

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

Module Title

Law & Forensic Examination

Reference	PL2603	Version	2
Created	February 2024	SCQF Level	SCQF 8
Approved	June 2023	SCQF Points	30
Amended	April 2024	ECTS Points	15

Aims of Module

To provide students with an understanding of the framework within which the law operates and enable students to develop practical and communication skills in forensic imaging. The module will introduce discipline specific legal skills and methods, an exploration of the UK's divergent legal systems (English & Scots) and selected areas of law and provide the principles and practice of techniques used by forensic analysts and document examiners.

Learning Outcomes for Module

On completion of this module, students are expected to be able to:

- 1 Report on the sources of law, the structure of the legal system and the roles of its personnel.
- 2 Compare the elements of criminal liability and identify applicable defences.
- 3 Report on the principles of the law of evidence and procedure as they apply in criminal cases with reference to expert evidence.
- 4 Undertake experimental procedures using selected imaging instruments and show understanding of the principles of use and report accurately the results.
- 5 Compare the methods of construction of characters used in all instances of handwriting and identify both natural and deliberate modifications made to handwriting.

Indicative Module Content

The module outlines key features of the Scottish legal system, its law-making process, prosecution system, key legal personnel and impact of European law. Core legal concepts and skills are introduced followed by study of Scots criminal law and evidence. Students will undertake and report the findings of several prescribed experiments using different forensic imaging techniques, including microscopy, to analyse a range of forensic samples including fibres, footprints, fingerprints, bullets and documents. This will also include analysis of documents using a range of techniques including ESDA, microscopy, and video spectral comparison. Students will examine handwriting and signatures, construction of characters, natural variation, accidental and deliberate modification. This module aligns with United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. This module examines the process of law-making, the prosecution and courts system and Scots criminal law and evidence. Furthermore, students learn how to maintain the integrity of evidence during forensic examination, analysis, and interpretation, contributing towards a fair judicial system and strong institutions.

Module Delivery

This is a lecture based module supplemented by tutorials, practical laboratory classes and case study workshops.

Indicative Student Workload

	Full Time	Part Time
Contact Hours	125	N/A
Non-Contact Hours	175	N/A
Placement/Work-Based Learning Experience [Notional] Hours	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	300	N/A
<i>Actual Placement hours for professional, statutory or regulatory body</i>		

ASSESSMENT PLAN

If a major/minor model is used and box is ticked, % weightings below are indicative only.

Component 1

Type:	Coursework	Weighting:	50%	Outcomes Assessed:	1, 2, 3
Description:	Written report				

Component 2

Type:	Practical Exam	Weighting:	50%	Outcomes Assessed:	4, 5
Description:	Skills test				

MODULE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTOR**Explanatory Text**

The first grade represents Component 1 (Written Report) equally weighted with the second, Component 2 (Skills Test). A minimum of a Module Grade D is required to pass, with compensation of grade E in Component 1 or Component 2 permitted.

Module Grade	Minimum Requirements to achieve Module Grade:
A	AA, AB, BA
B	AC, AD, BB, BC, CA, CB, DA
C	AE, BD, BE, CC, CD, DB, DC, EA, EB
D	CE, DD, DE, EC, ED
E	AF, BF, CF, DF, EE, EF, FA, FB, FC, FD, FE
F	FF
NS	Non-submission of work by published deadline or non-attendance for examination

Module Requirements

Prerequisites for Module	Successful completion of Stage 1 Forensic and Analytical Science or equivalent.
Corequisites for module	None.
Precluded Modules	None.

INDICATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1 LANGFORD, A.M., DEAN J., REED R., HOLMES D.A., WEYERS J., and JONES A. *Practical Skills in Forensic Science*. Current Edition. Prentice Hall.
- 2 WHITE, P.C., *Crime Scene to Court, The Essentials of Forensic Science*. Current Edition. The Royal Society of Chemistry.
- 3 JACKSON A.R.W., JACKSON J.M., MOUNTAIN H., and BREARLEY D. *Forensic Science*. Current Edition. Pearson.
- 4 BELL S. and MORRIS K. *An Introduction to Microscopy*. Current Edition. CRC Press Taylor & Francis Group.
- 5 AUCHIE, D., 2014. Evidence. 4th ed. Edinburgh: W. Green. (Law Basics series)
- 6 CHRISTIE, S., 2009. An introduction to Scots criminal law.. 2nd ed. Dundee: Dundee University Press.
- 7 WHITE, R., WILLOCK, I., and MACQUEEN, H., 2013. The Scottish legal system. 5th ed. Hayward Heath: Bloomsbury Professional.