

## Programme Specification: Undergraduate

### For Academic Year 2026/27

#### 1. Course Summary

<b>Names of programme and award title(s)</b>	BA (Hons) Criminology and Criminal Justice [Top-Up degree]
<b>Award type</b>	Single Honours
<b>Mode of study</b>	Full-time
<b>Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award</b>	Level 6
<b>Normal length of the programme</b>	1 year
<b>Maximum period of registration</b>	The normal length as specified above plus 3 years
<b>Location of study</b>	Keele Campus
<b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>	n/a
<b>Regulator</b>	Office for Students (OfS)
<b>Tuition Fees</b>	<p><b>UK students:</b></p> <p>Fee for 2026/27 is £9,790*</p> <p><b>International students:</b></p> <p>Fee for 2026/27 is £18,200**</p>

**How this information might change:** Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

\* These fees are regulated by Government. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study in response to changes in government policy and/or changes to the law. If permitted by such change in policy or law, we may increase your fees by an inflationary amount or such other measure as required by government policy or the law. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

\*\* We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

#### 2. Overview of the Programme

The BA (Hons) Criminology and Criminal Justice (Top-Up) provides an applied honours-level programme for students who have completed a relevant Level 5 qualification, most commonly an HND in Public Services (Policing or Criminology route), as well as those with equivalent international or professionally recognised qualifications.

The programme builds on students' existing understanding of crime and justice by developing advanced knowledge of criminal justice institutions, policy, and practice alongside core criminological theory. Emphasis is placed on problem-based learning, enabling students to apply theoretical perspectives and research evidence to real-world challenges facing contemporary criminal justice agencies.

Students benefit from Keele's established links with criminal justice practitioners and from opportunities to develop professional skills through applied modules, placements, and an independent study project. The programme provides a coherent and focused pathway for students seeking careers within criminal justice and related public service roles, as well as a strong foundation for postgraduate study.

### **3. Aims of the programme**

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- Develop an advanced, honours-level understanding of criminology and/or criminal justice, building on prior study and professional learning
- Think, write and debate critically about crime, social harm, and crime control using social-scientific reasoning.
- Analyse and apply criminological theory and research methods to contemporary issues and policy.
- Conduct independent research and communicate findings effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Develop a portfolio of transferable skills in analysis, communication, and reflective professional practice.
- Prepare for postgraduate study and employment in a wide range of criminal justice-related and social policy roles.

In its modern forms, the study of Criminology and Criminal Justice at undergraduate degree level can be characterised by robust debates over how to:

- conceptualise and explain its subject matter
- put its theories into operation in conducting research
- inform debates over criminal justice and crime control policy; the scope of human rights; the links between criminal and social justice; and the expanding knowledge bases of crime prevention, security and justice-related professions
- develop and enhance its methodological and technical expertise in handling different kinds of data (including large data sets ['big data'], open data and internet data)
- manage sensitive ethical issues arising from empirical research

### **4. What you will learn**

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

#### **Subject knowledge and understanding**

Graduates will be able to:

- Explain and evaluate theoretical traditions and debates within criminology.
- Analyse the relationship between crime, victimisation, inequality, and social change.
- Apply criminological theory to understand contemporary policy and practice.
- Demonstrate understanding of research design, ethics, and evidence-based approaches.
- Describe and evaluate formal and informal mechanisms of crime control and justice.

#### **Subject specific skills**

Graduates will be able to:

- Design and conduct criminological research using appropriate qualitative or quantitative methods.
- Locate, interpret and evaluate criminological literature and policy sources.
- Present written work in an appropriate scholarly format using Harvard referencing.
- Reflect critically on personal and professional development through placement or applied learning.
- Communicate complex arguments effectively in written, oral and digital formats.

#### **Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)**

Graduates will be able to:

- Work independently, managing time and tasks effectively.

- Evaluate information and make evidence-based decisions.
- Communicate clearly and professionally to varied audiences.
- Use digital tools to source, manage and present data.
- Demonstrate adaptability, self-awareness and ethical responsibility in professional contexts

## **Keele Graduate Attributes**

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social, environmental and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

## **5. How is the programme taught?**

Learning and teaching methods used on the programme vary according to the subject matter and level of the module. They include the following:

- Teaching combines lectures, seminars, workshops, supervised research and placement learning.
- Lectures provide frameworks for independent study and introduce current debates.
- Seminars enable discussion and collaborative learning using case studies and contemporary materials.
- Workshops focus on skills development—research design, data analysis, employability and reflection.
- Independent study forms a major element, particularly in the dissertation and applied modules.
- The Keele Learning Environment (KLE) supports blended delivery and digital resources.
- Students receive academic mentoring and have regular opportunities for one-to-one support. Learning is inclusive and designed to ensure accessibility for all students

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Academic Mentors or module lecturers on a one-to-one basis.

## **6. Teaching Staff**

The teaching staff on the Criminology Principal Programme currently consists of professors, senior lecturers, permanent and temporary lecturers and teaching fellows. Most members of staff other than teaching fellows have, or are working towards, doctorates (PhDs or the equivalent) in criminology, criminal justice or a closely related subject in law or the social sciences. As members of the Centre for Social Policy and the Keele Institute for Social Inclusion (KISI), they are all active researchers whose work across many different aspects of criminology has been widely published in books, research monographs and leading international journals. The staff group has extensive experience of teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level at universities in the UK and abroad. Most members of staff hold accredited or recognised teaching qualifications and several are fellows or associates of the Higher Education Academy.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

## **7. What is the structure of the Programme?**

The academic year runs from September to June and is divided into two semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from programme to programme, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between the end of September and mid-December, and from mid-January to the end of April. Our degree courses are organised into modules. Each module is usually a self-contained unit of study and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided in the tables below.

There are two types of module delivered as part of your programme. They are:

- Compulsory modules - a module that you are required to study on this course;
- Optional modules - these allow you some limited choice of what to study from a list of modules;

For further information on the content of modules currently offered, please visit:  
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/recordsandexams/modulecatalogue/>

A summary of the credit requirements per year is as follows:

Year	Compulsory	Optional	
		Min	Max
Level 6	90	30	30

## Module Lists

### Level 6

Compulsory modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Prisons and Imprisonment	CRI-30044	15	Semester 1
Hatred, Justice and the State	CRI-30072	15	Semester 1
Independent Study Project in Criminal Justice	CRI-30062	30	Semester 1-2
Advanced Issues in Policing	CRI-30060	15	Semester 2
Migration, Crime and (In)Security	CRI-30070	15	Semester 2

Optional modules	Module Code	Credits	Period
Rethinking 'Participation' in Crime control, Punishment and Criminology	CRI-30068	15	Semester 1
Work Placement for Social Sciences Final Year Students	SSC-30003	15	Semester 1-2
State crimes and crimes against humanity	CRI-30038	15	Semester 2

## Learning Outcomes

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

### Level 6

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<b>Subject Knowledge and Understanding</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Module in which this is delivered</b>
Explain and evaluate theoretical traditions and debates within criminology.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Analyse the relationship between crime, victimisation, inequality, and social change.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Apply criminological theory to understand contemporary policy and practice.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Demonstrate understanding of research design, ethics, and evidence-based approaches.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Describe and evaluate formal and informal mechanisms of crime control and justice.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme

<b>Subject Specific Skills</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Module in which this is delivered</b>
Design and conduct criminological research using appropriate qualitative or quantitative methods.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Locate, interpret and evaluate criminological literature and policy sources.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Present written work in an appropriate scholarly format using Harvard referencing.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Reflect critically on personal and professional development through placement or applied learning.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Communicate complex arguments effectively in written, oral and digital formats.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme

<b>Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Module in which this is delivered</b>
Work independently, managing time and tasks effectively.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Evaluate information and make evidence-based decisions.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Communicate clearly and professionally to varied audiences.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Use digital tools to source, manage and present data.	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme
Demonstrate adaptability, self-awareness and ethical responsibility in professional contexts	All modules approved as part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Principal Programme

## 8. Final and intermediate awards

This is a Level 6 only programme so students are not eligible for intermediate awards. On completion of the 120 credits at Level 6, students will graduate with a BSc (Hons) Criminology degree. If a student leaves the award prior to completion of the relevant credits no qualification will be awarded. Module credits will be awarded on successful completion of the relevant modules.

## 9. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

- Essays, including those based on case study material, also test the quality and application of subject knowledge. In addition they allow students to demonstrate their ability to carry out basic bibliographic research and to communicate their ideas effectively in writing in an appropriate scholarly style using the Harvard system of referencing.
- Reports, Critical Reviews, and related 'applied' written work have 'authenticity' and employability in mind. Students might be asked to write an evidence-based policy report for example that has real world implications.
- Reviews of other scholars' work test students' ability to identify and summarise the key points of a text and to evaluate the quality of arguments and the evidence used to support them. In the case of work based on empirical research, reviews also assess students' knowledge of research methodologies and their ability to make critical judgements about the appropriateness of different strategies for collecting and analysing data.
- Oral and poster presentations and reports assess students' subject knowledge and understanding. They also test their ability to work effectively as members of a team, to communicate what they know orally and visually, and to reflect on these processes as part of their own personal development.
- Portfolios may consist of a range of different pieces of work but routinely include a requirement that students provide some evidence of critical reflection on the development of their own learning and skills developed that could also be used to help with job applications.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

## 10. Contact Time and Expected Workload

This contact time measure is intended to provide you with an indication of the type of activity you are likely to undertake during this programme. The data is compiled based on module choices and learning patterns of students on similar programmes in previous years. Every effort is made to ensure this data is a realistic representation of what you are likely to experience, but changes to programmes, teaching methods and assessment methods mean this data is representative and not specific.

Undergraduate courses at Keele contain an element of module choice; therefore, individual students will experience a different mix of contact time and assessment types dependent upon their own individual choice of modules. The figures below are an example of activities that a student may expect on your chosen course by year stage of study. Contact time includes scheduled activities such as: lecture, seminar, tutorial, project supervision, demonstration, practical classes and labs, supervised time in labs/workshop, fieldwork and external visits. The figures are based on 1,200 hours of student effort each year for full-time students.

### Activity

	Scheduled learning and teaching activities	Guided independent Study	Placements
<b>Year 3 (Level 6)</b>	23.8%	76.3%	0%

## 11. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

## 12. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

## 13. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme:  
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/>

### Academic Skills

Please note: All new international students entering the university will provide a sample of Academic Reading and Writing during their registration. Using this sample, the Language Centre may allocate you to an academic skills module which will become compulsory. This will replace any GCP modules. *NB:* students can take an academic skills module only with the approval of the Academic Skills Programme Director and are not able to take any other Language Centre modules in the same academic year.

Academic Skills Modules at Level 6:

- Business - ENL-90003 Academic English for Business Students (Part 1);
- Science - ENL-90013 Academic English for Science Students;
- General - ENL-90001 English for Academic Purposes 3.

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here:  
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

## 14. How are students supported on the programme?

Recognising that students entering the programme via a top-up route may be returning to study or transitioning from a different higher education environment, the programme includes a structured package of academic and pastoral support designed specifically for top-up students.

Support for student learning on the Programme is provided in the following ways:

- Students will be invited to bespoke welcome activities during induction week, including sessions focused on academic expectations at honours level, assessment standards, and effective use of the Keele Learning Environment (KLE). These sessions will also provide guidance on module selection and timetabling.
- All students are allocated an Academic Mentor with expertise in criminology or criminal justice. Mentors provide enhanced support during the first semester, with scheduled check-ins focused on academic transition, workload management, and skills development. Academic Mentors also act as a first point of contact for students on non-academic issues, which may affect their learning and can refer students on to a range of specialist health, welfare and financial services co-ordinated by the University's Student Services.
- Modules on the programme provide opportunities for formative feedback, including feedback on plans, outlines, or draft elements of assessments where appropriate. This supports students in adapting to academic writing conventions and assessment expectations at honours level.
- All members of teaching staff on the Criminology Programme are available to see students during advertised weekly office hours and at other times by appointment.
- Non-native English-speaking students are offered language classes, facilities and services by the University's Language Centre. In addition to credit-bearing modules on English for academic study, students also have access to one-to-one tutorials for individual help and advice, and to a wealth of resources for self-study and practice.

## 15. Learning Resources

Criminology and Criminal Justice is taught in teaching rooms equipped with computers, internet access and electronic whiteboards or projection equipment. Rooms may be arranged either in traditional lecture format or more informally to allow students to work together in small groups. The learning resources available to students on the Programme include:

- The extensive collection of criminological materials relevant to undergraduate study held in the University Library. Built up over 30 years of delivering criminology at this level, these materials include books, journals and government publications. Much of this material is also accessible online to Keele students from anywhere in the world with a University username and password.

The Keele Learning Environment (KLE) which provides easy access to a wide range of learning resources including lecture notes, digitised readings electronic materials available in a repository maintained by the University Library and other resources - video, audio and text-based - accessible from external providers via the internet.

Most modules have electronic resource lists generated using Talis Aspire, a software package that allows students to access electronic journal articles, websites and other resources by clicking on links in a single document.

## 16. Other Learning Opportunities

If you take the SSC-30003 module, you will also have opportunities to contribute to the world beyond the University, where the specialist knowledge, research, analytical, and communication skills developed as part of your Social Science degree can be used and can make a difference. The workplace or volunteering opportunity may be, for example, with a local government agency, a charity, a community group, a criminal justice agency, a school or education provider, or another suitable opportunity identified by the student and approved by the module leader.

There will also be opportunities within modules to hear from, and network with, practitioners working in criminal justice and related fields.

## 17. Additional Costs

Students who take the optional Work Placement module may be expected to pay travel costs (usually one day weekly) to their placement. Students who take the optional Work Placement module may need to apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, if they plan to work with e.g. schools and charities. The current costs for a DBS check are detailed on the additional costs webpage:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/tuitionfeesandfunding/undergraduatetuitionfees/additionalcosts>

These costs have been forecast by the University as accurately as possible but may be subject to change as a result of factors outside of our control (for example, increase in costs for external services). Forecast costs are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain representative. Where additional costs are in direct control of the University we will ensure increases do not exceed 5%.

As to be expected there will be additional costs for inter-library loans and potential overdue library fines, print and graduation. We do not anticipate any further costs for this programme.

## 18. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.
- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual National Student Survey (NSS), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students in all three years of the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

## 19. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

**a.** UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

**b.** QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: for Criminology (2022 version): <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the->

[qualitycode/subject-benchmark-statements/criminology](#)

c. QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Policing (2022 version): <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/subjectbenchmark-statements/policing>

d. Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

## Version History

### This document

**Date Approved:** 31 March 2026

### Previous documents

Version No	Year	Owner	Date Approved	Summary of and rationale for changes
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