

Support for Teaching and Learning

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The Higher Education Academy exists to be a nationwide focus for enhancing teaching, learning and students' experiences in higher education. It works with institutions, discipline groups and individual staff within the four countries of the UK, in a number of ways, including:

- Informing policy
- Supporting institutions
- Research and evaluation
- Supporting learning
- Development and recognition
- Disciplines and networks

This disciplinary support is provided through a nationwide network of twenty four subject centres, hosted within higher education institutions. These subject centres provide workshops, resources, small grant funding for educational research and other activities relevant to the specific disciplines supported by each centre. Details about the full range of subject centres can be found at: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/networks/subjectcentres>

Criminology's recent benchmark statement (QAA, 2007) reflects the diverse and multi-disciplinary nature of the subject:

Criminology draws on the range of human and social science disciplines. The subject is evolving in its theoretical and methodological development, reflecting the rapid social changes it tries to capture and the increasing cross-fertilisation of ideas and methods between the human sciences (QAA, 2007:3.1).

This rich 'cross-fertilisation' provides us at the Academy with the opportunity to support learning and teaching of criminology across a number of relevant subject centres including: Social Policy and Social Work (SWAP); Sociology, Anthropology and Politics (C-SAP); Psychology; and Law (UKCLE).

At a recent meeting between these subject centres and the British Society of Criminology, preliminary discussion took place as to how we might be able to offer support for your learning and teaching in an effective and relevant way. As a first step, we hoped that it might be useful for you to see some of the range of resources currently available from the subject centres that may be useful in supporting your own teaching practice.

Resources to support learning and teaching in Criminology

Case studies from the Subject Centre for Social Policy and Social Work (SWAP):



Majella Kelkey (University of Hull), 'Target recruitment for under-represented groups in social policy and criminology'. Available at: <http://www.swap.ac.uk/docs/casestudies/csmkelkey.pdf>

Mike Stephens (Loughborough University) 'Sentencing policy', Available at: <http://www.swap.ac.uk/docs/casestudies/csmstephens.pdf>

This second case-study describes the use of a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to provide an information base for students studying a Criminology module. The aim is to use the facilities offered by e-learning to provide students with a large amount of text-based information in an accessible form and to offer an interactive exercise on-line for follow-up discussion in seminar groups.

Case studies from the Centre for Sociology, Anthropology and Politics (C-SAP):



C-SAP has supported the development of a Benchmark for Criminology, established by the British Society of Criminology.

'Developing and enhancing authentic assessment in crime investigation management modules on Applied Criminology degree programmes' - a mini project by the University of Gloucestershire. This project focuses on the development of 'authentic' scenario-based assessment tasks as a vehicle for promoting deep understanding of and critical reflection on a range of issues, concepts and methods applicable to management and leadership in the context of criminal investigation work.

'An investigation into recruitment, retention and programme preference of first year social science students' - a mini project by the University of Central Lancashire. The project identifies factors affecting recruitment and retention on Politics, Sociology and Criminology undergraduate programmes at UCLAN in order to facilitate and inform a review of current recruitment and retention strategies.

'Communicating across boundaries: e-communication on Criminal Justice issues' - a mini project by Manchester Metropolitan University evaluating and disseminating findings in relation to the International E-communication Exchange (IEE). The IEE represents a significant innovation in learning and teaching within criminology yet it is also transferable to other associated disciplines that hold the pedagogic desire to stimulate critical awareness, analytical thought and reflective practice.

Further information about these projects is at: http://www.c-sap.bham.ac.uk/subject_areas/projects/

From the Psychology Subject Centre:

'Teaching Criminology' - an event held at Sheffield Hallam University, 25 June 2007, with contributions from Helen Jones (Manchester Metropolitan University), Stephen Case (Swansea University) and Tom Ellis (Portsmouth University). PowerPoint slides and other materials can be found at: http://www.psychology.heacademy.ac.uk/html/event_reports_2007.asp



Case studies from the UK Centre for Legal Education (UKCLE):

'Designing a curriculum for criminal justice', a paper by Peter Handley and Brian Mitchell, University of Wolverhampton, presenting the curriculum design for a degree in criminal justice. The full paper can be found at: <http://www.ukcle.ac.uk/interact/lili/1999/mitchell.html>



Generic support and resources

In addition to subject-specific resources and activities provided by the subject centres, the Higher Education Academy also provides a range of generic learning and teaching resources and supports a number of themes and projects such as Assessment, Disability, Enhancing Learning Through Technology (ELT), Employability and enterprise, Internationalisation, Open Educational Resources (OER), Personal Development Planning (PDP), Personal tutoring and Sustainability. Details of each of these themes can be found at: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning>

Professional development and recognition

The Academy also offers professional development and recognition of staff in higher education including:

- Individual recognition
- National Teaching Fellowship Scheme
- New academic staff
- Part-time teachers
- Volunteering awards

Further details about this aspect of the Academy's work can be found at: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/professional>

We trust that this has given you some insights into the activities of the Higher Education Academy and its subject centres. We are committed to developing a purposeful relationship with the British Society of Criminology and to hear from you as to how we might further support you in your learning and teaching in higher education. Please do get in touch.

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Reference

QAA (2007) *Subject benchmark statements Criminology*, Gloucester: Qualifications Assurance Agency for Higher Education.