

# Programme Specification: Sociology and Criminology BA

## Course record information

<b>Name and level of final award</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts with Honours - Sociology and Criminology</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts with Honours - Sociology and Criminology with International Experience</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts with Honours - Sociology and Criminology with Professional Experience</li> </ul> <p>The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA first cycle degree or diploma compatible</p>
<b>Name and level of intermediate awards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts (BA) - Sociology and Criminology</li> <li>• Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE) - Sociology and Criminology</li> <li>• Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) - Sociology and Criminology</li> </ul>
<b>Awarding body/institution</b>	University of Westminster
<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Westminster
<b>Status of awarding body/institution</b>	Recognised Body
<b>Location of delivery</b>	Primary: Central London
<b>Language of delivery and assessment</b>	English
<b>QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</b>	<p><a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-sociology.pdf?sfvrsn=6ee2cb81_4">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-sociology.pdf?sfvrsn=6ee2cb81_4</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-criminology.pdf?sfvrsn=8f2c881_4">https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-criminology.pdf?sfvrsn=8f2c881_4</a></p>
<b>Professional statutory or regulatory body</b>	N/A
<b>Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA Sociology and Criminology FT, Full-time, September start - 3 years standard length with an optional year abroad or placement</li> <li>• BA Sociology and Criminology PT, Part-time day, September start - 4 years standard length with an optional year abroad or placement</li> </ul>
<b>Valid for cohorts</b>	From 2022/3 Levels 4, 5 and 6

## **Admissions requirements**

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/how-to-apply>

## **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Applicants with prior certificated or experiential learning at the same level of the qualification for which they wish to apply are advised to visit the following page for further information:

<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/guides-and-policies/student-matters/recognition-of-prior-learning>

## Aims of the programme

The aims of the BA (Hons) Sociology and Criminology at Westminster has been designed to produce graduates who are inspiring, active and informed global citizens who are interested and engaged with social issues in their communities and beyond. The course aims to develop students' knowledge and understanding of Criminology and Sociology as interdisciplinary subject areas. It aims to develop the skills necessary for intellectual enquiry by encouraging students to question and think critically about the ways in which societies operate.

Sociology and Criminology are complementary disciplines that make perfect partners in a degree programme. With current fears and anxieties about 'Broken Britain' and growing concerns relating to national and global security, the study of these two disciplines has never been more important. Combining sociology and criminology enables students to study the ways in which power relations operate in society. Students will gain knowledge and understanding of the complex social, political and ideological dimensions of legal institutions and the relationships between law, justice and society. In both sociology and criminology we aim to foreground issues of equality, social justice and human rights, in order to help develop our students as effective, active and critical citizens. The lives and interests of our students are reflected both in module content relating to diversity and in our approach to learning and teaching.

A distinctive feature of the course is our use of London as a learning and teaching resource, with several modules offering field trips around the city such as museum visits and themed street walks. As a Sociology and Criminology BA student at Westminster, you'll be part of a diverse and international student culture, and you can also gain valuable experience studying abroad for a semester. The programme is led by both Sociology and Criminology specialists in their fields, whose interests include human rights, migration, gender and sexuality, ethnicity, social activism, media, criminal psychology, theory and methodology.

The course aims to provide a wide variety of modules in sociology and criminology which will engage, stimulate, challenge and enthuse students, to develop their qualities of perception and judgement. The Sociology and Criminology combined course offers a greater variety of option modules than the respective single honours programmes, enabling students to create a 'bespoke' degree which follows their own areas of interests. The course enables students to identify and deploy a range of research strategies, including qualitative and quantitative methods and the use of published data sources, and to select and apply appropriate strategies for specific research problems. The programme provides both an essential and an additional optional module where students are expected to undertake work placements, providing essential practical experience and facilitating graduate career progression.

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The course has been designed to engage critically with questions of structure, power and identity formation. These are embedded across core and option modules from level 4 onwards, working from the basis that decolonising the curriculum is not something that can be ever finished, but rather needs to be an aspirational goal and central to broader conversations about social justice and liberatory pedagogies.

Beyond what can be achieved through a traditional engagement with library sources, module leaders regularly bring in guest speakers including academics, activists, students, alumni and community organisations. Fieldtrips and excursions led by community members and activists are also a regular feature of the course. This ensures that staff members as well as students continue to develop and challenge their practices and understanding of key issues related to social justice and critical education. We engage in open dialogue with students on our modules about how we navigate sociology and criminology as a discipline and how it does and does not address questions of diversity and decolonising.

Students' lived experiences are integral to the design and assessment of modules. The knowledges that students bring into the University from their communities are a valuable resource for revising and constantly updating and challenging existing material and practices of teaching and producing knowledge. This is further achieved by designing assessments so that students can follow through on the topics addressed in modules and delve deeper into questions of diversity and decolonising. We ensure that these areas are addressed in both core and option modules so that all students benefit from these pedagogic approaches. Finally, conversations, workshops and a core module on employability are all part of the course. These are designed holistically so that they integrate institutional and sector ambitions around employability and are responsive to our students' aspirations and beneficial to their communities.

## Employment and further study opportunities

University of Westminster graduates will be able to demonstrate the following five Graduate Attributes:

- Critical and creative thinkers
- Literate and effective communicator
- Entrepreneurial
- Global in outlook and engaged in communities
- Social, ethically and environmentally aware

University of Westminster courses capitalise on the benefits that London as a global city and as a major creative, intellectual and technology hub has to offer for the learning environment and experience of our students.

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The BA Honours Sociology and Criminology aims to create graduates who have acquired core competencies through practice-based learning. Embedded in the content and assessment of our combined degree are the opportunities to acquire attributes much sought after by employers, namely:

- Thinking creatively or 'outside the box' in solving problems and displaying initiative and willingness to tackle a problem or issue;
- The ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a team with minimal supervision;
- Numeracy and ICT skills including information retrieval and data management;
- Research, evaluation and analytical skills;
- Verbal and written communication skills;
- The ability to present an evidence-based argument;
- Awareness of issues around diversity and difference;
- Time management.

A degree combining Sociology and Criminology prepares students for a diverse range of professional careers because it develops high level critical analytical and evaluative competencies, self and social awareness. Many of our students enter what might be described as people-related professions such as human resources, marketing, teaching or social work, or they join private companies, national or local government or voluntary organisations. Their interest may have been sparked by specific modules in areas such as youth policy, media and crime or migration and identity. A significant number of students are inspired to continue to further study for Master's degrees and PhDs at prestigious institutions and subsequently make the transition to academic jobs in teaching and/or research at this or other universities.

Students on the course are encouraged from the first year onwards to develop career management skills and to identify skills gaps and remedy them through further training provided by the university e.g. in IT, modern languages and academic literacy or through voluntary or paid work. At Level 5 students undertake a compulsory work experience module which requires them to research and negotiate a suitable work placement and gain valuable experience in applying their knowledge and skills in a workplace setting. In addition to this, there is an optional module at Level 6 where students can continue to further their work experience as they prepare to leave Higher Education and enter employment. For many students the work experience placement has been crucial in making connections in a field of work and has led to enhanced employment opportunities after graduation.

## What will you be expected to achieve?

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are

threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)
- Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)
- Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)
- Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

**Level 4 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 4 you will be able to:

- L4.1 Describe a range of key concepts and theoretical approaches within sociology and criminology. ( KU )
- L4.10 Develop employability skills through team working, group dynamics, communications skills and time management ( GA PPP KTS )
- L4.2 Recognise patterns of social diversity and inequality and ways of addressing them through decolonising and associated perspectives, with particular relevance to relationships between law, social justice and society. ( KU )
- L4.3 Recognise the nature of social relationships between individuals, groups and social institutions. ( KU )
- L4.4 Identify methodological concepts and frameworks, and their strengths and weaknesses ( KU )
- L4.5 Summarise the findings of empirical sociological and criminological research. ( PPP )
- L4.6 Identify a well-defined focus for enquiry, undertake research, demonstrating an awareness of ethical issues, and communicate results effectively. ( KTS )
- L4.7 Retrieve reliable information, cite evidence and produce coherently structured arguments and written work ( KU KTS )
- L4.8 Reflect on your own work, work effectively with others and recognise the factors that affect team performance ( KU )
- L4.9 Formulate an understanding of the importance of critical thinking and its value in relation to various employment contexts. ( GA PPP KTS )

**Level 5 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 5 you will be able to:

- 5.12 The ability to apply theories, concepts and research skills related to the field to the cultural and political context(s) of the society within which the experience takes place. (KU) ( GA PPP KTS )
- L5.1 Evidence detailed knowledge of a range of key concepts and theoretical approaches in sociology and criminology ( KU )
- L5.10 An understanding of the demands and opportunities of working and/or studying in an international context. ( GA PPP )
- L5.2 Analyse patterns of social diversity and inequality and ways of addressing them through decolonising and associated perspectives. ( KU )
- L5.3 Analyse the ways in which sociology and criminology offer particular forms of understanding and identify the value of the discipline's work to social, public and policy issues ( PPP )
- L5.4 Critically assess diverse (qualitative and quantitative) methodologies and illustrate their use in gaining sociological and criminological knowledge ( PPP )
- L5.5 Construct evidence-based arguments that reflect on epistemological limitations ( KU )
- L5.6 Assess your own capabilities, and use feedback to adapt your actions to reach desired aim ( GA KTS )
- L5.7 Produce clear, fluent and coherently structured written work that draws on and cites evidence from a range of sources, demonstrating an ability to synthesise and evaluate competing explanations ( PPP KTS )
- L5.8 Interact and communicate effectively within a team, and recognise and ameliorate situations likely to lead to conflict ( GA KTS )
- L5.9 An ability to locate, organise and successfully complete a form of work-based learning in an appropriate organisational setting ( PPP )

**Additional Year course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Additional Year you will be able to:

- L5.11 An understanding of the demands and opportunities of working and/or studying in an international context (

**Level 6 course learning outcomes:** upon completion of Level 6 you will be able to:

- L6.1 Evidence a systematic understanding of key concepts and theoretical approaches in sociology and criminology and evaluate their application to questions across the two disciplines ( KU )
- L6.2 Critically evaluate patterns of social diversity and inequality, their effects, and ways of addressing them through decolonising and associated perspectives ( KU )
- L6.3 Generate original research questions, and formulate and investigate questions across a range of specialist areas in either of the two disciplines ( PPP KTS )
- L6.4 Employ sociological methodologies to generate new data, and critically analyse material with appreciation of theory, evidence and relevance to current sociological and criminological debates ( PPP KTS )
- L6.5 Demonstrate depth of engagement with specialist areas of knowledge in sociological and criminological research ( KU )
- L6.6 Illustrate the relationship between different kinds of sociological argument and evidence; identify and comment on the value of sociological work with regard to social, ethical and policy issues ( KU GA )
- L6.7 Produce professional level, evidence-based, critical and analytical written work ( GA KTS )
- L6.8 . Act with minimal supervision, taking responsibility for accessing support, and accept accountability for outcomes ( GA KTS )
- L6.9 Communicate your awareness of how your personal responsibility and professional codes of conduct contribute to fostering ethical and sustainable leadership skills ( GA PPP )

## How will you learn?

### Learning methods

At the heart of the degree is its learning and teaching strategy which encompasses a wide variety of teaching methods designed to accommodate the diverse learning needs and experiences of our students. Students are supported and encouraged to develop into autonomous, self-directed learners through experiential, reflective and research-based learning.

### Teaching methods

During the course your learning will be facilitated through a combination of:

**Lectures:** Hour-long lectures are used to provide a core of knowledge as a basis for further guided independent study. In addition to providing a common foundation of learning they also develop the skills of listening, note-taking and reflection. We encourage deep learning in lectures through interactive engagements and the use of a variety of audio-visual and presentational methods.

**Seminars:** These provide opportunities for student-centred and active learning and are used to examine and discuss material covered in lectures, to broaden debates around issues raised in lectures or set readings, and to provide support and guidance on the preparation of coursework. Individual or group exercises are a key element of seminars, providing an opportunity for students to rehearse and revise ideas in interaction with others, to benefit from the diversity of others' experience and to develop skills in oral presentation and communication. Seminars also provide opportunities for early formative assessment and feedback, a vital component of the learning experience and a means for developing sociological skills and analysis. Sociology and Criminology Combined students will have the opportunity to work together as a cohort at Levels 4 and 5, as well as being integrated with Single honours students from both disciplines throughout the three years.

**Workshops and Practical Classes:** Different kinds of workshops and practical classes are used on some modules and encompass a varied range of activities designed to allow students to practice new ways of thinking, work with new techniques of data collection or analysis, or to engage in close analysis of texts or case studies. Some workshops will be taught in computer laboratories where specialist methods software packages are available, to provide the opportunity for practical, hands-on learning. Other workshops may take place online, in the library or off-campus and/or involve film screenings, guest speakers, presentation of student work-in-progress, or the execution of set tasks prepared by students in advance.

**Field Trips:** London is used as a rich resource for students to engage with and investigate through fieldwork. A significant number of modules make use of the university's central location to facilitate 'off-site' learning. These field trips support learning or are part of assessments. Previous field trips have included: visits to the High Court of Justice and the

BBC, walking tours of Black London, leisure sites in Clerkenwell, LGBT History in Soho and street art in the Brick Lane area; exhibition visits to the Museum of London, the Museum of London at Docklands and the Victoria & Albert museum; visits to archives at the Stuart Hall library, the Women's Library and the Wellcome Collection. Other trips abroad have included Berlin and Paris.

**Individual Tutorials:** Individual tutorials are used to support group sessions on some modules, especially as students progress through the course and are expected to undertake more independent work such as small scale research and selecting topics/ texts/images for analysis. Individual tutorials are used most heavily in the final year honours dissertation, where students are assigned a supervisor who they meet at regular intervals to discuss their dissertation research.

**International exchanges:** Students will be able to take part in international exchanges through our study abroad programme and/or our international fieldtrips.

**Internships and work placements:** With an internship programme students can complete a work placement for credit. In addition, we are able to offer students further support in developing their work profile through the University's Career Development Centre.

In addition to the above modes of learning and teaching, the course provision also includes resources and guidance for independent learning which is supported through: advice and support from research-active teaching staff; access to a range of paper and electronic resources (books, journals and other sources); access to IT resources including hardware, software and the necessary technical support. The course also makes extensive use of:

**Virtual Learning Environment:** The virtual learning environment, Blackboard, is used as a central communication point between staff and students and is used for the following purposes:

- To supply readings, lecture notes, module documents, assessment guidance and seminar materials, thus increasing students' access to key resources;
- To link to/embed audio, visual and web content, including module-specific podcasts, lecture recordings, video content and task information;
- To provide reading lists with hyperlinks and downloadable module handbooks;
- To allow online submission of assessments via Turnitin, and online provision of feedback and marks;
- Discussion boards, Wikis and blogs for use in online workshops and to enable students to work together in preparation for classes and assessments;
- To provide links to other sources of study skills and learning support within the university;
- To keep students up to date with module events or changes via announcements.

**Guides to Study:** In their first year, every student is issued with a copy of the 'Guide to Writing and Referencing', also known as 'the red book'. It provides a clear guide on academic referencing and bibliography formatting, as well as guidance on structuring essays, interpreting assessment guidelines and how to avoid common usage and grammatical errors. The 'red book' has been identified as an example of good practice by the department and it has been adapted for use in a number of other HE institutions. For every module students take there is a comprehensive module handbook which contains details of lecture, seminar and workshop schedules, module learning outcomes, assessment instructions and criteria and full reading lists.

## Assessment methods

The course offers a variety of assessment to students which aim to stimulate, motivate and challenge. Formative, summative and synoptic assessments are carried out across the course. Assessment offers a way of measuring whether the learning outcomes at module and course level have been achieved and to what standard. At each level and within each module, assessments have been designed which assess not only knowledge, but skills. The range of assessment methods used on the course includes:

- Essays;
- Autobiographical and self-reflective analyses;
- Critical literature reviews and commentaries;
- Policy reports, manifestos and campaign design;
- Case studies;
- Oral presentations and interviews (group and individual);
- Analytical exercises including deconstruction of images and discourses;
- Practical research tasks (designing materials, collecting data and analysis);
- Computer-based assessments;
- Portfolios;
- Learning plans, logs, diaries and reflections;
- In-class tests;
- Exams (unseen, take-home and open-book);
- Dissertation.

### Formative Assessment and Feedback

Formative assessments are an important part of the assessment strategy. Students are given opportunities to undertake formative assessment on all modules. Formative assessment takes place in seminars and workshops, and through assessed work that rehearses skills required at a more advanced level in subsequent assessments or modules.

Central to the effectiveness of formative assessment is the provision of feedback to students. Formative feedback that 'feeds forwards' enables students to measure their progress, reflect upon the effectiveness of their learning and to make appropriate improvements in their work. This feedback may be given via comments on planned or draft work, in response to workshop presentations/tasks, via peer-assessment and class discussions or online via discussion boards and blogs. More formal, written feedback is provided to students on summative assessments (those which contribute to the mark on a module). Such feedback is designed to be constructive, forward-looking and formative in character. We expect students to reflect on their feedback and integrate it into future work on the course.

To help you understand your grade the University have developed generic descriptors for each level of study that can be found in every module proforma. Further, specific assessment criteria for each assessment will be provided in module handbooks.

Graduate Attribute	Evident in Course Outcomes
Critical and creative thinker	L4.1, L4.10, L4.3, L4.9, L5.1, L5.3, L5.6, L5.9, L6.6
Literate and effective communicator	L4.2, L4.8, L5.10, L5.2, L5.7, L5.8, L6.2, L6.7, L6.8, L6.9
Entrepreneurial	5.12, L4.10, L5.10, L5.11
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	L4.2, L5.10, L5.11, L5.2
Socially, ethically and environmentally aware	L4.2, L4.6, L5.6, L6.2, L6.9

## Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules are described as:



- **Core** modules are compulsory and must be undertaken by all students on the course.
- **Option** modules give you a choice of modules and are normally related to your subject area.
- **Electives**: are modules from across the either the whole University or your College. Such modules allow you to broaden your academic experience. For example, where electives are indicated you may choose to commence the study of a foreign language alongside your course modules (and take this through to the final year), thereby adding further value to your degree.
- Additional information may also be included above each level for example where you must choose one of two specific modules.

## Modules

### Level 4

Award of Certificate of Higher Education available

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
4SOCL002W	Identity and Society	Core	20	10
4CRIM008W	Researching Crime and Society	Core	20	10
4CRIM001W	The Criminological Imagination	Core	40	20
4SOCL001W	Thinking Sociologically	Core	20	10
4CRIM003W	Controversies in Criminal Justice	Option	20	10
4CRIM005W	Crime and the London Underworld	Option	20	10
4SOCL007W	Gender and Sexuality Studies	Option	20	10
4CRIM002W	Justice and Human Rights	Option	20	10
4SOCL003W	London Explored	Option	20	10
4CRIM004W	Psychology and Crime	Option	20	10
4SOCL006W	Social Media, Culture and Society	Option	20	10
4SOCL004W	Understanding Race	Option	20	10
		Elective	20	10

### Level 5

Award of Diploma of Higher Education or Foundation Degree available

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
5SOCL001W	Modern Social Theory	Core	20	10
5CRIM001W	Radical Criminology	Core	20	10
5SOCL015W	Research Methods in Sociology and Criminology	Core	20	10
5SOCL003W	Work -based Learning	Core	20	10
5SOCL014W	Childhood Youth and Society	Option	20	10
5SOCL002W	Education Now	Option	20	10
5SOCL006W	Emotional Life	Option	20	10
5SOCL011W	Food, Taste and Consumption	Option	20	10
5CRIM006W	Forensic Criminal Psychology	Option	20	10
5CRIM004W	Gender, Crime and Justice	Option	20	10
5SOCL009W	Globalisation and the Media	Option	20	10

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
5CRIM002W	Globalisation, Crime and Control	Option	20	10
5SOCL013W	Leisure, Pleasure and the Sociology of Fun	Option	20	10
5CRIM003W	Race, Power & Criminal Justice	Option	20	10
5SOCL012W	The City, Community, and Belonging	Option	20	10
5CRIM005W	Youth, Crime and Justice	Option	20	10
		Elective	20	10

## Additional Year

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
5SOCL017W	Sociology and Criminology International Experience Year	Option	120	60
5SOCL016W	Sociology and Criminology Professional Experience Year	Option	120	60

## Level 6

Award BA available

Award BA Honours available.

Module Code	Module Title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
6SOCL013W	Dissertation in Sociology and Criminology	Core	40	20
6CRIM014W	Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice	Option	20	10
6SOCL002W	Contemporary Social Theory	Option	20	10
6SOCL003W	Families, Intimacies and Personal Life	Option	20	10
6SOCL011W	Gender, Education and Identity	Option	20	10
6CRIM004W	Human Rights and Global Injustice	Option	20	10
6CRIM009W	Immigration, Borders and (In)Justice	Option	20	10
6CRIM007W	Issues in State Crime	Option	20	10
6SOCL004W	Making Bodies	Option	20	10
6SOCL007W	Making the News	Option	20	10
6CRIM006W	Media and Crime	Option	20	10
6CRIM005W	Psychology, Crime and the Popular Imagination	Option	20	10
6CRIM003W	Punishment and Modern Society	Option	20	10
6SOCL005W	Social movements, media and society	Option	20	10
6SOCL014W	Sociology of Religion	Option	20	10
6SOCL009W	The Cultural Politics of Race	Option	20	10
6CRIM010W	Work Experience in Criminology and Criminal Justice	Option	20	10
		Elective	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

## Professional body accreditation or other external references

N/A

## Course management

The BA Honours Sociology and Criminology and all the modules that make up the degree are managed by the teaching team and co-ordinated by the Sociology and Criminology course leader. Students will meet the course leader during Orientation week and thereafter they will be available either by email, during weekly office hours, or by appointment. The degree is part of a suite of BA Honours degrees in the School of Social Sciences, for which the head of school is ultimately responsible. Regular course team meetings are held and attended by full-time, fractional and part-time Visiting Lecturer staff to discuss course content, learning and teaching, academic and social activities and deal with any concerns.

Individual modules have a module leader who is responsible for the smooth running of that module. Module leaders are available in term-time in their office hours or by appointment. All staff are committed to a collaborative and reflexive engagement in learning and teaching as an academic and social community, where mutual respect and peer support are core values. To this end we ask all students to observe the policy for respect in the learning environment whereby mutual responsibilities for engagement in the course are clearly set out for staff and students alike.

Each student is assigned a personal academic tutor to whom they may turn for advice on academic or pastoral matters. At Levels Four and Five (years one and two) students will be assigned a personal tutor from the Sociology or Criminology team. At Level Six (year three) students' dissertation supervisors will also act as their personal tutor. During March of the first and second year students will have the opportunity to choose their option modules for the subsequent year following consultation with academic staff.

## Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/blackboard](http://westminster.ac.uk/blackboard).

## Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development).

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

## Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/student-advice](http://westminster.ac.uk/student-advice). The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/students-union](http://westminster.ac.uk/students-union).

## How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2021. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

## How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

## Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations).

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

## Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard>

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development).

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their

own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

## Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice>.

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union>

## How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university, a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

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This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must incorporate this Copyright Notice – 2021©

## **Additional Details**

### **Study Community**

Outside of formal learning and modules the Sociology and Criminology course has a lively community of staff, students and alumni that new students are encouraged to get involved in, and which offers alternative sources of support and engagement on the course.

- Westminster Sociology, the name of the sociology Facebook page and Twitter feed, is an excellent and easy way to stay connected to Sociology. The Sociology team use it to highlight happenings in the department, staff and student news, as well as external academic and cultural events around London.
- The Westminster Sociology wordpress blog contains longer pieces by or about staff and issues relating to Sociology.
- Research seminars take place regularly during the semester and are a chance for students to hear researchers from Westminster and other universities talk about their work. Events are very informal and a great opportunity to discuss ideas outside the classroom!
- The Students' Union Sociology and Criminology societies have in previous years been run by and for students, to do the things that students want to do – trips, film screenings, debates, campaigns, parties.

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