Crime Control*	30
7	LADD029S7	Healthcare and Human Rights	30
7	LADD005S7	History and Philosophy of Human Rights	30
7	LACN013S7	Influencing Public Policy*	30
7	LADD028S7	Issues in International Law and Human Rights	30
7	LACN026S7	Intersectionality & Criminal Justice*	30
7	LADD071S7	Law, Post-Colonialism & Political Economy	30
7	LACN025S7	Policing, Race & Justice	30
7	LALA087S7	Psychology of Crime and Law*	30
7	LACN013S7	Race, Crime and Justice*	30
7	LACN019S7	Regulating Sex and Sexuality	30
7	LALA078S7	Youth Justice*	30

\*Options marked with a star are expected to be offered as hyflex in 2024/5 – online and in-person

### How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into six 30-credit modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures (pre-recorded) and seminars. Lectures are designed to provide you with an outline or overview of the topic, to engage you with the material and direct you to other resources. They are a springboard for your own learning. Seminars are group sessions where you will be asked to contribute to discussion or group work around the topic, with material set in advance for which you need to prepare.

Most modules are offered in-person and online, with the remainder offered online only.

Students are also able to attend the *Criminology Seminar Series* and the *Race & Justice Seminar Series* (3 to 4 events per term on Thursday evenings). Students are encouraged to engage in a range of other School of Law events and workshops.

### **How we will assess you**

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment:

- Essays, short written exercises, oral presentations, group projects, case studies, reflective analysis and an extended independent research project.

### **Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)**

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Critically understand key thematic and methodological issues involved in criminological analysis;
- Understand and critically assess the complexity of political, economic, social and cultural forces that affect crime and its control;
- Be familiar with and be able to critically analyse the key contemporary theoretical approaches being used to design crime policy and criminal justice innovations
- Demonstrate an ability to identify and assess the political dimensions of current debates and theories accounting for variation in trends in crime and punishment;
- Demonstrate an ability to identify and assess the importance of different levels of analysis to explanations of trends in crime and punishment;
- Demonstrate a nuanced understanding of the practical complexity of the relationship between national and international political, social and economic pressures on one hand, and crime and crime control, on the other;
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to undertaking independent research and/or advanced scholarship in criminology
- Be able to prepare a large, complex yet innovative Research Project submission of 8,000 to 10,000 words on a topic related to the chosen pathway of study
- Possess advanced research and analytical skills, critical reading and discussion skills, appropriate referencing skills, clear and effective writing skills, and the ability to engage constructively with peers.
- Demonstrate a systemic understanding of knowledge, and critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights at the forefront of the chosen subject pathway



## **Careers and further study**

Postgraduate studies in criminology offer a range of career opportunities, including: a pathway to promotion within an existing career, a transition into a new career, or pursuit of a specialist knowledge areas.

You will find MSc Criminology graduates in the following kinds of roles:

- Policy Development & Research
- Public Administration
- Police, Probation and Security Services
- Criminal Case Review Management
- Legal Services
- Victim Support Services
- Welfare, Counselling and Well-Being Services
- Social Work, Youth Work and Community Support
- Public / Local Government Administration
- Charity /Voluntary Sector Work
- Community Campaigner or Advocate
- Community Educator
- Journalism

Birkbeck's MSc Criminology students will graduate with a range of transferrable skills, such as:

- Independent research and evaluation
- Policy analysis
- Organising and planning
- Team work and leadership
- High-level oral and written communication skills
- Critical problem solving and critical thinking
- Working to deadlines
- Advanced oral presentation skills
- Critical argumentation skills

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

## **Academic regulations and course management**

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a programme handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

## **Support for your study**

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services.](#) This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

### **Quality and standards at Birkbeck**

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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