

Liverpool John Moores University

Title: RESEARCHING CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Status: Definitive
Code: **7018LAWCJ** (107862)
Version Start Date: 01-08-2016

Owning School/Faculty: Law
Teaching School/Faculty: Law

Team	Leader
Helena Gosling	Y

Academic Level: FHEQ7 **Credit Value:** 30 **Total Delivered Hours:** 40

Total Learning Hours: 300 **Private Study:** 260

Delivery Options

Course typically offered: Semester 1

Component	Contact Hours
Lecture	20
Workshop	20

Grading Basis: 40 %

Assessment Details

Category	Short Description	Description	Weighting (%)	Exam Duration
Essay	AS1	coursework - 2000 word methods review	30	
Report	AS2	coursework - 1000 word data analysis report	20	
Essay	AS3	coursework - 3000 word dissertation plan	50	

Aims

To prepare students for the compulsory dissertation on the MA Criminal Justice course.

To enable students to develop an advanced and critical knowledge of the key

ontological, epistemological and methodological issues that impact upon research into crime and criminal justice.

To consider and demonstrate a critical appreciation of the particular research theories, and methods of data collection and analysis, which researchers use to study crime and criminal justice.

To examine and demonstrate advanced and critical understanding of issues relating to the politics and ethics of crime and criminal justice research.

To examine and demonstrate advanced and critical understanding of practical issues which can affect research into particular aspects of crime and criminal justice.

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module the student should be able to:

- 1 Recognise and critically evaluate the relative strengths and weaknesses of various theoretical perspectives on research into crime and criminal justice.
- 2 Demonstrate an advanced understanding of how to plan and construct a literature review as part of the preparation for research.
- 3 Show advanced and critical awareness of the politics and ethics of research into crime and criminal justice.
- 4 Relate theory to issues and problems which could be faced while doing research into crime or criminal justice in practice, and at postgraduate level.
- 5 Show an advanced ability to recognise and critically evaluate the substance, strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research techniques, when used individually and in combination with others.
- 6 Show critical awareness of techniques of quantitative and qualitative data analysis.
- 7 Construct a viable, robust and well-planned research design and methodology, applying advanced and critical knowledge of issues relating to research theory, research design, data collection, data analysis, and other relevant issues to a personal area of specialist postgraduate study relating to a particular aspect of crime or criminal justice.
- 8 Constructively work with others at an advanced level - through group discussions and presentations - to critically address specific questions and discussion topics.
- 9 Effectively communicate ideas in written and oral form at an advanced level.

Learning Outcomes of Assessments

The assessment item list is assessed via the learning outcomes listed:

Methodological Review	1	2	3	8	9		
SPSS Report	6	8	9				
Research Proposal	1	3	4	5	7	8	9

Outline Syllabus

BLOCK A: APPROACHING RESEARCH INTO CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

What is social research? Issues of acquiring knowledge about the social world

Research theory and its links with methods of doing research

Producing a literature review for your research

Assessing research designs

The politics of criminal justice research

Ethical issues in criminal justice research

BLOCK B: METHODS OF RESEARCHING CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Quantitative research: introduction and sampling issues

Quantitative research: structured interviews, self-completion questionnaires and structured observation

Quantitative research: quantitative documentary analysis and secondary analysis of official statistics

Quantitative data analysis

Using SPSS to analyse quantitative data

Qualitative research: introduction

Qualitative research: ethnography and participant observation

Qualitative research: qualitative interviewing techniques and qualitative documentary research

Qualitative data analysis: introduction, principles and practice

Triangulation in research

BLOCK C: ISSUES IN RESEARCHING CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN PRACTICE

Researching offenders and victims

Researching the police

Researching courts and sentencing

Researching punishment: community penalties and prisons

Researching 'hidden' crime

Learning Activities

Teaching sessions (containing lecture and interactive seminar elements)- oral interaction and note-taking

Self-directed study based upon critical reflection on course materials provided, as well as wider reading, as preparation for participation in teaching sessions

Preparation for the different components of the written module assessment, using the two activities described above

Dedicated assessment guidance built into the teaching programme

Notes

This module aims to give students a comprehensive and critical guide to both the theory and practice of research on crime and the criminal justice process. It will link theories to the practical issues relating to doing these kinds of research, using case studies to illustrate the possible difficulties which students may face when doing research for themselves (including political and ethical obstacles). It will also act as an advanced and theoretically-informed guide to the strengths and weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in the context of research on crime and criminal justice. The assignments for this module are designed to be as useful and practical as possible to students planning and undertaking dissertation-length, postgraduate-level research for the first time.