

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	<b>MA / LLM Criminal Law and Criminal Justice</b> (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate
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
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 years) September or January
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
<a href="#">QAA subject benchmark group(s)</a> <a href="#">Higher Education Credit Framework for England</a>	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMJCMLGY_C TMJCMLGJ_C (January start)
HECoS Code	100685 Criminal Law 100483 Criminal Justice
Start date of programme	Prior to 2008
Date of programme approval	Prior to 2008
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2022
Valid for academic entry year	2023-24 (and for cohorts starting in 2022-23)
Date of last revision to document	28/7/22

## 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.

## Course aims

This programme offers a unique opportunity for advanced study of criminal law and criminal justice from an interdisciplinary perspective. Taught by academics in Criminology and Law, and researchers from the Institute for Crime and Justice Policy Research (ICPR), this programme provides insight into cutting-edge debates in criminal law and criminal justice grounded within legal, criminological, policy, social science and humanities-oriented perspectives. The programme is distinct in that it gives students the opportunity, at the end of their studies, to decide whether they would like to receive an award of LLM or MA. This allows students to choose their award based on their own needs, career paths and areas of specialism.

Students on this programme are drawn from a range of backgrounds, including those with pre-existing knowledge or experience of criminal law and the criminal justice system, and those with a desire to pursue a specialism in this area. It caters to those who would like to advance in their existing career or to carve out a new career path.

Those enrolled on the programme will be introduced to theoretical debates and perspectives that underpin understandings of the relationship between criminal law and criminal justice and will be supported to pursue their own independent research on a relevant area of their choice. This is achieved through the completion of three compulsory modules: Criminal Law, Theory and History; Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice; and the Masters Research Project. Students are then invited to select three optional modules from the range offered in Criminology and Law, and (subject to agreement) the wider College, which can be tailored towards students' individual research interests.

## 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.
- 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 specialisms.
- 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

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
<b>Full-time – 1 year</b>					
7	LADD059S7	Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice	30	Comp	T1
7	LADD058S7	Criminal Law, Theory and History	30	Comp	T2
7	LACN022S7	Masters Research Project	30	Comp	T3
7	various	Option*	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7	various	Option*	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7	various	Option*	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
<b>Part-time – 2 years</b>					
<b>Year 1</b>					
7	LADD059S7	Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice	30	Comp	T1
7	LADD058S7	Criminal Law, Theory and History	30	Comp	T2
7	various	Option*	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
<b>Year 2</b>					
7	LACN022S7	Masters Research Project	30	Comp	T3
7	various	Option*	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3
7	various	Option*	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3

*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*

**\*The range of options available each year will vary but an indicative list includes:**

- Critical Methods in Law & Society Research
- Contemporary Criminological Theory
- Cultures of Human Rights
- Data, Surveillance and Insecurity
- Drugs, Crime and Culture
- Equality & the Law
- Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice
- Global Perspectives on Crime Control
- Healthcare and Human Rights
- History and Philosophy of Human Rights
- Influencing Public Policy
- Issues in International Law and Human Rights
- Intersectionality & Criminal Justice

- Law, Post-Colonialism & Political Economy
- Policing, Race & Justice
- Psychology of Crime and Law
- Race, Crime and Justice
- Research Methods in Criminology
- 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.

Students can select 1 x 30 credit option outside the School of Law.

(See also summary table in appendix below.)

### **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 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.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Teaching on this course is a combination of lectures (pre-recorded) and seminars, supported by digital materials and online learning resources. 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.

For the Research Project, students are supported via three workshops delivered by the Research Project module convenor and a minimum of three one-to-one supervision meetings with Project Supervisors.

Moodle will also be used to provide students with appropriate materials and a space to share details of other pertinent publications and events. Students are also able to attend the Criminology Seminar Series talks (three events per term on Thursday evenings) and 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, a research proposal, short written exercises, oral presentations, group projects, case studies, reflective analysis and an 8,000 word 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:

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding and critical awareness of topics which are relevant to the study of criminal law and criminal justice.
- Critically appraise a wide range of contemporary and historical approaches relevant to the study of criminal law and criminal justice, informed by a range of disciplines.
- Convey a critical understanding of the intersection between different disciplines, such as law, policy, humanities and the social sciences, in the study of criminal law and criminal justice.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to undertaking independent research and/or advanced scholarship in criminal law and criminal justice.
- Express a sophisticated awareness of current problems and/or new insights at the forefront of the discipline.
- Formulate a clear research proposal and detail the methodological and theoretical steps necessary for its completion.
- Understand and assess the ethical implications of all independent research.
- Prepare a large, complex yet innovative Research Project submission of 8,000 words on a topic related to criminal law and criminal justice
- Engage in advanced analytical skills, critical reading and discussion skills, appropriate referencing skills, clear and effective writing skills.
- Work both independently and in a group, and to engage constructively with peers.

### **Careers and further study**

Postgraduate studies in criminal law and criminal justice offer a range of career opportunities, including: pathways to promotion within an existing career, transitions into a new career, or pursuit of a specialist knowledge areas.

You will find criminal law and criminal justice graduates in the following kinds of roles:

- Legal practitioners
- Positions within the third sector including non-government organisations (NGOs) and voluntary organisations
- Positions within criminal justice agencies, such as the police, prisons and youth justice system
- Local government or civil service roles
- Education, research and academia.

Birkbeck's LLM/MA Criminal Law and Criminal Justice graduates will complete with a set of valuable attributes, for example:

- The ability to critically evaluate and assess a range of sources.
- The ability to present persuasive arguments.
- Research skills.
- The ability to work as part of a team.
- High-level oral and written communication skills in English.

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 course 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.

Students also have access to a range of study skills workshops, online research and writing resources, and one-to-one sessions offered by subject-specific Learning Development Tutors.

### **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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## Appendix – MA/LLM Criminal Law & Criminal Justice Summary Table.

MA / LLM Criminal Law & Criminal Justice			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Year 1	Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice (L7, 30 credits)	Criminal Law, Theory & History (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)

### The range of options available each year will vary but an indicative list includes:

Critical Methods in Law & Society Research	30 credits	Level 7
Contemporary Criminological Theory	30 credits	Level 7
Cultures of Human Rights	30 credits	Level 7
Data, Surveillance and Insecurity	30 credits	Level 7
Drugs, Crime and Culture	30 credits	Level 7
Equality & the Law	30 credits	Level 7
Gender, Sexuality & Criminal Justice	30 credits	Level 7
Global Perspectives on Crime Control	30 credits	Level 7
Healthcare and Human Rights	30 credits	Level 7
History and Philosophy of Human Rights	30 credits	Level 7
Influencing Public Policy	30 credits	Level 7
Issues in International Law and Human Rights	30 credits	Level 7
Intersectionality & Criminal Justice	30 credits	Level 7
Law, Post-Colonialism & Political Economy	30 credits	Level 7
Policing, Race & Justice	30 credits	Level 7
Psychology of Crime and Law	30 credits	Level 7
Race, Crime and Justice	30 credits	Level 7
Research Methods in Criminology	30 credits	Level 7
Regulating Sex and Sexuality	30 credits	Level 7
Youth Justice	30 credits	Level 7

\*Options can be spread out across the terms depending on student preference. 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.

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.