

Forensic Science Awards



<http://helpingpsychology.com/forensic-psychology-is>

BSc Forensic Science and Criminology

STUDENT HANDBOOK

PART 1

2011

Intentionally blank

Welcome

My name is David Flatman-Fairs and I am the Award Leader for awards in Forensic Science. Let me take the opportunity to welcome you to Staffordshire University and especially to Forensic Science. For many of you this will be a big step in your life taking you away from home for the first prolonged time or, for the mature student, redirecting yourself. Whatever the reason, I hope you spend a happy and successful three years at the University studying for your undergraduate degree.

The purpose of this student handbook (part 1) is to provide understandable information relatively free from jargon about the course you are studying. You will need to use it in conjunction with the Faculty of Science Student Handbook (part 2) – http://www.staffs.ac.uk/assets/FacultyStudentHandbook0910_tcm44-23631.pdf – which gives information about the faculty and university policies on a range of topics. Other useful information is also provided through pages of the University Website (homepage: www.staffs.ac.uk). This handbook will cover all three years of all courses in the Forensic Field so please put it in a safe place and refer to it as and when required. I have tried to make the handbook succinct but still remain informative, and I would appreciate any comments about it (things not included or things that might be excluded). You will need to use this handbook in conjunction with information from the other subject area.

Awards at Staffordshire University (as with most universities) are modular and each module is rated with credits based on 15 credits per single module. Modules are built around learning outcomes and you will achieve specific outcomes for your award at each level of your award. (Level 4 (first year), level 5 (second year) and level 6 (third year).

Details about the award structures, learning outcomes and assessment type for are listed within the following pages

For each individual module you study, you will be provided with a handbook which will provide you with more specific information about the content of the module (including its specific learning outcomes) and you should refer to this for specific requirements for that module.

Enjoy!

David Flatman-Fairs
d.p.flatman-fairs@staffs.ac.uk
Tel: +44 1782 294609

Intentionally blank

Contents

Section 1: Who's Who	6
Section 2: Forensic Science and Criminology at Staffordshire University	
Rational for the Award	7
Aims	7
Award Structure – Forensic Science and Criminology	8
Award Structure – Ordinary (Pass) degree	10
Learning outcomes	11
Teaching Learning and Assessment	16
Attempting ALL Assessments	18
Summative Assessment Feedback Return Period	18
Section 3: Departmental Student Support	
Personal Tutor	19
Academic Support Time	19
Award leader	19
Disability Support	19
Notice Boards/E-mail	19
Section 4: Additional Useful Information	
Locating Rooms	20
Finding Module Descriptors	20
Post	20

Section 1: Who's Who

- **Subject Leader and Award Leaders**

Individual Subject Areas are managed by a Subject Management Team (SMT). Your 'Subject' leader is Dr Andrew Jackson, (S324A, ext 4579) a.r.jackson@staffs.ac.uk, who is always an important point of contact for any information relating to your programme of academic work at Staffordshire University.

As mentioned in the welcome your award leader is David Flatman-Fairs (S321B, ext. 4609), d.p.flatman-fairs@staffs.ac.uk, he is responsible for the 'day to day' organisation and management of your award.

Additionally two people you might need to consult are Dave Evans in Law (ext 4583, d.j.evans@staffs.ac.uk) and David Gatley in Art, Media and Design (ext 4780), d.a.gatley@staffs.ac.uk.

- **Forensics Staff Contact Details – including relevant members of Biology**

Forensics – Academic Staff

David Flatman-Fairs ¹	d.p.flatman-fairs@staffs.ac.uk	S321B	294609
John Cassella	j.p.cassella@staffs.ac.uk	S312	294434
Andrew Jackson ²	a.r.jackson@staffs.ac.uk	S326A	294579
Neil Lamont	n.a.lamont@staffs.ac.uk	S328	294098
Hilton Middleton	h.r.middleton@staffs.ac.uk	S310	294683
Andy Platt	a.platt@staffs.ac.uk	S314	294784
Dave Rogers	d.g.rogers@staffs.ac.uk	S310	294098
Julian Partridge	J.D.Partridge@staffs.ac.uk	S328	294098
Jodie Dunnett	J.C.Dunnett@staffs.ac.uk	S303	295746
Sarah Fieldhouse	s.j.fieldhouse@staffs.ac.uk	S310	295795
Claire Gwinnett	c.gwinnett@staffs.ac.uk	S310	295795
Laura Walton	l.m.walton@staffs.ac.uk	S303	295746
Jane Maclean	j.maclean@staffs.ac.uk	S328	294098
Phil Lee	P.Lee@staffs.ac.uk	S321A	294370
Karl Harrison	K.S.Harrison@staffs.ac.uk	S321A	294568
Ken Raper	K.Raper@staffs.ac.uk	S321A	294576
Caroline Study Colls	C.Sturdy-Colls@staffs.ac.uk	S310	295795

1.Award Leader

2.Subject Area Leader

Forensic - Technical Staff

Terry Barker	t.j.barker@staffs.ac.uk	S305	294575
Jayne Francis	j.e.francis@staffs.ac.uk	S325/327	294862
Paul Bailey	p.m.bailey@staffs.ac.uk	S325/327	294862
Sharon Williams	s.y.williams@staffs.ac.uk	S325/327	294862
Liz Deakin	e.m.deakin@staffs.ac.uk	S529	295737

Biology – Academic Staff

Paul Mitchell	p.mitchell@staffs.ac.uk	S411	294572
Sue Bird	s.j.bird@staffs.ac.uk	S409	294408
Steve Merry	s.merry@staffs.ac.uk	S503	294692
Harry Mountain	h.a.mountain@staffs.ac.uk	S413B	294702
Kevin Reiling	k.reiling@staffs.ac.uk	S413A	294746
Pete Gowland	p.c.gowland@staffs.ac.uk	S409	294581

Section 2: Forensic Science and Criminology at Staffordshire University

2.1 Rational for the Award

The context of the operation of forensic science is largely within the criminal justice system. Hence criminal law and sociological aspects of crime and criminal behaviour are interlinked with the scientific work of the forensic professional. Indeed, an understanding of criminology can enhance appreciation of the contribution which forensic science makes to the implementation of criminal justice. This award incorporates core scientific forensic methods, together with an understanding of criminal law and the sociological contexts of criminal behaviour to provide a coherent study programme.

Clearly some breadth of scientific study must be sacrificed to incorporate these complementary subjects. Although this narrows scientific expertise, it does not particularly limit choice of modules at level 6 where options across a range of forensic topics, professional practice, civil liberties and a variety of sociological perspectives on the subject, may be selected to match interests, aspirations and career plans. The ethos of this award is to produce graduates with a good range of specialist skills in forensic science, an understanding of criminology and well-developed analytical, communication and problem solving skills who are able to research and undertake a diverse range of tasks which incorporate both scientific and criminological issues.

2.2 Educational aims of Forensic Science and Criminology Award – terms in italics are explained in table 2.1

- To provide a coherent learning experience for the learner to acquire a broad knowledge and understanding of the scientific principles and techniques underpinning forensic science. (*KU, LE, EN, AN, SS1*)
- To train the student to become proficient in the documentation of, and collection and analysis of, evidence from simulated crime scene scenarios. (*KU, LE, PS, AP, SS1*)
- To enable the student to act the role of expert witness in presenting evidence in a mock courtroom. (*KU, AN, AP, CO, RE, SS1*)
- To develop transferable skills, especially in team working and in the communication and reporting of evidence in a fashion understandable to the general public. (*AP, CO, RE*)
- To develop research skills that the learner can utilise effectively to pursue independent work in a specified area within the disciplines of either forensic science or psychology or criminology. (*EN, PS, CO*)
- To gain the skills necessary for independent learning and for attaining responsibility for the learner's own career planning and development (*EN, AN, AP, RE*)
- To gain a strong foundation in theories and methods of contemporary criminology. (*KU, LE, AP, CO*)

- To develop the ability to employ critically sociological and legal methodologies, modes of thought and analysis. (*KU, LE, EN*)
- To provide the opportunity to specialise in either social aspects or legal aspects of criminology (*KU, AP, RE*)

2.3 Award Structure

- **Forensic Science and Criminology** - further details at and links from:
<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/schools/sciences/forensic/index.php>

This named route contains modules from Forensic Science, Law and Social Science. The structure has 45 credits from of Forensics, which is tailored more to the crime scene processing elements and criminalistic methods. The Criminology element at each level mainly consists of 30 credits from Law and 15 credits from Social Sciences (see figure 3.1). This course provides a lot of flexibility and allows you to easily pick up additional modules to provide either a Forensic or Criminology emphasis if you desire. For example to gain a 'biological' emphasis you could opt for '*Biological Principles for Forensic Science*' at level 4, '*DNA Profiling and Forensic Biology*' at level 4 and '*Forensic Toxicology*' and '*Advanced DNA Profiling*' at level 5. Moreover, there is the opportunity to pick 30 credits at each level of general option modules (A listing of university-wide general options can be found at: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/modules/options/>), enabling you to develop a further string to your education say, in business or computing.

2.3.1 Accreditation

This award is accredited by the Forensic Science Society and requires no additional module choices to meet the accreditation requirements

Figure 2.1 BSc (Hons) Forensic Science and Criminology

Level 4

SHS82106-4 Introduction to Forensic Science (30 credits)	SHS82105-4 Crime Scene Documentation (15 credits) or SHS82102-4 Crime Scene Documentation (Foundation)	LWU10013-4 Criminal Law (30 credits)	AM25058-4 Crime and Deviance (15 credits)
	General Credit Module (15 credits)		General Credit Module (15 credits)

Level 5

SHS82201-5 Methods of Crime Detection (30 credits)	General Credit Module (15 credits)	LWU10061-5 Criminology (30 credits)	Specific Option in Social Science (15 credits)
	SHS82213-5 Research and Professional Skills (15 credits)		General Credit Module (15 credits)

Level 6

SHS82301-6 Investigating and Reporting Crime Scenes (30 credits)	Subject Specific Option (15 credits)	Subject Specific Module (Law or Social Sciences) (15 credits)	Subject Specific Module (Law or Social Sciences) (15 credits)
	General Credit Module (15 credits)	Subject Specific Module (Law or Social Sciences) (15 credits)	General Credit Module (15 credits)

Current Forensics options may include (available as Specific or General Credit Module):

- Level 4: *Basic Chemical Principles; Periodicity**; *Chemical Principles for Forensic Science (30 credits); Biological Principles for Forensic Science (30 credits); Introduction to Policing (30 credits)*
- Level 5: *Experimental Chemistry**; *Methods of Chemical Analysis (30 credits); DNA-profiling and Forensic Biology (30 credits); Crime and Dishonesty (30 credits)*
- Level 6: *Independent Project (30 credits); Analysis and Investigation of TEREFF Incidents; Environmental Forensics; Forensic Toxicology; Advanced DNA-profiling; Techniques in the Identification of Human Remains*

Current Social Science options may include (available as Specific or General Credit Module):

- Level 4: *Crime and Deviance 2*
- Level 5: *Transforming the Self and Society; Crime, Justice and Punishment; An Anthropology of Evil: Deviance, Conformity, Morality and Responsibility; Deviance, Dissidence and Divisions;*
- Level 6: *Refugees and Immigrants; Doing Drugs: Policing Illegal Drug Use; Forensic Anthropology: Criminal Investigations and Police Work; Transnational Organised Crime; The War on Terror Explained*

Current Law options may include (available as Specific or General Credit Module):

- Level 6: *Crime Prevention; Criminal Justice (30 credits); Law of Evidence (30 credits); Law Dissertation (30 credits)*

Law options exist for levels 1 & 2 and can be found in University General Option Directory

*These modules will run every other year (i.e. 2011/12 then 2013/14 then 2015/16)

Figure 2.2 Ordinary (Pass) Degree Award

The award offers a BSc Degree without honours (pass degree). In this award, the learning outcomes are achieved at Intermediate Level, but not all outcomes are achieved at Honours Level. The structure for the BSc Degree is shown below.

SHS82301-6 Investigating and Reporting Crime Scenes (30 Credits)	Criminology Specific option (15 Credits)
	Core or Specific Option Module (15 Credits)

2.4 Learning outcomes

The University has identified a set of general learning outcomes which any student can expect to achieve as a result of studying at the University. These were identified by the University from the national framework for Higher Education Qualifications, and these types of learning outcome are common to all degrees across the university, and to all levels of study. They vary in specific content depending on programme area and level of study. As you progress through the levels of the award, the range of material you will have encountered, and your expertise in those areas will increase. These general learning outcomes are as follows:

- **Knowledge and Understanding.** You will know and understand a body of knowledge about the field.
- **Learning.** You will be able to distinguish different approaches within the field and to participate in debates about the validity of these approaches.
- **Enquiry.** You will be aware of a range of research methods, of the ethical considerations associated with them, and be able to use these methods, supported by a range of information sources.
- **Analysis.** You will be able to analyse and evaluate theories and concepts in the field and to use different research methods for this purpose.
- **Problem Solving.** You will be able to analyse problems in terms of your field of study and to carry out research designed to solve those problems.
- **Communication.** You will be able to communicate in a range of different ways about ideas in the field, using conceptual analysis and empirical evidence, and to use information technology appropriately (e.g. word processors and statistical software) to do so.
- **Application.** You will be able to apply your knowledge and understanding of the field to real life issues using the skills itemised above.
- **Reflection.** You will be able to work independently and responsibly in the field, and have acquired general skills valued in employment or future learning.

In the following section we explain the specific form these learning outcomes will take as you proceed through the different levels of your Forensic Science degree. In addition to the University identified eight learning outcomes there is a 'subject specific' learning outcome which is individual to your degree, this has been included on the following pages too.

2.4.1 Learning Outcomes by Level

Table 2.1 on the following page specifies the skills that we expect you to develop at each level of study. These skills will initially be developed in core modules, and then further refined according to the choice of modules that you make.

Table 3.1 Award Outcomes for BSc (Hons) Forensic Science and Criminology

	<i>Level 4 (Certificate)</i>	<i>Level 5 (Diploma)</i>	<i>Level 6 (Honours)</i>
Subject Specific	Understand the importance of the continuity, preservation and non-contamination of evidence during collection.	Develop skills to operate specialised equipment for analysing evidence from crime scenes. Evaluate with understanding of their value and limitations in the courtroom.	Demonstrate an in depth understanding of continuity, preservation and non-contamination of evidence during collection and analysis. Critically appraise results in the production of expert witness reports and presentation in the courtroom.
Knowledge & Understanding	Demonstrate a broadly based knowledge of the underlying forensic, social and legal concepts and principles.	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the appropriate concepts and their application to analysis of physical evidence and to social and legal issues.	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of key aspects, at least some of which lies at the forefront of forensic science and criminology. Develop a detailed understanding in specialist chosen areas of criminology.
Learning	Develop an initial understanding of the diversity of learning processes within forensic science, social science and law. Produce simple arguments applying to particular approaches and perspectives.	Develop an understanding of the importance of independent learning and group working and adopt an appropriate learning strategy for the task in hand. Interpret evidence for or against perspectives and approaches.	Demonstrate a capacity to drive and sustain independent learning and to evaluate individual contributions to team working. Reflect, evaluate and debate issues in specialist chosen areas in criminology and forensic science.
Enquiry	Collect, present, evaluate and interpret quantitative data accrued through practical exercises and qualitative data provided in classes or acquired from the literature. Engage with simple directed research using appropriate criminological strategies.	Demonstrate a critical knowledge of the main methods of enquiry for investigating forensic, legal and sociological issues.	Select, deploy and adapt techniques and methodologies to carry out a team project in crime scene investigation and analysis.

	<i>Level 4 (Certificate)</i>	<i>Level 5 (Diploma)</i>	<i>Level 6 (Honours)</i>
Analysis	Analyse, evaluate and interpret data and information with reference to fundamental concepts and principles of sociological, legal and forensic knowledge.	Use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake analysis of forensic and criminological data and information	Demonstrate and comment on current research or equivalent advanced scholarship and make judgement to its value in crime scene investigation and sociological and legal situations.
Problem Solving	Demonstrate a basic understanding of different approaches to problem solving in forensic science, social science and law. Express questions in an amenable form and suggest different approaches to solutions.	Critically evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving forensic and criminological problems and design solutions to them. Construct appropriate research questions to enable investigation of issues.	Devise, refine and apply research questions to achieve a critical understanding of issues of importance in crime scene investigation and criminological issues.
Communication	Demonstrate competence and confidence in a range of communication media to express forensic, sociological and legal information in a structured and coherent manner.	Communicate effectively forensic and criminological-related information and arguments in a variety of different contexts and scenarios.	Demonstrate an advanced standard of competence in a range of communication skills especially in presenting scientific data and information in a fashion understandable to the general public.
Application	Undertake further training and new skills in the planning, photographing and documenting of crime scenes. Use perspectives and principles to understand some real life issues.	Develop a capacity to apply forensic, social and legal concepts, principles and skills in various contexts / scenarios to construct and present appropriate informed arguments and positions. Apply knowledge of forensic and criminology matters in a context outside that in which they were first studied.	Apply knowledge and skills learned to review, consolidate and extend further an advanced understanding of forensic science and criminology to construct, articulate and defend advanced intellectual arguments and positions.
Reflection	Undertake self-appraisal of learning achievements; and understand the need / value of a reflective approach to pastoral and intellectual development.	Refine and develop critical reflective skills in relation to personal qualities and transferable skills. Exercise personal responsibility in developing competencies to match academic and / or vocational aspirations.	Manage learning, exercise initiative and personal responsibility, and demonstrate the learning abilities, qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment or further academic or professional training.

Table 2.2: BSc Forensic Science and Criminology Ordinary Degree Level 6 Outcomes

	<i>BSc Forensic Science & Criminology</i>
Subject Specific	Demonstrate an in depth understanding of continuity, preservation and non-contamination of evidence during collection and analysis, and critically appraise the results in the production of expert witness reports and presentation in the courtroom.
Subject Specific	
Knowledge & Understanding	Develop a detailed understanding in specialist chosen areas of criminology.
Learning	Demonstrate a capacity to evaluate individual contributions to team working. Reflect, evaluate and debate issues in specialist chosen areas in criminology.
Enquiry	Select, deploy and adapt techniques and methodologies to carry out a team project in crime scene investigation and analysis.
Analysis	Comment on the value of current research or equivalent advanced in crime scene investigations.
Problem Solving	Achieve a critical understanding of issues of importance in crime scene investigation and criminological issues.
Communication	Demonstrate an advanced standard of competence in a range of communication skills especially in presenting scientific data and information in a fashion understandable to the general public.
Application	Apply knowledge and skills learned to review and consolidate understanding.
Reflection	Manage learning, exercise initiative and personal responsibility, and demonstrate the learning abilities, qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment or further academic or professional training.

Relationship of Core Modules on BSc (Hons) Forensic Science and Criminology award to Staffordshire University Learning Outcomes

			University Learning Outcomes								
			KU	LE	EN	AN	PS	AP	CO	RE	SS 1
LEVEL 4	Core	Introduction to Forensic Science	X	X			X		X	X	X
		Criminal Law	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
		Crime Scene Documentation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
		Crime and Deviance	X	X	X					X	
LEVEL 5	Core	Methods of Crime Detection	X		X	X	X	X			X
		Criminology	X		X	X		X	X	X	
		Research and Professional Skills		X		X	X		X	X	
LEVEL 6	Core	Investigating and Reporting Crime Scenes		X	X	X	X		X	X	X

KEY:

- KU Knowledge and Understanding
- LE Learning
- EN Enquiry
- AN Analysis
- PS Problem Solving
- AP Application
- CO Communication
- RE Reflection
- SS1 Subject Specific 1

The table above shows the relationship between core modules on the award and the Staffordshire University learning outcomes. Option modules offer additional learning outcomes, depending on choice of option

Additionally below are listed the learning outcomes for each of the level 6 specific forensic science options (which you must choose at least one of) to show how their learning outcomes map to the university eights – more specifically to show that they all contain ‘Knowledge and Understanding’ and ‘Application’.

			University Learning Outcomes							
			KU	LE	EN	AN	PS	AP	CO	RE
LEVEL 6	Forensic Science Specific Options	Independent Project (forensics)	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
		Analysis and Investigation of TEREFF Incidents	X	X	X	X		X		X
		Environmental Forensics	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Forensic Toxicology	X			X	X	X		
		Advanced DNA Profiling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Techniques in the Identification of Human Remains	X			X		X		

Section 2.5 Learning Teaching and Assessment

The award will be delivered by a variety of teaching and learning strategies, enabling you to develop their learning skills whilst addressing the indicative content and learning outcomes of a module. The strategies will range from the traditional whole group lectures, through smaller group work in practical, classes, crime scenes and case studies through to individual ones such as interviews, court room presentations and role play. Assessment will reflect the teaching and learning strategies used in a particular module.

At level 4, 45 credits from 'forensics' and 45 credits from law/social science out of 120 credits are core material with 30 credits being general option. At level 5, 45 credits from 'forensics' and 30 credits from law out of 120 credits are core, the remainder is made up of 15 credits of specific options from social science and 30 credits of general options. At level 6, 30 credits from 'forensics' are core, the other 90 credits consists of 15 credits specific options from 'forensics', 45 credits of specific options from law and/or social science and 30 credits of general options. This allows you to introduce some specialisation into your award

Table 2.2: Breakdown of Assessment per Module

Module Title	Code	CATS	Assessment	
			Exam	Cont
Introduction to Forensic Science	SHS82106-4	30	70	30
Crime Scene Documentation	SHS82105-4	15	-	40/30/30
Criminal Law	LWU10013-4	30	100	-
Crime and Deviance	AM25058-4	15	-	100
Methods of Crime Detection	SHS82201-5	30	50	50
Research and Professional Skills	SHS82213-5	15	-	40/40/20
Criminology	LWU10061-5	30	50	50
Investigating and Reporting Crime Scenes	SHS82301-6	30	-	50/30/20
Introduction to policing	SCS82125-4	30	50	50
Basic Chemical Principles	SHS82101-4	15	-	100
Periodicity	SHS82103-4	15	50	50
Chemical Principles for Forensic Science	SHS82100-4	30	50	50
Biological Principles for Forensic Science	SHS82107-4	30	15	35/50
Methods of Chemical Analysis	SHS82200-5	30	50	50
DNA Profiling and Forensic Biology	SHS82207-5	30	50	25/25
Experimental Chemistry	SHS82204-5	15	-	50/35/15
Crime and Dishonesty	SCS82216-5	30	100	-
Analysis and Investigation of TEREFF Incidents	SHS82312-6	15	100	-
Environmental Forensics	SHS82304-6	15	70	30
Forensic Toxicology	SHS82305-6	15	60	40
Advanced DNA Profiling	SHS82308-6	15	50	50
Independent Project	SHS82300-6	30	-	70/10/10/10
Techniques in the Identification of Human Remains	SCS82315-6	15	-	100

Shaded modules are specific options. Multiple entries in continuous assessment column indicates number and weighting of different elements of coursework

The following is a list of generic criteria which indicate what is required from your assessed work to achieve the grades listed. These criteria are applicable across all levels of your award BUT must be viewed in conjunction with the learning outcomes listed earlier (pages 11-12) for each of those levels.

- **First Class – 1st (Grade Point 13-15 or over 70%)**
You will demonstrate an excellent achievement of learning outcomes. Assignments are well argued and excellently organised. Work is academically excellent, evidencing perceptiveness, insight and demonstrating creativity and originality. There is evidence of excellent reading and systematic review.
- **Upper Second Class – 2i (Grade Point 10-12 or 60-69%)**
You will demonstrate a very good achievement of learning outcomes. Assignments are expressed cogently and lucidly. Work is of very good quality academically, evidencing well-focussed observations and the addressing of all of the obvious key questions. There is good evidence of reading and a thorough critical analysis of the available literature, leading to an output which may have potential for wider use.
- **Lower Second Class – 2ii (Grade Point 7- 9 or 50-59%)**
You will demonstrate a good achievement of learning outcomes. Assignments are expressed reasonably and coherently. Work is academically sound, evidencing focussed observations and acknowledging key questions. There is evidence of sound reading and thorough critical analysis of the available literature.
- **Third Class – 3rd (Grade point 4-6 or 40-49%)**
You demonstrate an adequate achievement of learning outcomes. Assignments have some coherency. Work is of reasonable academic quality, evidencing observations and acknowledging some key questions. There is evidence of some reading and engagement with the available literature.
- **Fail (Grade Point 1-3 or 0-39%)**
You demonstrate an unsatisfactory achievement of learning outcomes. Assignments are poorly expressed and incoherent. Work is of poor academic quality with little or no observations and no acknowledgement to key questions. There is no evidence of reading or engagement with available literature.

We normally report marks based on a grade point (Gp) system – however you may at times get percentages instead.

Therefore minimum pass mark = Gp4 (or 40%)

NB. As long as your overall module mark is Gp4+ you do not need to pass all elements of assessment to pass a module. However you **MUST** attempt all elements of assessment for a module or you will fail the module by default – even if your overall mark is a pass.

2.5.1 Attempting ALL Assessments

It is important that you attempt ALL assessments for all your modules. You should ensure that the appropriate coursework is submitted on time and required timed assessments (including exams, class-tests, presentations, vivas) are attended. **Your right to a second (referral) attempt at a failed assessment(s) will be conditional on whether you have or have not made a first attempt (unless a successful claim for extenuating circumstances has been made) at the assessment(s).** What does that mean? It means that in most cases, unless a successful claim for extenuation is made, students who have not attempted assessments will not be allowed a referral for the module, will therefore fail the module and if a core module, fail the award! **Attempting all assessments is therefore ESSENTIAL.**

This re-enforces the fact that it is always better **to submit a half-finished assignment than not submit anything or attempt an examination you are not confident about than not attend** – you may gain sufficient marks to pass the module or at least allow the possibility for compensation between modules (if allowed by your award).

If there are **extenuating circumstances** that prevent you from submitting / attending assessments then **ensure you gather evidence to support an extenuating claim.** Again, submitting a draft assignment by the required deadline is better than nothing and if the extenuation claim is successful a further assessment opportunity can always be offered. If you are unable to attend a timed-assessment due to an extenuating circumstance you should also **inform the Faculty at the earliest opportunity** and then make an extenuation claim.

2.5.2 Summative Assessment Feedback Return Period

You will receive feedback on your coursework and class test summative assessments normally within 20 working days following the coursework submission date or date of the class test. For some assessments the feedback period will be less than 20 working days. However, it may be the case that the 20 day rule for some assessments cannot be met for justified reasons (for example, modules on which a large number of students are enrolled). However, it is anticipated that this will apply to only a small number of modules on your award and, in those cases, the feedback return period will not exceed 25 days. The anticipated feedback return times for all assessments will be published in your Module handbooks.

In order to ensure that feedback is provided within 20 days, in some cases, the marks for your work will be provisional and will be subject to final ratification by the appropriate Assessment Board in due course.

The University hopes that you will also play your part by ensuring that you collect feedback from your module tutor as soon as it is available.

Section 3: Departmental Student Support

3.1 Personal tutor

You are assigned a personal tutor from during the first week of your degree and unless that person leaves the University or you request to change tutors (which can be done through the award or subject leader – see section 1) they will act as your personal tutor for the entirety of your degree. They are there to help with ‘life at university’ and act in a pastoral role offering advice on things such as claiming for extenuating circumstances. However they will also undertake/organise the Professional Development Portfolio tasks with you as you progress through the course. During the course they will request/require meetings with you periodically, but you can also request meeting with them at any time either by dropping by the office, e-mailing or phoning them. The personal tutor’s role is not that of academic support; please see below for details on how academic support is offered.

3.2 Academic Support Time

Your lecturers will also provided academic support for each of the modules you study during the course. To do this module lecturers will publish timetables on their office doors showing available ‘academic support’ slots. These timetables will be published the week before the availability shown e.g. timetables posted in week 4, shows week 5’s availability. It is advisable to book one of the available slots by writing your name in the space provided – **e-mail bookings will not be accepted** – otherwise you cannot guarantee to see a lecturer. You cannot expect to speak with lectures in their offices outside of the ‘academic support’ times on academic matters. This does not apply to personal tutees who will have allocated tutorial sessions and may approach their tutor at anytime in relation to pastoral matters (see above).

To compliment the personal academic support offered by the department, we will also provided computer based support in the form of ‘BlackBoard’ which is a virtual learning environment onto which lecture notes, announcements about tutorial sessions or assignments for modules and other useful information is placed. This can then be accessed by you locally, nationally or internationally.

3.3 Award Leader

Your award leader operates an ‘open door’ policy whereby you can contact them by any means (drop in, by phone, by e-mail etc.) to arrange to speak about personal issues, academic support, award matters or anything else.

3.4 Disability Support

Dr. Andy Platt is the department of Forensics and Crime Sciences disability support representative. If you have declared a disability on your application form (or do so at any time after starting your award) Andy will arrange a meeting with you to discuss your needs and requirements to supplement any support agreement the University publishes for you.

3.5 Notice Boards/E-mail

The only notice boards ‘forensics’ will make use of are those of 3rd floor Mellor Building, please make sure you check them regularly for announcements and group allocations. Please also check your university e-mail account regularly as it will be used by tutors to contact you.

NB. If your in-box is full it will ‘bounce’ e-mails and you may not receive important information.

Section 4: Additional Useful Information

4.1 Finding Rooms

The letter or letters at the start of the room number of the room you're trying to find relates to the building in which that room is located. Below is a list of letter codes with the appropriate building:

S = Mellor
LT = Ashley
LW = Law School
B or BG = Brindley
A or D = Cadman
GO = Cadman Court Yard
L = Flaxman
H = Henrion
LC = Trent

The first number of the after the letter(s) refers to the floor of that building on which the room can be found, therefore, 0 = Ground floor, 1 = 1st floor, 2 = 2nd floor etc.

The final two numbers relate to the room.

For example if you were trying to locate S315 you would go to the 3rd floor of the Mellor Building to find it.

4.2 Locating Module Descriptors

Should you wish to check the indicative content or assessment type for any module you can do so by following the instructions below:

Open University main page (www.staffs.ac.uk)
Choose: A-Z Index
Choose letter 'M'
Click 'Module Descriptors'
Select 'Faculty of Sciences'
Select 'Level 4' or type in 'module code' or 'module name' in appropriate search field
Select 'Show Modules'

4.2 Post

Unfortunately, the Faculty is only able to deal with internal mail for students. You should not give correspondents the Faculty's address because we cannot guarantee your receipt of anything that is sent you via Royal Mail. Always use your term or home address for any correspondence likely to come to you via snail mail from external contacts.

All post for students is received in the Faculty Office. It is then sorted and can be collected from the pigeonholes in S321, 3rd Floor in Mellor.

Tutors may also return assignments via the pigeonholes in this room, but *only* when specified

NB. Pigeonholes will be cleared of all mail at the end of July every year – it will not be possible to retrieve anything after this date since it will have been recycled.