BSc(Hons) Intelligence and Security

Why choose Staffordshire University to study for this BSc(Hons) Award?

This programme is accessible to all Armed Forces personnel who have completed Phase 3 intelligence training or its’ equivalent. Personnel from other backgrounds within the intelligence community may gain entry to the programme on successful completion of an interview with the Principal Lecturer.

The award is designed to broaden your knowledge and skills whilst enhancing your ability to contribute successfully within the workplace. It focuses on the strategically important area of cyber security and related computer forensic investigation.

It will also provide you with knowledge and skillsets that may enhance your post-service employability.

The range of knowledge and skills covered within the set of modules on the award essentially constitute a condensed course in network and computer security, digital forensics and knowledge discovery/data mining. These skill sets are highly sought after, and a number of the modules that you will study cover the requirements of civilian industry standard professional certifications. For example, the modules that cover operations in the cyber domain would embed within them the Certified Ethical Hacker syllabus. The Certified Ethical Hacker certification is in high demand within the broader IT sector. The Digital Forensics module would cover the use of Encase which is the computer forensic investigation tool whose use is recognised by UK Courts. Upon passing the relevant module you will have an opportunity to take the relevant exams for those professional certifications.

While focusing on areas related to Cyber Security, the award also permits you to take some modules in the area of politics and international relations that are relevant to modern intelligence work in order to provide a broader context to other studies.

How will I study?

Hard...sorry, but we have to be honest with you. If you are to gain the most benefit from your studies, then you need to put in the work. To achieve a good Honours degree by part-time study is something to be proud of, but like anything that is worthwhile, it will take commitment. We want to be honest with you, rather than selling you on how easy it will be.

The award consists of eight modules (120 credits) and you will undertake 2 modules during each 15 week study period. The learning material is designed to cover 12 weeks with some additional time for assessment related activity over the remaining three weeks. Each module will contain a recommended timetable of study with suggested milestones to help you plan your time. There are three study periods over the year (roughly September to January, January to April, May to August).

Although it is expected that you undertake study in each study period, we are aware that the requirements of the Service or individual circumstances may sometimes preclude that. In which case, we are flexible and you can choose not to take any modules in a given study block or take one module rather than two, subject to the requirement that you complete the award within the maximum period allowed of four years.
Most of the modules on the award are distance learning modules which are designed to be studied remotely from the University. The approach to learning will therefore be resource based – providing you with access to study materials and a defined pathway of study and learning activities to guide you through them. The study materials are wide ranging and could include reference books, lecture notes, websites and exercises which you can perform in order to validate your learning - to name but a few. You will also have support from fellow students via electronic discussion forums and direct tutor support to answer difficult questions. You will learn all about how this works during induction to the award. We will expect you to be proactive and take responsibility for following the programme of study.

You will be encouraged to undertake independent learning to extend the material presented. The value of self-gained knowledge and understanding is emphasised, both as an essential skill/practice for life (lifelong learning) and as an expectation of professionals.

The distance learning will be supported by a piece of software accessible over the internet known as Blackboard. This is a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) – a bit of educational jargon for a website where you will have access to the various learning materials, exercises, assessments, discussion forums and other things that support your study of the module.

Some of the option modules will require some attendance at the University depending upon the module.

How will I be assessed?

All modules are individually assessed via one or more methods according to the requirements of that module. The method of assessment is chosen to ensure that we can verify that you have met the learning outcomes of the module (learning outcomes being our jargon for what we expect you to know and be capable of doing by the end of the module). These methods may include individual coursework assignments, written reports, discussion contributions, but others as well.

Typically assignment submission will be via Blackboard and feedback will also be given using Blackboard. Module results will also be made available electronically.

What resources will be available to me during my studies?

As we have already indicated, the module study material hosted within the Blackboard VLE will be the most significant resource used to support your studies.

In addition to the module material and Blackboard VLE support, you will have access to the various online library facilities. Staffordshire University has subscriptions to electronic book services which offer full text electronic access to many textbooks, journals and conference proceedings, software support services, and even to some software provided by the University. You will be able to access these resources remotely. In addition, all students of the university can borrow texts from other university libraries, so you may be able to use this facility if another university library happens to be close to where you live/study.

When can I begin my studies?

Intakes will be September and January of each year.

Compulsory launch events take place at selected regional HM forces bases prior to each intake.

The purpose of this launch is to provide an in-depth overview of how the programme is structured, the commitment required to study and how you are able to claim accreditation for previous qualifications or experience gained throughout your career.

How long does it take?

With eight modules taken as two modules per study period and three study periods per year, the minimum time will be something like 16-18 months. The maximum time as indicated earlier is four years. Modules normally run twice a year, so if you miss one for whatever reason, you can pick it up at a later time.

How much does it cost?

Current Fees can be found at: www.staffs.ac.uk/HMForces

The University is an approved ELC provider; therefore you are able to use your ELC as payment towards your fees. If you do not qualify for ELC then the University is able to provide a flexible payment schedule.

What will I study?

There are six core modules that you must take (90 Credits in total) and two modules (30 Credits in total) over which you have a choice of which module to take from a list of modules (known as option modules).
Core modules:

Career Planning, Academic Research and Study Skills for Remote Learners (Distance Learning)
You will take this as the part of the first two modules you study. We recognise that intelligence work gives you experience and skill in various aspects of research and higher level investigation and the presentation of your results both verbally and in writing. However, the academic context is different from the operational context in which you have developed these skills. This module will seek to re-orient your existing skills and further develop them so they are suitable for the academic context. We adopt a principle-based approach that draws on your existing skills and knowledge, and provides clear guidance on how to develop your study approach and undertake academic research to support your off-campus learning. You will also have an opportunity to explore your career goals and aspirations and develop plans to help make these happen.

Operations in the Cyber Domain: Ethical Hacking 1 (Distance Learning)
Computer systems and network infrastructure are considered to be an attractive target to attackers, in order to understand how such infrastructure is compromised; we examine the operation of computer systems and security components, in order to identify critical entry points to secured systems. It is important for any security professional/ethical hacker to understand how these components are linked together and to be able to identify their weaknesses. This will allow him to perform a security assessment to a stand-alone or a networks computer device. A variety of security and protection mechanisms are examined and attacks and countermeasures against those attacks are considered.

Operations in the Cyber Domain: Ethical Hacking 2 (Blended Learning) – will require 1 day attendance at the University.
The module builds on the Ethical Hacking 1, to cover the application of specialist knowledge and of tools and techniques to launch infrastructure attacks, which would lead to probing and altering secure systems. You will look at techniques of social engineering, active and passive data gathering, system enumeration and hiding tracks.

Operations in the Cyber Domain: Cyber Warfare and Malicious Software (Distance Learning)
With such a heavy reliance on IT Systems by Governments and organisations, they pose a very tempting target for any aggressor. It is imperative that the threat to these cyber-systems is identified and understood, and that the correct means to defend against any cyber-attack is implemented. This module gives an overview of the risks associated with cyber warfare, how the methods typically available to hackers can be used to engineer a systematic attack. It also covers malicious software as an important threat vector to any type of computer system and how such software can be used to attack systems and their potential use in intelligence gathering.

Computer Networks and Security (Distance Learning)
This module covers a range of topics to address computer networks structure and operation, network security including methods of implementation and cryptographic solutions and network resilience/redundancy. This is intended to give someone who is not a networking technical expert an understanding of how networks work, their vulnerabilities and how they can best be secured.

IT Support for Intelligence (Distance Learning)
Databases are the backbone of any GIS system. They are the ‘I’ in GIS. This means that you should have an understanding of how the underlying databases work and how they support the GIS. You would cover the structure and operation of databases and how they support and underpin GIS. you will also look into the processes involved in searching for specific information in large information sources like the internet or large databases, often called data mining.
Optional modules:

Digital Forensics for Intelligence: Fundamentals – will require 4/5 day course at the University
This module develops your skills in the fundamentals of conducting a forensic investigation of a computer system. It will prepare you for the industry certification in the application of EnCase within digital forensic investigations. It will cover the operation of digital systems, how people try to hide data, data recovery and evidence gathering using fundamental forensic tools and techniques, etc.

Digital Forensics for Intelligence: Advanced Practice – will require 4/5 day course at the University
This module builds on the earlier Digital Forensics for Intelligence: Fundamentals module and covers the investigation of a more extensive range of digital devices and extends the range of techniques and background understanding required to apply those techniques. It will cover the forensic investigation of mobile devices. It will prepare you for the industry standard certification in the application of XRY mobile device investigation technology. It will also cover such matters as processes and standards for digital evidence handling as required by the legal authorities.

International Security
(Will require some attendance at the University)
This module examines the theories of Sun Tzu and Clausewitz, war as policy and the importance of strategic theory. It will cover inter-war theories of strategic bombing and the experience of the Second World War. This will lead on to a look at the theories of deterrence, the nuclear age and the evolution of NATO strategy including arms control. This will be further developed with an examination of post cold war security including the ‘new security architecture’ in Europe. NATO, Partnership for Peace and OSCE. Finally it will explore the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the State/non-State threat.

Twentieth Century Political Ideas
This module focuses on some of the most important and influential political ideas of the twentieth century. It surveys key debates on ideologies such as Leninism, Fascism, Nazism, Social Democracy, Feminism and elitism, some of which built on or emerged from political ideologies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The module examines ideas and concepts that contributed to the ideologies. Whilst some sections of the module focus on these ideas, concepts and ideologies, other sections examine the work of some important thinkers such as Marcuse, Weber and Freud.

I want more information or I want to start the course; who do I contact now?
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