

The Foundation for Professionals in Services to Adolescents Friday, 19 July 2013

I would like to take this opportunity to thank FPSA for their generous contribution towards my MSc in Forensic Psychology at Cardiff Metropolitan University. I will be undertaking the MSc part-time over the next two years. Forensic psychology is a field that deals with both psychology and the law & is very relevant to my role as a Forensic Clinical Nurse Specialist in the All Wales Forensic Adolescent Service (FACTS). It is the practice and application of psychological research relevant to crime, policing, the courts, the criminal and civil justice system, offenders, prison, secure settings, offender management, health and academic settings.

This will enhance & develop my clinical skills, link theory to practice, provide evidence based research & hopefully contribute enormously to the further development of services to young offenders.

The MSc course involves:

Research Methods & Design. The aim of this module is to extend knowledge and experience of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Topics covered include: randomised control trials, ANOVA, ANCOVA, MANOVA, Power analysis, Regression, Non parametric methods, interviews, discourse analysis, grounded theory, reflective analysis and psychometric evaluation.

Forensic Mental Health This module aims to provide a critical examination of the relationship between mental illness, personality disorder, learning disability and criminal behaviour. The module will encourage students to view the mental health needs of offenders in the broadest possible context and to appreciate the inter-disciplinary nature of services available to mentally disordered offenders, difficulties in accessing those services and problems for custodial adjustment presented by specific psychiatric diagnoses

Professional Practice & Offender Management. The focus of this module is the professional practice of forensic psychology. The module builds on the groundwork laid by earlier modules and covers professional skills and the types of interventions that a practicing forensic psychologist may engage in. The topics covered by this module include ethics, report writing, working with other agencies, and working with offenders and victims.

Psychological Assessments and Interventions This module covers psychology as it may be applied to the reduction of re-offending by convicted criminals. The central focus of the module is the 'what works' literature. A range of topics will be covered demonstrating the broad application of psychology to offender rehabilitation in the Criminal Justice System, and within Wales particularly. These topics include: (1) assessment of risk and treatment need; (2) factors affecting response to treatment; (3) ethical issues of compulsory treatment; and (4) interventions for a range of offending behaviours.

Theories of Criminal Behaviour The module aims to examine the contribution made by biological, psychodynamic, evolutionary, cognitive and socio-cultural perspectives to our understanding of the aetiology of criminal behaviour. It will explore psychological theories of a

variety of offending behaviours such as: violence, aggression, domestic abuse, sex offending, vehicle crime, fire setting as well as gangs and gangs membership.

Legal Psychology This module covers psychology as it may be applied to the law, and the central focus of the module is evidence. A range of topics will be covered, demonstrating the broad application of psychology within the legal system. These topics include the interviewing of suspects and witnesses, vulnerable victims, offender profiling and the detection of deception.

Psychological Vulnerabilities This module informs students about different factors that may contribute to psychological vulnerability in offenders and victims. A variety of topics will be covered, including issues around the concept of vulnerability and the protection of vulnerable adults, including factors which may increase a prisoner's vulnerability (e.g. youth, learning disability, older prisoners, and women).

Following completion of the above modules I will also be required to conduct a novel, supervised research dissertation with participants preferably drawn from a forensic setting. Mine will be with adolescents.

I will provide the Foundation for Professionals in Services to Adolescents_with regular updates from the MSc & a copy of my dissertation. Friday, 19 July 2013

Thank you so very much

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