National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Criminology: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

Unit code: H1WK 11

Superclass:	EE
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Version:	02

Summary

The purpose of this Unit is to introduce candidates to physical and psychological evidence available at a crime scene. Candidates will develop an understanding of the different types of physical evidence available at a crime scene, the importance of preserving evidence and how this evidence is utilised. Candidates will also develop an understanding of psychological evidence available at a crime scene and how that information can be used by offender profilers. The target candidate group is 16+ and adult returners.

Progression opportunities on successful completion of this Unit include possible entry to a range of Social Sciences Units at SCQF level 6. This Unit is part of the NC in Social Sciences at SCQF level 5 but can also be taken as a free-standing Unit.

Outcomes

1   Describe crime scene protocol and the range of evidence which may be present.
2   Describe psychological evidence from a crime scene and the nature of offender profiling.

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 4.

General information (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

Credit points and level

1 National Unit credit at SCQF level 5 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5*)

*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: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

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 crime scene protocol and the range of evidence which may be present.

Performance Criteria

(a) Describe the role of the First Officer Attending in securing a crime scene.
(b) Describe the range of physical evidence which may be available at a crime scene.

Outcome 2

Describe psychological evidence from a crime scene and the nature of offender profiling.

Performance Criteria

(a) Explain the meaning of psychological evidence.
(b) Describe the psychological evidence which may be gathered from a crime scene.
(c) Describe approaches to offender profiling.
(d) Differentiate between organised and disorganised criminals.

National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

Evidence Requirements for this Unit

Written and/or recorded oral evidence is required to demonstrate that candidates have achieved all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. Evidence must be generated under closed-book conditions and completed within 30 minutes.

Outcome 1

The candidate must provide written or oral recorded evidence to include:

An accurate description of how a crime scene is secured by the First Officer attending.

This must include the response to victims, preservation of crime scene and listing of physical evidence to be preserved.

An accurate description of three types of physical evidence at a crime scene which includes: biological evidence (eg blood, hair, semen), fingerprints, weapons.

Outcome 2

The candidate must provide written or oral recorded evidence to include:

An accurate explanation of the meaning of psychological evidence.

An accurate description of the psychological evidence which may be gathered from a crime scene which includes intent, cover up, and emotion or passion.

An accurate description of a minimum of two approaches: bottom up and top down or any other appropriate current approach to offender profiling and includes how a profiler may use the available information.

An accurate differentiation between organised and disorganised criminals which includes the following: how organised/disorganised a crime scene is and how this information can help categorise the perpetrator.

National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Criminology: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

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

Throughout this Unit the term 'crime scene' is used rather than 'scene of crime'. In the UK, 'scene of crime' is the accepted formal referent however within popular culture it is expected that candidates will be more familiar with the US term 'crime scene'. As this Unit aims to introduce candidates to more practical considerations rather than theoretical underpinnings of criminology the more accessible term 'crime scene' has been used. Candidates should not be penalised for using either term.

A suitable starting point for this Unit may include a study of killers, brought to justice through the work of forensic scientists. Ted Bundy was arrested after bite marks found on a victim could be traced to him; Harold Shipman was arrested due to a combination of drug evidence found in victims and evidence of forgery in patient documents (medical notes and wills); Andrezej Kunowski was convicted due to DNA and fingerprint evidence along with an eyewitness.

Outcome 1

Locard's Exchange Principle states that 'every contact leaves a trace'. The Scottish Police Services Authority: Forensic Services is an excellent internet resource for physical evidence. Physical evidence at a crime scene includes biological evidence (link to DNA debate) such as blood, hair, semen, sweat, saliva; weapons such as guns, knives, heavy blunt objects; fingerprints; environmental evidence such as tyre tracks, mud tracked indoors, broken window, etc.

The role of the First Officer Attending centres around helping live victims, securing the crime scene, preventing contamination of the physical crime scene until forensic examiners arrive.

There is the opportunity to include the DNA database debate within this Outcome. When DNA is collected at a crime scene or from a person who is of interest, should it be stored on a central database or does this violate our right to privacy? Should all children have a DNA sample taken at birth and stored on a central database? Candidates should be encouraged to explore their own views on the matter, to consider the views of others in class, and also to investigate the views of the police, government and victims of crime.

The Narborough Inquiry was the first example of DNA overturning a conviction (based on a false confession) and gaining a murder conviction.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

Outcome 2

Psychological evidence can include information available to an offender profiler. David Canter built a successful psychological profile of the Railway Rapist. There could be consideration of organised versus disorganised criminals (Hazelwood, 1987) and the type of crime scene each category would leave behind.

Guidance on learning and teaching approaches for this Unit

This Unit may incorporate tutor-led information and Q and A sessions, interactive crime scene investigation and debate.

Outcome 1

Use of the Scottish Police Services Authority: Forensic Services website could be used as a foundation for teaching and workshops. Candidates could be allocated a different service and asked to produce a short formative presentation (oral, PowerPoint, poster) to inform the class. Television shows such as the CSI franchise can provide short YouTube clips to illustrate particular aspects of physical evidence to be collected however it should be borne in mind that UK investigations observe crime scene preservation and non-contamination procedures and as such real life practice does not resemble the glamour (or timescale) of television. The DNA database debate could be delivered as a debate, with two opposing sides and an audience to ask questions of the panel.

An interesting illustration of where physical evidence can be collected involves candidates walking into the premises and counting the number of times they touch a surface (door, chair, table/desk, etc). There may be the opportunity to use a light box to illustrate how much evidence is on hands/fingers. They can also look at their fingerprints and identify if they are arches, loops or whorls. This can help them consider the parameters of a crime scene and the type of physical evidence they/FOA are trying to preserve.

Outcome 2

Real life cases can be used to illustrate psychological evidence from a crime scene. Offender profiling examples could focus on the work of David Canter (University of Liverpool) in establishing profiling in the UK. Candidates may be familiar with television shows such as *Criminal Minds* and *Wire in the Blood*. Care should be taken to remind candidates that television does not always reflect real life practice.

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

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 the workings of the police force. Careers in psychology or police support services or the police force could be mentioned in the introduction to the Unit
♦ Citizenship — this can be developed through considering the role of police and forensic services

Guidance on approaches to assessment for this Unit

A suitable assessment instrument should be chosen to allow the candidate to demonstrate knowledge across the Evidence Requirements. A single assessment instrument could cover requirements for Outcomes 1 and 2. This would be taken under closed-book conditions.

It is possible to have a formative assessment that includes a practical element for Outcome 1. This can include: taking and identifying fingerprints; role play for a First Officer Attending; analysis of photographic evidence for a scene of crime (eg fire scene, road traffic accident, staged classroom incident, etc). Guiding an avatar through a role-playing online gaming scenario is another possibility.

There is a wide variety of methods of assessment that would allow candidates to meet the knowledge and skills/Performance Criteria for this Unit. Likely evidence types for this Unit could include:

Written essays or structured questions or individual oral presentation or poster exhibition including oral explanation of poster. Candidates could also provide the Evidence Requirements in the form of an individual blog or creation of a website. Evidence can be provided in one form or in a combination of the suggested forms or any other method that meets the Evidence Requirements.

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), SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005).*

National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Criminology: Crime Scenes (SCQF level 5)

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

In this Unit candidates develop an understanding of the practical applications of criminology. Candidates will develop an understanding of the different types of evidence available at a crime scene and how this evidence is utilised.

Candidates will describe:

♦ the range of evidence available at a crime scene
♦ the role of the First Officer Attending in securing a crime scene
♦ approaches to offender profiling
♦ appropriate interviews/interrogations for persons of interest

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

In developing Communication skills activities may be written, such as 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.

Critical Thinking is developed through the DNA database debate.

In addition, candidates may develop aspects of the Core Skills of *Working with Others* and *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*.

Working with Others could be fostered through group research and presentations.

ICT skills can 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. The use of online assessment for practical content could also contribute here.

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
02	Minor amendment to "Guidance to approaches to assessment"	14/09/17