

WJEC Applied Diploma Criminology FAQs



What is criminology?

Criminology is the scientific study of criminal behaviour, on individual, social and biological levels, and how it can be managed, controlled and prevented.

This course will enable you to use theories of criminality to analyse criminal situations and make recommendations for policy. You will develop the knowledge and skills to research policy in practice, assess campaigns for changes in awareness and examine information to review verdicts in criminal cases.

What is the exam board?



The exam board is WJEC and the specification can be found here or by scanning the QR code

https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/criminology-level-3/#tab_overview

Is criminology an A level?

No, criminology is not an A level, it is an Applied Diploma which is an A level equivalent.

Does this course attract UCAS points and how is it graded?

The WJEC Applied Diploma attracts UCAS points on the same tariff system as a conventional A level and is graded A* - E.

How is the course structured?

This course comprises of four units in total, two internally assessed units and two externally assessed units. Units 1 and 2 are studied in the first year and units 3 and 4 are studied in year 2.

What are the different units that you study?

Unit	Mode of assessment	Areas explored
Unit 1 Changing Awareness of Crime	Internally assessed via controlled assessment	The focus of the unit is on unreported crime and the consequences of such crimes. The unit will also introduce media representation of crime and how campaigns for change can raise awareness of unreported crimes in society.
Unit 2 Criminological Theories	Externally assessed via an examination	This unit focuses on why people commit crime and includes a study of a range of theories of criminality. Biological theories, individualistic theories (psychological) and sociological theories are all explored and evaluated to consider which ones can explain a range of crimes from white collar crime to serial killers.
Unit 3 Crime Scene to Courtroom	Internally assessed via controlled assessment	The focus of Unit 3 is the Criminal Justice System from the identification of the crime through to the verdict. This unit will allow candidates to gain the understanding and skills to be able to examine the validity of verdicts given in criminal cases. In this unit the various personnel involved in solving a crime are examined such as Crime Scene Investigators, Police & specialised forensic experts. The techniques used to investigate crime are also thoroughly explored.

Unit 4 Crime and Punishment	Externally assessed via an examination	This unit allows the learner to apply understanding of theories and processes of bringing the accused to court. This unit explores the various agencies of the criminal justice system and how they work together and how laws are made within the UK.
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Is there any coursework?

There is no coursework but there are two controlled assessments which are done in school.

What is a controlled assessment?

A controlled assessment is an unseen assignment that is completed under supervised exam conditions (over an 8 hour period) at the end of unit 1 and unit 3. Unlike exams, you are able to use your class notes and your own independent research to help you complete the assignment. This means you have the opportunity to be thoroughly prepared for the controlled assessment if you are well organised. Controlled assessments test your ability to apply your knowledge and understanding to a previously unseen crime scenario. Each controlled assessment is worth 25% of the overall diploma grade.

How long are the formal examinations?

Unit 2 and Unit 4 are examined via formal examination. The examination for each unit is 1 hour 30 minutes long and will have a variety of questions ranging from 1 to 9 marks. Each exam is worth 25% of the overall diploma grade.

What are lessons like?

Criminology lessons involve a variety of activities to support and challenge you, whilst learning a brand new subject. You can expect individual work, paired, group based tasks, independent research, presentations, exam practice, retrieval practice tests and teacher led content.

Does it matter that I have not studied criminology before?

Criminology is not taught at Key Stage 4, so you will not be at a disadvantage having not studied it before. All you need is an interest in crime and a willingness to learn.

Are there other subjects that would be suitable to study alongside criminology?

We do not have a 'typical' criminology student. Our students study a range of other subjects. We have a large number of students who also take one of the other social sciences alongside it but this is not a requirement. There are overlaps with psychology as we explore psychological explanations of criminal behaviour especially when we trace back the origins of criminality to traumatic childhood experiences. There are also overlaps with sociology both in applying sociological theories to understanding crime but also in the area of crime prevention as CCTV, zero tolerance approaches and custodial sentences all have their roots in sociological theory.

What resources are there to support learning?

There are textbooks, websites, documentaries and films which can be used to support learning.

Two textbooks are currently available for learners:

http://www.illuminatepublishing.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=157

<https://criminology.uk.net/>

How can criminology help me with my degree choices?

Criminology can help you study degrees related to the subject (Criminology, Forensic Investigation, Psychology, Sociology and Law), however our past students have also gone on to study degrees such as Nursing, Business Studies and International Relations.

How will criminology help me gain an apprenticeship or employment?

Criminology will help you develop a range of skills suited to apprenticeships or employment. These include problem solving, critical thinking, organisation, research, presentation and communication skills.

Can I get in touch if I have any other questions?

Of course, my email address is richardson@plymstockschool.org.uk

What else can I do if I am interested in criminology?

Watch the news, keep a close eye out for stories about crime. BBC iplayer, ITV Hub and 4 On Demand all contain relevant programmes. Netflix also have a range of documentaries about crime and punishment that would be useful to start watching.