Unit Outline 2014
Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Mathematics

Forensic Science 1
8778
This Unit Outline must be read in conjunction with:

a) *UC Student Guide to Policies*, which sets out University-wide policies and procedures, including information on matters such as plagiarism, grade descriptors, moderation, feedback and deferred exams, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

b) *UC Guide to Student Services*, and is available at *(scroll to bottom of page)*

c) Any additional information specified in section 6h.

### 1: General Information

1a Unit title: Forensic Science 1  
1b Unit number: 8778  
1c Teaching Period and year offered: Semester 1, 2014  
1d Credit point value: 3 cp  
1e Unit level: Level 1  
1f Name of Unit Convener and contact details (including telephone and email)
   
   James Robertson: james.robertson@canberra.edu.au  
   6201 2870, Room 7D18  

1g Administrative contact details (including name, location, telephone and email)
   
   Academic Programs Office  
   Faculty Administrative Office 6C38  
   ESTeM-courseadvice@canberra.edu.au  
   6201 2400

### 2: Academic Content

2a Unit description and learning outcomes  
This unit will introduce the principles of forensic science, the individual forensic science disciplines, the types of physical evidence, the practical skills required for crime scene investigation, the role of forensic science in the legal system, and the preparation and delivery of forensic evidence to the courts.

On completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. apply a knowledge of basic concepts in forensic science in the areas of crime scene examination, impression evidence, fires and explosions, document examination, fingerprints, toxicology, biological evidence, electronic evidence, and general trace evidence;

2. demonstrate an awareness of the role of forensic evidence in the legal system.
2b Generic skills

The University recognises that individuals entering its programs bring with them a diversity of personal and professional attributes that should be further developed by their experience as students and graduates of the University. These generic skills can be accessed at: https://guard.canberra.edu.au/policy/policy.php?pol_id=3030

By the end of their course, graduates will have developed skills and attributes in:

1. Communication
The ability to present knowledge, ideas and opinions effectively and communicate within and across professional and cultural boundaries

2. Analysis and inquiry
The ability to gather information, and to analyse and evaluate information and situations in a systematic, creative and insightful way

3. Problem solving
The ability to apply problem-solving processes in novel situations; to identify and analyse problems then formulate and implement solutions

4. Working independently and with others
The ability to plan their own work, be self-directed, and use interpersonal skills and attitudes to work collaboratively

5. Professionalism and social responsibility
The capacity and intention to use professional knowledge and skills ethically and responsibly, for the benefit of others and the environment

Personal attributes
Individuals entering our programs bring with them a diversity of attributes and experiences. As students of the University they will develop the qualities of critical thinking, curiosity and reflective practice. They will use foresight, initiative and leadership, and be open to alternative perspectives. As graduates, they will continue to learn and thrive in environments of complexity, ambiguity and change.

Generic skills that are emphasised in this unit are referred to in the assessment overview (5a).

2c Prerequisites and/or co-requisites
None

3: Delivery of Unit and Timetable

3a Delivery mode
The unit will be delivered in traditional on-campus mode and may involve attendance off campus at specialist facilities. On-campus activities include weekly 2 hour lectures and up to 2 hour case study / tutorial sessions each week. The crime scene practical exercise is up to 3 hours.
3b  Timetable of activities, such as lectures/ tutorials/ practicals/ field classes, showing key dates and topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date Week starting</th>
<th>Lecture Tuesday 11:30 – 13:30 Room 6C35</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Practical Session/Tutorial Monday 15:30 – 17:00 Room 9A1 unless otherwise advised</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Introduction to Forensic Science</td>
<td>JR</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feb 24</td>
<td>Introduction to the Legal System</td>
<td>JR</td>
<td>E – Court – Building 6 Level C 13:30 – 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>From the Crime Scene to the Lab #1 (3 Rs, GIFT, Scene Recording – sketches, notes, photography etc.)</td>
<td>JR</td>
<td>Case Studies – Miscarriages of justice 15:30 – 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>From the Crime Scene to the Lab #2</td>
<td>JR</td>
<td>PUBLIC HOLIDAY (Canberra Day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>From the Crime Scene to the Lab #3</td>
<td>JR</td>
<td>Create a case file. Introduction to photography 15:30 – 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>March 24</td>
<td>Fires / Explosions / Firearms / Toolmarks / Impression Evidence</td>
<td>DR</td>
<td>Crime Scene scenario CSE role 15:30 – 17:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>Document Examination</td>
<td>Guest</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>April 7</td>
<td>Class-Free Period (Mid-Semester Break)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>April 14</td>
<td>Fingerprint</td>
<td>CL</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>Trace Evidence</td>
<td>JR/CL</td>
<td>PUBLIC HOLIDAY (Easter Monday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Biological Evidence</td>
<td>DMc</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 3*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Forensic Medicine &amp; Pathology</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>May 12</td>
<td>Toxicology &amp; Illicit Drugs</td>
<td>TK</td>
<td>Crime Scene Examination Practical Mock Case - Group 5*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Students are required to participate in one 3 hour crime scene activity from 13:45 – 16:45 during weeks 7 -13 (see Moodle for group allocations), and in one of the free weeks attend a Magistrates Court hearing and prepare a report on the proceedings.

Note: Mondays in weeks 4 and 10 are public holidays

Presenters:
JR - James Robertson  DR - David Royds
CL - Chris Lennard  DMc - Dennis McNevin
TK - Tamzin Kelly  VP - Vanita Parek
4: Unit Resources

4a Lists of required texts/readings

There are no prescribed texts for this unit, however, the following text book is recommended:


4b Materials and equipment

Protective clothing for the outdoor crime scene activity will be provided as needed.

4c Unit website

To find your unit site online, login to LearnOnline(Moodle) using your student ID.

Note that your unit site has a profiles page that displays your name and email address for the benefit of other students. If you prefer to hide your email address, click here for instructions.

5: Assessment

All staff and students are required to read the document named ‘Assessment Responsibilities’ on the following link to ensure accurate understanding of the various perspectives surrounding assessment at UC. It can alleviate many misunderstandings. 


5a Assessment overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment item</th>
<th>Due date of assignments</th>
<th>Weighting (total to equal 100%)</th>
<th>Addresses learning outcome(s)</th>
<th>Addresses generic skill(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online quizzes</td>
<td>Weeks 6 and 11</td>
<td>20% (10% each)</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>1 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case file for mock crime scene &amp; participation in activity</td>
<td>Completed at mock crime scene</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Magistrates Court and produce written report</td>
<td>Friday 9 May Week 12</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>3, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>Exam period</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key for UC Generic Skills
1 - Communication
2 - Analysis and Inquiry
3 - Problem Solving
4 - Working independently and with others
5 - Professionalism and Social Responsibility
Details of each assessment item

Online quizzes
There will be two online quizzes covering the theoretical content of the unit throughout the semester. Both quizzes will be in multiple choice format and will address learning outcomes 1 & 2. The online quizzes will be in Week 6 (covering Weeks 1 – 5) and Week 11 (covering Weeks 6 – 10). Each online quiz will be worth 10% of the overall mark, will be available for 5 days and are untimed.

- Quiz one will open on Thursday 27th March at 12:01pm and will close on Tuesday 1st April at 11:59am.
- Quiz two will open on Thursday 1st May at 12:01pm and will close on Tuesday 6th May at 11:59am.

Assessment will be on the basis of a single mark per correct answer.

Attend Magistrates Court – Written Report
The attendance at a hearing of the Magistrates Court introduces students to the working of a lower Court and how a committal proceeding is heard. This will complement the mock case practical in introducing students to the Australian legal system and will address learning outcomes 1 & 2. Students are to prepare a 1000 word standard essay type report on the case they attend and on the processes they observe. This report will be worth 10% of the overall mark and is due on Friday 9th May. Assessment will be based on the student response to 5 criteria as follows;

1. Make general observations on the running of the Court list on the day you attended and contrast this with the mock court from Week 2.
2. Comment on the role played by the Magistrate and how this aligned with what you might expect from an adversarial system.
3. What did the prosecutor do and say in presenting the prosecution case? What documents were tendered and did these have an impact on the conduct and outcomes in Court?
4. What did the defendant or solicitor do or say in presenting the defence case? What documents were tendered and did these have an impact on the conduct or outcomes in Court?
5. What did the Magistrate say and do in dealing with the case? What was the outcome of the case and, if a sentence was imposed did the Magistrate make comments when imposing the sentence?

Case file for mock scene
The mock crime scene and case file will introduce students to the practical elements of crime scene processing including concepts of evidence recognition, recording and recovery. This item will address learning outcome 1. Students will work in small groups and will attend one crime scene activity during weeks 7 -13. The group allocations and required week of attendance will be posted on Moodle. Each group will prepare and complete a formal case at the mock scene practical which is worth 20% of the overall mark. Assessment will be based on observations of the team performance during the examination of the mock crime scene and on the hard copy case file completed during this exercise. More detailed criteria will be posted on the Moodle site. Students will be allowed to bring lecture notes and other relevant material to assist them with completion of this exercise.

Final examination
The final written examination, 2 hours in duration, will assess all delivered topics and will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The exam will address learning outcomes 1 & 2. Students will be allowed to bring a scientific calculator and a one double-sided A4 page of typed or handwritten notes.

Full details for each assessment item will be available on the Moodle site. Feedback for all assessment items will be provided in a timely and constructive manner.
Submission of assessment items

The hard copy crime scene case file will be retained by the Unit Convener at the end of the mock crime scene examination session. The written report on the Magistrates Court will be submitted online via the unit Moodle site. The first page of the submission should include the following information:

- Student Name:
- Student ID:
- Assessment Name:
- Date of Submission:
- Word Count:

Late submission of assignments

Late submission of assignments without an approved extension will result in the assignment not being marked and zero being recorded for that particular assignment. In extenuating circumstances a late submission may be considered upon the production of supporting documentation and at the discretion of the unit convener.

Extensions: Extensions must be applied for before the due date.

Students can apply for an extension to the due date for submission of an assessment item on the grounds of illness or other unavoidable and verifiable personal circumstances. Documentary evidence will be expected in order that an extension be granted.

It should be noted that such documentation will be considered but will not guarantee that the application will be successful. The Unit Convener will decide whether to grant an extension and the length of the extension.

Responsibility for understanding

If there is any doubt with regard to the requirements of any particular assignments or assessment procedure, the onus for clarifying the issue rests with the student who should contact the unit convener or tutor. Further, it is the responsibility of students to ensure that they are correctly enrolled in the unit and that the tutor and Student Administration have their correct contact details.

Deferred examinations

Provisions will be made for students who are unable to sit the end of semester examination and produce appropriate medical certificates or other documentation. In the event a student misses the end of semester examination due to illness or other exceptional circumstances, the procedures outlined on http://www.canberra.edu.au/student-services/examinations/alternative-exams must be followed (including submitting deferred application form within 3 days of scheduled exam to the Examinations Office).

Special assessment requirements

In order to obtain a pass grade or better, students must:

- attempt all assessment items; and
- achieve an overall aggregate mark of 50% or higher.

Supplementary assessment

Supplementary assessment will usually only be offered to students who have failed a single unit in their final semester with a final mark between 45-49%. (The unit must be required for course completion.) Refer to the UC Supplementary Assessment Policy.
5f Academic Integrity

Students have a responsibility to uphold University standards on ethical scholarship. Good scholarship involves building on the work of others and use of others’ work must be acknowledged with proper attribution made. Cheating, plagiarism, and falsification of data are dishonest practices that contravene academic values. Please see UC’s Academic Integrity Policy.

To enhance understanding of academic integrity, it is expected that all students will complete the LearnOnline Academic Integrity Module (AIM) at least once during their course of study. The module is automatically available as a listed site when students log into LearnOnline.

5g Text-matching software

The University of Canberra has available, through LearnOnline (Moodle), text-matching software that helps students and staff reduce plagiarism and improve understandings of academic integrity. Known as URKUND, the software matches submitted text in student assignments against material from various sources: the internet, published books and journals, and previously submitted student texts. Click here for further information on the URKUND text-matching software.

6: Student Responsibility

6a Workload

The amount of time you will need to spend on study in this unit will depend on a number of factors including your prior knowledge, learning skill level and learning style. Nevertheless, in planning your time commitments you should note that for a 3cp unit the total notional workload over the semester or term is assumed to be 150 hours. These hours include time spent in classes. The total workload for units of different credit point value should vary proportionally. For example, for a 6cp unit the total notional workload over a semester or term is assumed to be 300 hours.

6b Inclusion and Welfare

Students who need assistance in undertaking the unit because of disability or other circumstances should inform their Unit Convener or Inclusion and Welfare as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements can be made.

6c Participation requirements

Participation in the crime scene practical is a compulsory condition of this unit. In the event that you cannot attend your assigned crime scene examination practical due to illness or unavoidable commitments, contact the unit convener as soon as possible so that an alternative session can be arranged. You will need to provide the unit convener with an official medical or counsellor’s certificate or a letter from your employer to be permitted into an alternate practical.

If you have to miss an online quiz because of illness or personal problems you must submit an official medical or counsellor’s certificate to the unit convener as soon as possible once you are well. If possible, please contact the unit convener by email or phone prior to the online quiz deadline so that you are not disadvantaged in any way and we can make alternative arrangements in a timely fashion.

6d Withdrawal

If you are planning to withdraw please discuss with your unit convener. Please see this link for further information on deadlines.

6e Required IT skills

Familiarity with Microsoft Office software, Word, Excel and PowerPoint or equivalent is necessary.
6f  **In-Unit Costs**

None.

Note: To calculate your unit fees see: [How do I calculate my fees?](#).
The online [UC Co-op Textbook Search](#) is available for purchasing text books.

6g  **Work placements, internships or practicums**

The learning in this unit will be integrally linked to experiences in professional contexts.

6h  **Additional information**

Most information relevant to the unit will be posted on the Moodle website.

In all cases of absence, sickness or personal problems it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the unit convener is informed. The minimum participation requirement must be met in order to pass the unit (regardless of supporting documentation). If you feel that any problems are interfering with your work please let the unit convener know. Furthermore, the University has extensive counselling services that are available free of charge to all students. These are found in the Health and Counselling Centre (Building 1, Level B, phone: 6201-2351). The Centre offers help and advice in areas such as relaxation, financial and personal problems. The Academic Skills Centre (located in the Library, phone: 6 201-2205) offers help, advice and extra courses on effective study skills and general course guidance.

If you have a serious dispute with the University there are a number of experienced mediators who are available to help. Details of how to use this facility are available from your Faculty Student Information Office or the Student Association. For any conflicts regarding the Forensic Science 1 unit, please feel free to discuss your concerns with the unit convener.

---

7:  **Student Feedback**

All students enrolled in this unit will have an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on the unit at the end of the Semester via the Unit Satisfaction Survey (USS) which you can access by logging into MyUC via the UC homepage: [http://www.canberra.edu.au/home/](http://www.canberra.edu.au/home/). Your lecturer or tutor may also invite you to provide more detailed feedback on their teaching through an anonymous questionnaire.

In light of student feedback received from 2013 students will be provided with greater feedback following assessment items.

---

8:  **Authority of this Unit Outline**

Any change to the information contained in Section 2 (Academic content), and Section 5 (Assessment) of this document, will only be made by the Unit Convener if the written agreement of Head of Discipline and a majority of students has been obtained; and if written advice of the change is then provided on the unit site in the learning management system. If this is not possible, written advice of the change must be then forwarded to each student enrolled in the unit at their registered term address. Any individual student who believes him/herself to be disadvantaged by a change is encouraged to discuss the matter with the Unit Convener.