

Options with criminology

Your skills

Over the course of your degree you develop a good mix of subject specific and technical skills as well as transferable core skills. Consider these alongside your other activities, such as paid work, volunteering, family responsibilities, sport, membership of societies, leadership roles, etc. Think about how these can be used as evidence of your skills and personal attributes. Then you can start to market and sell who you *really* are, identify what you may be lacking and consider how to improve your profile.

Studying criminology draws on a range of academic disciplines and develops a range of analytical and critical skills which will be of benefit to you in a variety of future careers.

The degree programme develops specific skills related to criminology, which can be applied in a variety of working environments related to this subject. These include: an understanding of crime, its background and consequences; the values and workings of the legal system; knowledge of the social process of crime and the criminal justice system; judging and evaluating evidence. You may develop research skills, including data collection and analysis and statistical or quantitative techniques through practical and project work.

In addition, you will develop a range of transferable skills which can be applied in a variety of careers in both the business and public sectors. These include written and oral communication, group work, analytical skills, problem solving, working to deadlines, and IT skills.

Relevant experience will be valued by future employers, particularly for careers related to criminology. It's therefore important that while you are a student, you take advantage of any opportunities - paid or unpaid - that will help develop your skills and experience. This may include voluntary work with offenders and/or victims of crime, or as a special constable with your local police force.

Job options

Bear in mind that it's not just your degree discipline that determines your options. Look at [your degree... what next?](#) for informed advice on career planning and graduate employment, or take a look at [what jobs would suit me?](#) a helpful starting point for self-analysis.

You can choose between jobs that are degree-related or those that appeal because they use other interests or elements of your degree.

Jobs directly related to your degree

- [Barrister](#) - presents cases in court under instruction from a solicitor. Barristers can specialise in criminal practice and undertake criminal prosecution or defence in all courts. Postgraduate training and qualifications are essential.
- [Police officer](#) - responsible for the protection of life and property; the prevention and detection of crime; the maintenance of law and order; and the preparation of documentation and evidence for the prosecution of offenders.
- [Probation officer](#) - involved with the supervision of offenders in the community, the care of offenders in custody and the aftercare of released offenders.
- [Prison governor](#) - manages prisons and is responsible for the safe custody of prisoners before and during trials, and after conviction.
- [Solicitor, non-commercial](#) - provides a wide range of legal

support and advice to clients. Criminal law practitioners deal with every stage of the criminal justice system from police station interviews through to trial. Postgraduate training and qualifications are essential.

Jobs where your degree would be useful

- [Community development worker](#) - aims to empower communities by helping them to develop the skills to regain control over, and improve the quality of, their lives. Much of the work is project-based, giving the community development worker a particular location or social issue as their remit
- [Local government administrator](#) - assists in the formulation of policies and procedures, and advises on and co-ordinates their implementation. Areas of specialisation related to crime may include crime reduction and community safety.
- [Personal adviser](#) - provides information, advice and guidance to young people aged 13-19 in England.
- [Social researcher](#) - designs, formulates and carries out social research, interprets results and then disseminates the findings.
- [Social worker](#) - works with people who need help or protection (these may include young offenders or people with drug/alcohol problems), providing support to enable clients to help themselves. Maintains professional relationships with service users, acting as a guide, advocate or critical friend.

Other options

You may be interested in taking time out after graduation, to travel or to gain further experience. It's important to plan this well in advance in order to make the most of the opportunities available and to consider what you might gain in terms of experience, insight and skills. Practical experience, gained through volunteering, work shadowing or work experience, is important in entering many careers of interest to criminology students and employers will value the commitment and initiative that this demonstrates as well as the experience itself.

Although some of the jobs listed here might not be first jobs for many graduates, they are among the many realistic possibilities with your degree, provided you can demonstrate you have the attributes employers are looking for. It's also worth noting that many graduate vacancies don't specify particular degree disciplines, so don't restrict your thinking to the jobs listed here.

[Explore types of jobs](#) to find out more about the above options and related jobs.

Career areas

Every year statistics are collected to show what HE students do immediately after graduation. These can be a useful guide but, in reality, with the data being collected within just six months of graduation, many graduates are travelling, waiting to start a course, paying off debts, getting work experience or still deciding what they want to do. For further information about some of the areas of employment commonly entered by graduates of any degree discipline, check out [what do graduates do?](#) and [your degree... what next?](#)

Popular career choices for criminology graduates include the police (not only police officer training but also civilian posts such as crime analysts); the prison and probation services; community and youth work; the legal profession; and academic or policy research. Other employment related to crime could include the security and intelligence services; forensic accounting; and

insurance claims work. Although these careers obviously relate to criminology, the majority of them are open to graduates in any degree subject and are unlikely to specify a criminology degree.

A substantial number of criminology graduates enter support work in a wide range of social welfare fields such as homelessness, work with refugees and victim support. This is often a way of developing experience and skills in order to progress further in this field or to improve their chances of entry to one of the careers noted above.

Where are the jobs?

Many criminology graduates enter employment in central and local government or other non-profit-making organisations. Opportunities also exist in educational institutions and the private sector. Employment in these sectors has increased in recent years. For further details, see:

- [Local, regional and national government](#) - includes social services, emergency services and youth work;
- [Social care](#) - this covers many issues and operates in many settings: in hospitals or health centres; in educational settings; in community groups; in residential homes, advice centres or even in people's own homes.
- [Voluntary](#) - there are voluntary organisations dealing with every conceivable area of society.

Career management is an ongoing process; one that you'll no doubt develop throughout your working life. [Explore job sectors](#) for further information on all the above employment areas.

Further study

A substantial number of criminology graduates go on to further study - 36% were in full-time study in 2007, six months after graduation.

Only half this number were studying for a higher degree; others were studying on vocational courses such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or law conversion courses.

A further 8% of graduates were working and studying. Many of these would be working in career areas related to their degree while working towards a relevant vocational qualification through on-the-job training or part-time study.

Those students who undertake postgraduate academic study often do so in order to take their subject knowledge further by undertaking an MA in Criminology, Criminal Justice or a related area.

These trends show only what previous graduates in your subject did immediately upon graduating. Over the course of their career - the first few years in particular - many others will opt for some form of further study, either part time or full time. If further study interests you, start by thinking [about postgrad study](#). [Find courses and research](#) to identify your options; you can also [apply for courses online](#).

Look at [funding my further study](#) for more details relating to finance and the application process.

What next?

Don't forget there are alternatives to entering employment or postgraduate study, such as taking time out, volunteering or travelling. Longer term, you may want to consider starting your own business. For something different, check out [self-employment](#) and [flexible working](#) or explore [working and studying abroad](#).

This should have started you thinking about your future. Whether you are in the early stages of career planning, or you have definite ideas about what you want to do, you will find further information to help you in the following sections:

- Analyse your skills, interests and motivations to find out [what jobs would suit me?](#)
- [Explore types of jobs](#) to find out about entry requirements, salaries and working conditions.
- [Explore job sectors](#) for hints on breaking into various

industries.

- [Find graduate employers](#) and see what they have to offer.
- Look at the advice on [applications, CVs and interviews](#).
- Get [work experience](#) through vacation work or a work placement.
- [Find courses and research](#) and investigate postgraduate study opportunities.
- If you have already graduated, get online [interactive advice](#).
- Visit [your university careers service](#) for a wealth of advice and resources to help with your career planning.

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