



National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Criminology: Nature and Extent of Crime (SCQF level 6)

Unit code: H1WM 12

Superclass: EE

Publication date: July 2012

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 01

Summary

This Unit is designed to introduce candidates to the variety of approaches and methods of research which characterise the discipline of criminology. The candidate will develop an understanding of the complex nature of crime and the problems with measuring crime. This is an optional Unit within the National Certificate in Social Sciences at SCQF level 6 and can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

The target candidate group is 16+ and adult returners.

Successful completion of this Unit may facilitate progression to a Higher National course and assist employability opportunities.

Outcomes

- 1 Describe the nature of crime.
- 2 Evaluate how crime is measured.

Recommended entry

Entry is at the discretion of the centre. There are no formal entry requirements. However, it would be beneficial if candidates had achieved the following, or equivalent:

A social subject or an English Unit or Communication at SCQF level 5.

General information (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Nature and Extent of Crime (SCQF level 6)

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF Level 6 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the Support Notes of this Unit specification.

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skill components in this Unit.

National Unit specification: statement of standards

Unit title: Criminology: Nature and Extent of Crime (SCQF level 6)

Acceptable performance in this Unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the Unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to SQA.

Outcome 1

Describe the nature of crime.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Define crime using current classification systems.
- (b) Describe changes in defining crime across time.
- (c) Describe cross cultural differences in defining crime.
- (d) Describe the development of criminology as a discipline since the 19th century.

Outcome 2

Evaluate how crime is measured.

Performance Criteria

- (a) Describe official methods of measuring crime.
- (b) Describe the 'dark figure' of crime.
- (c) Evaluate methods of reporting crime.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Nature and Extent of Crime (SCQF level 6)

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Written and/or oral recorded evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Evidence will be generated holistically under closed-book conditions and within time constraints.

Evidence for the Unit must include:

Outcome 1 pc (a):

- ◆ Definition of crime using two current opposing classification systems

Outcome 1 pc (b):

- ◆ Description of two changes in defining crime across time

Outcome 1 pc (c):

- ◆ Description of two cross cultural differences in defining crime

Outcome 1 pc (d):

- ◆ An accurate description of the development of criminology as a discipline from the 19th century

Outcome 2 pc (a):

- ◆ Description of official methods of measuring crime to include: official records and the British Crime survey

Outcome 2 pc (b):

- ◆ Description of the dark figure of crime obtained from sample surveys, self-report studies, victim surveys

Outcome 2 pc (c):

- ◆ Evaluation of the relative merits of official and dark statistics, in terms of understanding how crime is measured and by whom
- ◆ Evidence must include at least one advantage and one disadvantage for both official and dark crime reporting

National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Criminology: Nature and Extent of Crime (SCQF level 6)

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

The Unit introduces candidates to the variety of criminological approaches and the particular perspectives they give to the explanation of criminal behaviour. These classification systems may include the following: The Classical School, Positivist School, Differential Association (Subcultural), Chicago School, Ecological Approaches, Strain theory, Control theories, Labelling Theory, Contemporary cultural and critical criminology and Rational choice theory.

For example, the classical and positivist school of thought would allow the candidate to review the nature versus nurture debate (a pinnacle debate amongst all social sciences) with the particular focus on criminal behaviour. This would also allow the candidate to explore positivism as the first 'scientific' approach in collecting data and classifying criminal/deviant behaviour. The candidate could look at this aspect chronologically by examining various criminological theories which have attempted to classify criminal behaviour. For example, the candidate should explore the differing approaches to Blue-Collar and White-Collar crime in society as a means of evaluating data and as a means of examining crime, law and statistics as a social construct.

The candidate should develop an understanding of the various methods and competing ways of measuring crime highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each. The candidates will also familiarise themselves with the problem of comparing crime data both over time and between jurisdictions, or across cultures. The Unit will also illustrate to candidates the ways in which criminologists use such data and offer experience of examining material from the British Crime Survey, thereby establishing the link between criminological theory and the statistical evidence and research strategies.

It is the intention of this Unit to establish detailed understanding of crime and its measurement, allowing the candidate to develop critical appreciation of crime data, the methods of data collection and the problems of comparability. In addition a basic understanding of sampling and the desirability of random sampling, basic quantitative skills in accessing and the simple analysis of the British Crime Survey should be covered. This should allow the candidate to develop an appreciation of research methodology in prediction and evaluation studies.

While some candidates may have studied a Social Science subject before, for others it will be their first experience of the subject and for this reason its content should be treated as a means of establishing the background and development of criminology as well as an in depth study of the subject. Criminological concepts, theories and methods should all be supported by relevant examples.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Nature and Extent of Crime (SCQF level 6)

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

It is recommended that the learning experience at this level should be varied, to encourage enthusiasm for the subject and to stimulate and prepare candidates for independent study.

The Unit should be approached using a wide range of stimulus materials and teaching approaches. Candidates should be encouraged to draw upon their own experiences, where appropriate, and should have access to resources such as audio-visual material, invited speakers, internet, ICT and paper-based resources. The materials should be up to date and relevant to the Unit, the level of study and the interests of the candidates.

The Unit may be suitable for open learning and online delivery.

Outcomes 1 and 2 could be integrated in the learning and teaching.

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

Evidence Requirements apply to the Unit as a whole and, therefore, apply holistically to all Outcomes of the Unit.

Candidates could produce written and/or oral evidence for all Outcomes and Performance Criteria of the Unit.

The assessment could take the form of a closed-book, supervised test of approximately one hour's duration. The instrument of assessment may take the form of a range of restricted response-type questions and other forms of written/oral assessments, eg multiple choice, case studies and may make use of stimulus material to help candidates focus on the question(s) posed.

The assessment must ensure that both Outcomes and all PCs are covered.

Essential Skills

By adopting the above learning and teaching approaches and through the Outcomes and corresponding Evidence Requirements, the Unit should provide candidates with an opportunity to develop the following essential skills for life, learning and work:

- ◆ Employability — this Unit contributes knowledge of careers in psychology, police support services, the police force, Scottish Prison Service or court system and victim support organisations.
- ◆ Citizenship — this can be developed through considering the role of the crime and victims in our community.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Nature and Extent of Crime (SCQF level 6)

Opportunities for the use of e-assessment

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education* (AA1641, March 2003), and *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools* (BD2625, June 2005).

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit the candidate will describe the nature of crime and evaluate how crime is measured.

Candidates will:

- ◆ define crime
- ◆ describe historical and cultural differences in defining crime
- ◆ describe measurement of crime
- ◆ evaluate how crime is reported

Critical Thinking is developed through the custodial versus non-custodial debate.

Activities involving communication may be written, eg short essays or reports, or oral, such as a presentation for evidence or taking part in a group discussion or question and answer session. Candidates should be encouraged to undertake individual and group presentations to develop Oral Communication skills. *Numeracy* is developed through the use of crime statistics.

This means that as candidates are doing this Unit they will be developing aspects of the Core Skills of *Communication*, *Numeracy* and *Problem Solving*.

Additionally the Core Skill of *Working with Others* could be fostered through group research and presentations and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)* skills could be developed by giving specific tasks to research information from Internet sites (ensuring that judicious selection from academic sources is emphasised) or from the use of e-books. Word processed written work or PowerPoint presentations could develop specific ICT skills. The use of a blog or personal online journal could be developed for formative or summative assessment purposes.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2012

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Business Development and Customer Support team, telephone 0303 333 0330.