

6.7 Module 7: Criminal Law

Module title			
Criminal Law			
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	Module number / reference	ECTS Value	Duration
Level 7	DLSP-CRM	5 ECTS	8 weeks
Parent programme(s) . Principal programme title, and embedded(s) if relevant		Stage of parent programme	Semester No.
Diploma in Legal Studies and Practice		Award Stage	Block 3
Certificate in Legal Studies		Award Stage	Block 3
Teaching and Learning modes	Proportion (% of Total Directed Learning)		
Classroom / Face to Face	20%		
Workplace	-		
Online	-		
Other (Identify)	80%		
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)			
Learners must comply with and meet programme entry requirements.			
Maximum number of learners per instance of the module	80 learners		
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week	4 hours		
Pre-requisite module title(s) (if any)	n/a		
Co-requisite module title(s) (if any)	n/a		
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No		
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)			
Lecture room with Wi-Fi access, digital recording facilities, Zoom access and digital projector.			
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module. (Staff includes workplace personnel who are responsible for learners such as apprentices, trainees and learners in clinical placements)			
Role e.g. Tutor, Mentor etc	Qualifications & experience required:		# of Staff with this profile (WTEs)
Lecturer	Lecturers expected to hold at minimum a Level 8 legal qualification, preferably with a professional legal qualification. It is an advantage to have completed the Certificate in Education, Learning and Development provided by Griffith College. Industry experience is beneficial but not a requirement.		0.2 WTE

Analysis of required learning effort		
*Effort while in contact with staff	Minimum ratio teacher / learner	Hours
Classroom and demonstrations	1:80	21
Mentoring and small-group teaching	-	-
Other (specify)	-	-
Independent Learning		
Directed e-learning (hours)		-
Independent Learning (hours)		104
Other hours (specify)		-
Work-based learning hours of learning effort		-
Total Effort (hours)		125

Allocation of Marks					
	Continuous Assessment	Supervised Project	Proctored Practical Exam.	Proctored Written Exam	Total
Percentage Contribution	100%				100%

6.7.1 Module aims and objectives

The purpose of the Criminal Law module is to provide learners with an appreciation of key legal principles and an understanding of the Criminal Law both in social and strict legal terms and how it operates. The module covers foundational concepts which learners require to progress through the programme, including: an appreciation and understanding of the elements of crime. It familiarises learners with a number of specific offences, most especially offences against the person, offences against property, public order offences and inchoate offences.

The module also covers foundational concepts, including: an appreciation for the different of sources of law; how to interpret said sources; legal research; academic writing. Learners are taught how to navigate research platforms such as JustisOne, Westlaw, Westlaw UK, LexisNexis etc.; how to record methods of research; how to engage with hard-copy resources (e.g. textbooks, law reports etc.); how to engage with e-resources (e.g. e-journals, the Irish Statute Book, reports etc.); how to employ their knowledge of precedent to locate relevant case law; how to analyse and solve legal issues through application of precedent and other primary/secondary sources; and how to cite effectively using OSCOLA.

6.7.2 Minimum intended module learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, learners are able to:

- (i) Discuss the nature of criminality.
- (ii) Identify and assess the central elements of a crime.
- (iii) Identify, describe and evaluate the different types of criminal offence.
- (iv) Discuss the defences available to a criminal offence and the constitutional rights such as trial and due process.
- (v) Apply the law regarding criminal offences and the defences to such charges to different factual situations.

6.7.3 Rationale for inclusion of the module in the programme and its contribution to the overall MIPLOs

Criminal Law provides learners with an overview and understanding of the key legal principles in Irish Criminal Law. It also covers the practical, research and legal writing skills that learners require if they embark on or continue their legal careers. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO I.

The module builds upon the legal research and writing skills that learners will already have acquired in Block 1 and challenges them to apply their legal knowledge to Criminal law problems and exercises, both in formative class discussions and in summative components i.e. the assignment and examination. The module also requires learners to critically analyse legal sources and apply them to legal problems. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO II and IV.

Formative classwork includes group discussion of exercises, fact-based problem scenarios and quizzes, aimed at increasing collaborative problem-solving. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO VI.

By receiving feedback on all summative and formative assessments, learners are enabled to evaluate and reflect on their work, thereby facilitating improvement. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO VII.

The area of Criminal law encompasses both offences and defences, both of which involve controversial and impactful constructions which impact on society e.g. mandatory sentencing for murder or certain drug offences. Certain common law legal norms which pervade the subject of Criminal law are also discussed, which impact on society e.g. the presumption of innocence, the right to silence etc. The dichotomy which exists between these legal norms and the interest that the community has to see justice done require learners to engaging in balancing exercises and a comparison of rights. In that context this module supports the achievement of MIPLO VIII.

6.7.4 Information provided to learners about the module

Learners enrolled on this module initially receive a copy of the module descriptor, assessment briefs and assessment strategy. These materials are given directly by the lecturer and also by the Programme Director as part of the Learner Handbook for award stage modules of the programme. All content is provided on Moodle as well as access to additional content through the library and online resources.

Online (via Moodle) learners are provided with video recording of each lecture, copy of PowerPoint slides, a module specific manual, extensive reading list, incorporating professional and academic and non-academic sources. Guest lectures will be introduced to ensure practical knowledge and real-life examples will keep the content relevant.

6.7.5 Module content, organisation and structure

This is a 5 ECTS credit module taught over an 8-week Block. This Block includes 5 lectures (of 4 hour duration); one revision class; two reading weeks; and an exam week. Specifically, the topics covered are as follows:

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
Introduction to Criminal Law Elements of an Offence 4 hours, 19%	Defining the aims and purposes of the criminal law, examining constitutional protections and the definition of a crime. Examining sources of Criminal Law and the classification of offences. Examining and explaining Actus Reus, omissions, causation, medical treatment, Egg-Shell Skull Rule, Mens Rea, intention, recklessness, strict liability and coincidence of Mens Rea and Actus Reus.
Complicity in Offences Homicide 4 hours, 19%	Defining the Doctrine of Innocent Agency, common design and accessorial liability. Examining and explaining murder, Mens rea, Actus Reus, Intervening Causes: Novus Actus Interveniens, Capital Murder Section 3 Murder and manslaughter.
Sexual Offences Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person 4 hours, 19%	Defining and examining rape, consent, sexual assault, section 4 rape, sexual offences against children and incest. Defining and examining Assault, assault causing harm, causing serious harm and consent
Property Offences Public Order Offences 4 hours, 19%	Defining and examining Criminal Justice (Theft and fraud offences) Act 2001, theft, robbery, burglary and the Criminal Damage Act 1991 Defining and examining Intoxication in a Public Place, Offensive Conduct in a Public Place, Threatening, Abuse or Insulting Behaviour in a Public Place, Obscene Displays in a Public Place, Riot, Violent Disorder and Affray

Inchoate Offences Defences 4 hours, 19%	Defining and examining Incitement, Conspiracy and Attempt Defining and examining General Principles, Categorisation of Defences, Burden & Standard of Proof, Effect of successfully raising a defence, Duress, Necessity, The lawful use of force, Provocation, Infancy, Intoxication, Insanity, Automatism, Mistake and Unconstitutionality
Revision & Preparation 1 hour, 5%	This session will provide a revision class for learners with exam preparation guidance and assistance.

6.7.6 Module teaching and learning (including formative assessment) strategy

This module is delivered through a series of lectures. Learners engage with the module either in class; online via the online streaming option or via recorded lectures. On Moodle, virtual learning environment, the lecturer can interact with learners via the class discussion forum and upload relevant additional learning material e.g. legal articles, case law, study aids and relevant multimedia. The module comprises of 21 contact hours, being 20 lecture hours and one revision/exam preparation class. Formative assessment is provided in the form of interactive exercises such as tutorial style discussions, quizzes, directed class discussion topics and collaborative group work.

6.7.7 Work-based learning and practice-placement

There is no work-based learning or practical placement in the module.

6.7.8 E-learning

Griffith College uses Moodle, a virtual learning environment, to support its delivery of e-learning activities in the form of peer-to-peer support based around activities where learners give and receive feedback, forums where learners must contribute, formative quizzes and video links.

6.7.9 Module physical resource requirements

Requirements are for a fully equipped classroom. The classroom has Wi-Fi access and is equipped with a PC with Zoom and Microsoft Office. In addition the classroom has digital recording facilities and digital projector. No other software is required for this module. The College library has a dedicated law section and also online legal research tools including Justice One, Westlaw, Hein Online.

6.7.10 Reading lists and other information resources

Primary reading

Griffith College Manual, *Criminal Law*, (Dublin: Clarus Press, updated annually)
 Charleton, McDermott, Bolger, *Criminal Law*, (2004, Dublin; Butterworths)
 Hanly, *An Introduction to Irish Criminal Law*, (2006, Dublin; Sweet & Maxwell)
 McIntyre & McMullen, *Criminal Law – Essential law Text*, (2005, Dublin; Round Hall)
 Ormerod, *Smith and Hogan, Criminal Law*, (2008, Oxford; Oxford University Press)
 O'Mahony, *Criminal Justice in Ireland*, (2002, Dublin; Institute of Public Administration)

6.7.11 Specifications for module staffing requirements

Lecturers expected to hold at minimum a Level 8 legal qualification, preferably with a professional legal qualification. It is an advantage to have completed the Certificate in Education, Learning and Development provided by Griffith College. Industry experience is beneficial but not a requirement.

6.7.12 Module summative assessment strategy

Theoretical knowledge is assessed at the end of the module by examination (worth 60% of overall grade), the purpose of which is to enable learners to become accustomed to undertaking extended examinations which are a traditional method of assessment commonly used in law-based degrees on the NFQ and in the sphere of professional legal training.

The examination consists of a mixture of essay-style questions and problem-style questions. The former emphasises the demonstration of effective academic writing and an analysis of key concepts or topics on the programme. Problem-style questions are aimed at assessing the learner's ability to apply the law to practical, factual scenarios.

The examination is supplemented by an essay assignment (40% of overall grade). The assessment components are aimed at enabling learners to use the legal research and academic writing skills taught in class and to apply same in a practical way. The following table indicates the module's learning outcomes' alignment with the assessment used for the module:

No.	Description	MIMLOs	Weighting
1	Essay	(i) to (v)	50
2	Essay	(i) to (v)	50

Reassessment/Repeat assessment strategy:

Griffith College regulations state that learners must pass all component elements of the module to be deemed to have passed the module.

- In the event of a learner failing the case brief or research record required of this module, they will be required to submit a new, individual, repeat attempt which will be made available on Moodle to learners, and which must be submitted as per faculty instructions.
- In the event of the learner failing the exam, learners will take the re-sit exam at the next available sitting, details of which will be made available to learners via Moodle.

6.7.13 Sample assessment materials

Please see sample assessment supplementary document.