

MODULE DESCRIPTOR

MODULE TITLE	Forensic Risk Assessment		
MODULE CODE	PS4804 (L7)	CREDIT VALUE	20 / 10 ECTS
SCHOOL	SCHOOL OF SCIENCE		

MODULE AIMS

This module aims to:

1. Identify a number of areas relevant to conducting and interpreting assessments with offenders, with a particular focus on the assessment of violent and sexual offenders.
2. Review the theoretical basis underpinning risk assessments.
3. Outline ethical and good practice guidelines that should be adhered to when conducting and presenting assessments both in professional reports and when feeding back to clients.
4. Develop students' skills in reading and interpreting primary sources.

MODULE CONTENT

Introduction to risk assessment: risk assessment as 'litigation support' and its role in protecting victims.
 Historical developments: Overview of risk assessment actuarial vs. clinical approaches.
 Ethics and professional issues in risk assessment.
 Recent developments: Structured clinical assessment and incorporating treatment gains.
 Assessing risk across the lifespan.
 Compiling assessments: Good practice.
 Completing assessments: The Historical, Clinical and Risk Management Guide (HCR-20).
 Functional Analysis: Its link to assessment.
 Completing and presenting a professional report with attention to the Civil Procedure Rules (Part 35).

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this module a student will be able to:

1. Select, synthesize and evaluate the relevant research literature in depth, on a specific aspect of risk assessment.
2. Present a comprehensive risk assessment that includes a functional analysis.
3. Write a professional assessment report, with due attention to ethical considerations.
4. Demonstrate skills in independent learning and critical analysis appropriate to postgraduate study such as producing critically evaluative coursework and identifying their own sources.

TEACHING METHODS

The module will be taught via formal lectures and seminars, with one independent learning session. The lectures will provide the theory behind forensic risk assessment, with the seminars allowing students an opportunity to complete an assessment, a functional analysis and a professional assessment report that includes the most up to date researched methods for risk assessment and relevant literature.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

This module is assessed through an essay (40%) and a report (60%).