

Unit 40: Criminal Investigations in Practice

Unit code:	Y/502/5585
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit will give learners an opportunity to carry out criminal investigation procedures and practices to investigate a crime scene, collect evidence, interview suspects and present evidence in a practical scenario to achieve the desired result.

● Unit introduction

In this unit the techniques, methods and legal framework under which investigators operate are set out for learners. This unit develops theories and provides an opportunity to learn by actually giving learners the chance to carry out a simulated crime investigation using practical settings. They will appreciate the roles of different experts within the investigating team and why different skills and expertise are important at different stages of the criminal investigation. There are real constraints in the ways in which the crime scene must be preserved, evidence collected and analysed, witnesses and suspects interviewed and the case prepared for prosecution. These are necessary to protect the innocent and ensure that justice is applied in a fair way.

Scientific principles underpin the discovery, preservation, recovery and processing of evidence found at a crime scene and in addition learners will discover the importance of effective presentation of that evidence at a trial. These principles will be studied and applied by learners together with important skills in interviewing witnesses and suspects. This is an exciting and practical unit which mirrors the criminal investigations seen in the media.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Be able to research a crime case, appreciating the various procedures and practices involved in evidence collection
- 2 Know the contribution of those involved in various stages of the investigation process
- 3 Be able to use interviewing and communication skills for the purpose of obtaining intelligence information
- 4 Understand how the investigating team involved in the crime case reached their conclusions and whether they were justified.

Unit content

1 Be able to research a crime case, appreciating the various procedures and practices involved in evidence collection

Crime scene examination: types and variations of crime scenes eg buildings, vehicles, outdoors; identification of difficulties eg weather, temperature; first officer attending scene; health and safety precautions; personal protective equipment (PPE); types of forensic evidence and equipment; preservation of scene and evidence; preventing contamination; crime scene search techniques and methods of exhibit collection; documentation of the scene and evidence eg photography, note taking, sketching; methods of operation; evidence packaging, transport and storage

Collection and preservation: initial response; crime scene examination and evidence recovery eg rough notes; documentation records; photographing scene and evidence; anti-contamination techniques; packaging, transportation and storage; security of evidence; continual chain of evidence; obtaining warrants, searching people and premises; police and criminal evidence (PACE) orders; questioning of victims of crime, witnesses, suspects and offenders

Analysis: investigating lines of enquiry; using appropriate resources; primary and secondary research; sources of information eg witness statements, database records, CCTV analysis, surveillance informants, interviews, crime statistics; forensic analysis of evidence eg DNA profiling, footprint casting, fingerprint powdering; reviewing results, identifying patterns and drawing conclusions; investigative reasoning; evaluation and interpretation of evidence in context of the specific criminal case

Laboratory examination: processing of biological and chemical forensic evidence, eg fingerprinting, body fluids, DNA, fibres, drug analysis and environmental profiling; investigation of physical evidence, eg document and handwriting evidence, footprint casting and foot impressions, closed circuit television (CCTV) images, audio recordings; imaging and digital imaging techniques

Presentation of results: methodical; accurate; detailed; objective records; report writing, reporting to the police, reporting to the media; court case preparation and verbal presentation of evidence; expert witness role in court, giving evidence

2 Know the contribution of those involved in various stages of the investigation process

Roles and responsibilities of the investigation team: police officers and powers of police; detectives; scene of crime officers and evidence recovery; forensic scientists and collection of forensic evidence; scientific support; Major Crime Squad; Crown Prosecution Service (CPS); role of other investigative agencies eg Serious and Organised Crime Agency; military police; Immigration Service; HM Revenue and Customs; Environment Agency; Financial Service Agency; Post Office Investigations; NHS counter-fraud; private insurance and fraud agencies

3 Be able to use interviewing and communication skills for the purpose of obtaining intelligence information

Interviewees: victim and suspect/offender statements; witness testimony; vulnerable witnesses eg elderly, young, disabled, foreign; professional experts

Interviewer: dealing with the public; preparation location; interview conduct; tape recording, video recording; types of evidence, corroborative, circumstantial, hearsay evidence

Techniques: types of interviews and interrogation techniques eg interview models; non-verbal observation and communication skills; criminal investigation interview, cognitive interview, use of open and closed questions; inappropriate use of force; multiple choice questions, leading or misleading questions; models of memory; false confessions; detecting deception

4 Understand how the investigating team involved in the crime case reached their conclusions and whether they were justified

Development of investigative skills: objectivity; unbiased; professional and personal responsibility; self-monitoring; moral and ethical behaviour; respectfulness

Communication: nonverbal communication; cultural/social differences; verbal and effective listening; effective relationships; rough note taking; written and verbal presentation skills; giving evidence in court

Assessing the situation: accurate and ethical recording of crime; potential sources of material; collation and analysis of information; developing and testing hypotheses; assessing evidential value; identifying links and patterns; report writing, drawing conclusions, interpreting evidence

Practical effectiveness: responsibility; professionalism; written reports/paper and assessment; planning; dealing with conflict and ambiguity; social and relationship skills; ethical use of investigative powers

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 carry out research into a crime case, outlining the procedures followed to secure the crime scene and collect/preserve evidence for scientific and physical analysis [IE1,2; CT2; TW1]	M1 describe how different types of evidence from the crime scene were collected and preserved	D1 analyse the procedures, taking account of factors contributing to valid evidence collection
P2 explain the types of evidence recovered during the investigation [CT2]		
P3 outline the contribution of members of the investigation team to ensuring a secure audit trail [CT2; TW4]	M2 describe how the different roles and responsibilities of those involved in various stages contribute to objective investigation process	D2 evaluate how the different team members contribute to the security of the audit trail of evidence
P4 describe the analysis of evidence from the crime scene [CT2]		
P5 demonstrate the use of fundamental interviewing and communication skills for the purpose of obtaining intelligence information [CT2,3,4; SM7]	M3 explain how different interviewing and communication skills are used to obtain intelligence information from a different witnesses	D3 justify the ways in which fundamental interviewing and communication skills were used, taking account of ethical issues
P6 explain how the investigating team reached their conclusions [IE3; EP2,5,6]	M4 describe the evidence trail leading to the conclusions drawn.	D4 evaluate the conclusions reached by the investigation team.
P7 explain whether their conclusions were justified. [EP2,5,6]		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

The use of a simulated crime case is recommended as the main vehicle for delivery of this unit. This will give learners an opportunity to role play different members of the investigating team in the different stages of a crime case.

It would be appropriate to use a mixture of tutor-based theory to prepare learners for their roles in the case study but also to use group work and guided learner research to collect information and extend knowledge of events in the local community. The importance of contacts with local police community liaison officers should be recognised and input from guest speakers and/or visits to the local police station would enrich learners understanding of crime case investigations. The different roles of members of the investigation team and their individual skills, knowledge and training to fulfil their duties need to be recognised. For example, the importance of the actions of first officer attending should be developed by tutor input and if possible by a guest speaker, because a whole investigation can be compromised by inappropriate actions to secure the crime scene.

The purpose of any criminal investigation is to gain evidence to secure a conviction and the work on the simulated crime case will give learners awareness of the importance of all stages in the investigative process, as well as important safeguards for individuals built into formal police procedures. Here too, input from a guest speaker from the local police would be invaluable, both from content delivery but also experiences of the officer involved – the opportunity to allow learners to question speakers should be encouraged. If it is possible to arrange a visit or guest speaker from a local analytical or forensic laboratory that would give learners valuable information about the skills required by analysts to examine forensic samples, as well as the importance of dual sampling, labelling and storage to ensure a rigorous audit trail from the sample to the experimental evidence.

The collection of evidence from a range of witnesses and/or potential suspects as indicated in unit content will give learners an excellent opportunity to participate as interviewers/interviewees and learn by doing, thereby developing important interpersonal and communication skills. Preparation by whole-class discussion of the underpinning theory and also the different types of interviewing techniques and interviewee could be enriched by guest speakers practised in interviewing techniques.

Having collected evidence from a variety of sources learners need to consider the judgements made by the investigating team on the outcome of the crime case. It would be relevant for this to take account of the role of the Crime Prevention Service in real criminal case investigations, and a guest speaker from the Service would be a real asset.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Tutor introduction to <i>Unit content</i> for learning outcome 1 and 2.
Tutor-led theoretical coverage of procedures and practices used in crime cases whole class.
Group exercise: cover various types of crime scene; health and safety briefing by tutor.
Group research: focused on first officer attending scene, contamination, preservation of scene – why this is important; group presentation of findings.
Tutor-led examples of good and bad practice, skills and training required for scene of crime officers.
Case study exercises: groups to cover techniques and methods of collection of evidence, documentation, packaging transport and storage; groups to present findings.
Tutor-led discussion: skills and expertise of people involved in analysis of samples.
Laboratory examination: methods, theoretical and practical input to whole class.
Research: types of evidence by learners, then presentations to the class.
Survey: of local stories about types of crime investigated in the area.
Learner research: use media to find cases where failures in practice have led to acquittal, ideally in local area, group work, then presentations.
Tutor input: followed by learner research to cover sources of information and how hypotheses are tested, procedures to use evidence for further investigation.
Tutor input: into theory and practice of presentational methods.
Learner practice: presentational methods.
Assignment 1 – Collecting the Evidence (P1, P2, M1, D1)
Assignment 2 – Scene of Crime Presentation to Local School (P3, P4, M2, D2)
Tutor introduction to <i>Unit content</i> for learning outcome 3 and 4. Setting objectives for the learners and methods to be used; theory and practice of interviewing and communication skills.
Learners undertaking simulated crime scene exercise – role playing member of the investigating team, practical work on methods, use of evidence both from practical work and simulated findings.
Assignment 3 – Interviewing Exercise (P5, M3, D3)
Presentations: conclusions by the investigating team, justification by the investigating team.
Learner reflection then feedback sessions.
Class debate: covering initial response, potential problems, reasons for ethical procedures, importance of securing samples and clear audit trail from crime scene to final conclusions.
Assignment 4 – Cracking the Case (P6, P7, M4, D4)
Review of unit and programme of assignments.

Assessment

A number of different assessment strategies can be used to measure the achievement of evidence in this unit and these should be integrated wherever possible.

Assessment should be by both written and practical means. Evidence may be in the form of assignments, production of notes or reports on activities, and the compilation of documents. The following activities are possible ways of generating evidence:

- small-group assignments where learners investigate a mock criminal case, research a variety of sources of information and use a number of different aids and techniques in the collection and analysis of information and evidence
- setting out a scene of crime, for example an aggravated burglary scene, allowing for the collection of a variety of evidence types
- a role play that puts into practice the techniques of interviewing, where the learners can record themselves on tape or video and assess the interview and performance.

This unit balances research and theory to allow knowledge gained to be applied to a series of linked learning activities. The research undertaken and the products of the activities are the most likely sources of evidence for this unit.

Evidence is likely to be produced at results level, but opportunities exist for covering more than one learning outcome in an assignment. Evidence of learning outcomes may be in the form of research documentation, formal reports, verbal presentation, observed discussions, appropriate role play or a series of practical exercises. All evidence produced must be carefully assessed and validated in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the stated learning outcomes.

All the pass grade criteria must be met in order for a learner to achieve this unit.

For P1, learners must carry out a basic examination of a mock crime scene or investigate a case study of a crime case. Learners must effectively outline the procedures followed from the securing of the crime scene through to the presentation of findings. For P2, learners must explain the types of evidence recovered during the investigation. For M1, learners must understand how scientific aids enable the investigator to suitably recover and preserve evidence. For D1, learners must establish the suitability of the scientific techniques and aids used in a criminal investigation. Learners must appreciate the relevance and value of different types of evidence and assess the value of forensic science to the criminal investigation.

For P3, learners must outline the contribution of members of the investigation team, clearly detailing their different roles. For M2, learners must describe how the various members of the investigation team contributed to the whole process. For D2, learners must evaluate the contributions of different team members to the security of the audit trail.

For P4, learners must describe how evidence was analysed during the case study or through their own investigation of a mock crime scene.

For P5, learners must carry out an investigative interview of an eyewitness to a mock crime. Learners must determine the line of questioning prior to the interview, and make notes during the interview. Afterwards, learners are required to write a report of the interview and their findings. For M3, learners must have a clear understanding of the use of interviewing and communication skills in relation to obtaining information from a range of witnesses to help investigators come to a conclusion. For D3, learners must justify the criminal investigative interviewing techniques used and the advantages of these methods over others. Learners must describe psychological theory of the 'model of memory' to justify the use of the cognitive interview.

For P6 and P7, learners need to explain how the investigating team reached their conclusions and whether their conclusions were justified. To progress to M4 learners need to draw links between the evidence trail and the conclusions drawn. For D4, learners will evaluate the evidence trail in order to draw out the strengths and weaknesses of the procedures followed. Having done this, they can either justify the conclusions or make a recommendation for a different conclusion.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, M1, D1	Collecting the Evidence	You have just joined a crime team as a junior member and need to find out how each section works to collect evidence from a crime scene.	Findings to be presented to the whole class supported by detailed research notes.
P3, P4, M2, D2	Scene of Crime Presentation to Local School	You have been asked by the sergeant at the local police station to be a guest speaker at a school doing BTEC Criminal Investigations in Practice. She points out that learners will be interested in the types of evidence collected and anecdotes about good practice and times when mistakes were made.	Group research to prepare material for a presentation to an audience of BTEC learners. Presentation.
P5, M3, D3	Interviewing Exercise	Several witnesses, potential suspects from a crime scene, are in your school and you need to interview them and record the outcomes for the local police. This is part of a police training exercise where they are looking for potential recruits into the force. You note that there is a variety of types of witness in the room.	Role playing with learners taking interviewer and interviewee roles, ensuring that the range of witnesses described in the unit content is considered.
P6, P7, M4, D4	Cracking the Case	Your investigation team has collected and presented evidence leading to a conclusion on the crime case studied. The group will present their findings and reasons to a member of the Crown Prosecution Service who will interrogate them to check on the evidence audit trail and how well the evidence gathered supports the conclusions drawn.	Group presentations to tutor supported by detailed notes. Question/answer session documented.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Applied Science sector suite. This unit has particular links with the units shown below in the BTEC Applied Science suite of qualifications:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Crime Scene Investigation (Foundation Learning Tier)	Investigating a Crime Scene	Criminology
		Forensic Evidence Analysis and Collection
		Criminal Photography
		Criminal Investigation Procedures

Essential resources

Learners must have access to library resources and the internet. Visiting law courts will allow the learner to witness how evidence discovered through the criminal investigation is presented in a court case.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Dean J R et al – *Practical Skills in Forensic Science (Practical Skills Series)* (Prentice Hall, 2005)
ISBN 9780131144002

Fleisher W L and Gordon N – *Effective Interviewing and Interrogation Techniques* (Academic Press Inc US, 2006) ISBN 9780123694904

Jackson A R W and Jackson J – *Forensic Science* (Prentice Hall, 2004) ISBN 9780130432513

Milne R and Bull R – *Investigative Interviewing: Psychology and Practice* (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2007)
ISBN 9780470016275

White P C – *Crime Scene to Court: The Essentials of Forensic Science* (The Royal Society of Chemistry, 2004)
ISBN 9780854046560

Websites

www.a-levelpsychology.co.uk/online/as/chapter03	A-level psychology online
www.crimeandclues.com/testimony.htm	The art and science of criminal investigation
www.crime-scene-investigator.net	Crime Scene Investigator Network
psycprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/archive/0000498	Interviewing witnesses
psycprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/archive/0000508	Enhancing the practicality of the cognitive interview in forensic situations
www.tncrimlaw.com/forensic/fsbindx.htm	Forensic science resources

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	[IE1,2] carrying out research on a crime case [IE3] explore issues from other perspectives when explaining how the investigation team reached their conclusions
Creative thinkers	[CT2] asking questions when researching the crime case [CT2,3,4] asking questions, connect their own and others' ideas, question their own assumptions when interviewing witnesses
Team workers	[TW1] collaborate with others when researching a crime case [TW4] considering others when discussing the contribution of team members
Self-managers	[SM7] manage emotions and build relationships when interviewing witnesses
Effective participators	[EP2,5,6] present a persuasive case for action, try to influence others, act as an advocate for views that may differ from own when explaining the conclusions of the investigation.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	[IE4,6] evaluating information and supporting conclusions at distinction level
Reflective learners	[RL3,4,5] reviewing progress, inviting feedback and evaluating experiences to inform future progress when demonstrating communication and interviewing skills
Team workers	[TW3] adapting behaviour when taking on different roles in team work
Self-managers	[SM3,5] prioritising and organising their work across a range of different types of activity/learning.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	doing surveys of local crime; giving presentations
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	giving presentations; researching material
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	researching failed prosecutions; first officer on scene; collection and storage of evidence
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching for case studies
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	researching for information, particularly in use of web sources
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	giving presentations
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	giving presentations
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	giving presentations, interview evidence
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	giving presentations
Mathematics	
Use appropriate checking procedures and evaluate their effectiveness at each stage	reporting experimental results
Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems in familiar and unfamiliar routine contexts and situations	interviewing, case studies

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	group work; case study work; interviewing exercises, presentations, tutor feedback, guest speaker input
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching for unit
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	preparing for presentations, interviewing exercises.