Module Descriptor

Title	Mental Disorder and the Law		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	Published
Code	NURS11139	**SCQF Level**	11
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Health and Life Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Yvonne Murray		

Summary of Module

The aim of this module is to explore the relationship between mental health and the legal system.

The module critically explores the main types of mental disorder and their relationship to offending within the confines of mental health law, both civil and criminal. To understand the positive and the negative effects of homicide inquiries are important learning points. The role of psychiatric defences and the available legislation and processes involved in mental health legislation for offenders, including psychiatric defences are outlined. Students will also learn about legal defences against criminal charges available on psychiatric grounds. The module explores the roles of clinicians working within the legal system and the knowledge they need to both write competent court reports and appear in court. Understanding the aims and composition of court reports is an important aspect of the process. The services available for forensic patients (and others requiring similar services) are described as part of this module.

Graduate are likely to be more ethically minded and incisive as a result of completing this module.

Module Delivery Method	**On-Campus**[1] ☐	**Hybrid**[2] ☐	**Online**[3] ☒	**Work -Based Learning**[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London	☒ Online / Distance Learning	

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

			☐ Paisley		☐ Other (specify)	
Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the main types of mental disorder and their relationship to offending.
L2	Conceptualise and examine the available civil and criminal legislation and processes involved in mental health legislation for offenders.
L3	Demonstrate a critical understanding of the role of psychiatric defences.
L4	Demonstrate a robust and systematic approach to court report writing and an in depth knowledge of the process required for court appearances.
L5	

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 11** Critically understand the concepts and principles of mental disorder and the relationship to offending. Develop in-depth knowledge of mental health law, both civil and criminal, including comparative knowledge of other legal systems.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 11** Critically review the positive and negative effects of homicide inquiries. Use a range of specialised forensic skills that are informed by forefront developments in the engagement of court processes.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 11** Critically appraise the value of civil and criminal legislation and processes. Critically reflect upon ethical issues linked to mental health legislation.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 11** Demonstrate knowledge of effective communication skills required for attendance at court and court report writing. Effectively use ICT and numeric skills to present and disseminate information.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 11** Demonstrate substantial autonomy and initiative in all professional activities. Practice in ways which draw on critical reflection on own and others' roles and responsibilities.

Prerequisites	Module Code	Module Title
	Other	
Co-requisites	Module Code	Module Title

Learning and Teaching

In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.

This module is delivered on a distance learning basis utilising AULA as the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Distance learning students: In this mode of delivery, students are learning fully online and are supported by the VLE. On-line students will receive core module resources; individual and group tutorial support; and directed learning via the VLE system. This will be aided by online AULA Community feed discussion posts; virtual learning activities; tutorials (on-line or face to face via Microsoft TEAMS); directed wider reading including access to electronic library and e-books.

All students will be expected to work through the on-line module materials independently via AULA. This will assist in enhancing skills of communication, presentation, information abstraction, problem-solving, and critical reflection. Module content reflects societal diversity and a rights-based approach to practice. To promote accessibility, anticipatory adjustments have been made to teaching and learning strategies e.g. availability of electronic copies of lecture materials. Further reasonable adjustments can be made for students who have been assessed as requiring specific adjustments e.g., specialised equipment for studying e.g. specialised software.

Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	22
Asynchronous Class Activity	14
Independent Study	164
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Thomson, L.D.G. and Cherry, J. (2014) Mental Health and Scots Law in Practice, 2nd edition. Green & Thomson Reuters, ISBN: 978-0-414-01763-4.

World Health Organisation (2019/2021) International Classification of Diseases, Eleventh Revision (ICD-11). Available: https://icd.who.int/browse11.

Thomson, L.D.G. & Robinson, L. (2010) The Relationship between Crime and Psychiatry in Johnstone E.C. et al Companion to Psychiatric Studies Churchill Livingstone.

Fazel, S. et al (2009) Schizophrenia and Violence: systematic review and meta-analysis PLOS Med.

Tyrer,P., Duggan, C., Cooper, S., Crawford, M., Seivewright, H., Rutter, D., Maden, T., Byford, S. & Barrett, B. (2010) The successes and failures of the DSPD experiment: the assessment and management of severe personality disorder Medicine Science and the Law, 50, 2, 95-99, ISSN: 0025-8024.

Crichton, J. (2011) An introduction to Criminology. Chapter 2 in Bermingham et al Eds Seminars in Forensic Psychiatry 2nd Ed London: Gaskell.

McCall Smith, RAA, Shelden, D (1997) Scots Criminal Law, Butterworth, 2nd edition Scottish Law Commission (2004) Report on insanity and diminished responsibility. Edinburgh, The Stationery Office.

Crichton, J., Darjee, R., and Chiswick, D. (2004) Diminished responsibility in Scotland: new case law. Journal of Forensic Psychiatry and Psychology, 15, 552 - 565.

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are attending and participating in all timetabled programme activities including on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, placement, work-based elements, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

Regularly engaged with timetabled teaching sessions, course-related learning resources including those in the Library and on Aula. Complete assessments and submit these on time.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.

The School of Health and Life Sciences believes that education and practitioner diversity are central to achieving quality of care.

Within this module, quality of care, inclusiveness and employability are achieved by:

Provision of a welcoming and supportive culture that promotes accessibility and equal opportunities to students and prospective students.

Promotion of confidence and knowledge of their rights as a student and employee.

Promotion of respect and knowledge of client diversity, their needs, rights and associated practitioner responsibilities.

The above aims are supported by staff belief in fairness and equal opportunities and thus guide the content, teaching and learning, assessment and evaluation.

Anticipatory' and 'reasonable' adjustments are grounded in 'competence standards' – specifically, the core requirements for progression / achievement in placement / module. Anticipatory adjustments have been made and 'reasonable adjustments' can be made available in teaching and learning strategies to promote accessibility of the module. For students who have disclosed a disability, the UWS Disability Service (DS) will assess the

individual's strengths and support needs and then forward a Student Support Form to the appropriate DS Co-ordinator who will circulate the form to all of the relevant teaching staff. 'Reasonable adjustments' may include adapted or specialised equipment or further specialist assessment or support (e.g. assessment by an Educational Psychologist, extended time for presentations or assessments). If funding is required, this can be organised by the DS and funded by the School. Reasonable adjustments, in line with DS recommendations for the assessment of the individual student can be assured. Processes and procedures have been subject to Equality Impact Screening and where appropriate Equality Impact Assessment. Evaluation by all key stakeholders throughout the life of the module is also central to meeting our commitments. Students should approach the Disability Service as early as possible to discuss support. Details of the service can be found at: www.uws.ac.uk/disabilityservice/
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Mental Health Nursing Midwifery Health**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	MHMH L9-11
Moderator	Donna Maguire
External Examiner	L Gilling
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
Changes / Version Number	3

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Summative assessment: Students will provide a written assignment (essay) of 4,000 words demonstrating the principles that underpin mental health law and the ethical considerations associated with use of the law (100% weighting).
Assessment 2
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Essay	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	100	0

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	0 hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**
For AY 21-22 EE updated	Jan 2022	Y Murray
For AY22/23 minor text changes to teaching and learning and to EDI statement. Updated version number and added graduate attributes. Amended school title to reflect Health and Life Sciences.	Jan 2023	Y murray