Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

	Basic Course Information	
1.	Awarding Institution:	Nottingham Trent University
2.	School/Campus:	Science & Technology, Clifton campus
3.	Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study:	FdSc Forensic Science
4.	Normal Duration:	Full time - 2 years
5.	UCAS Code:	F411

6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

The FdSc course in Forensic Science provides a knowledge base to stimulate enthusiasm for Forensic Science and to develop transferable scientific skills. Through practical applications of theoretical knowledge you will acquire the skills and attributes required by employers in forensic laboratories and scientific support services for policing. Completing this award may also take you on the BSc or MSci Forensic Science courses or other further study options.

You will benefit from teaching from practitioners and follow a curriculum based on the National Occupational Standards knowledge required for Forensic roles.

The aims of the course are:

- To stimulate your enthusiasm for the studying, learning and application of forensic science;
- To provide you with a sound knowledge base for, and an understanding of the fundamental principles, concepts and terminology of theoretical and practical forensic science;
- To enable you to develop practical skills for use at the crime scene and in the laboratory, and to interpret numerical and observational data;
- To develop your key intellectual and transferable skills;
- To develop your maturity, independence and confidence, so enhancing your employability and to encourage lifelong learning.

7. Course outcomes

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

Knowledge and understanding

By the end of the course you should be able to:

CLO1*Describe and discuss the key facts, concepts and principles of chemistry and biology that are required to assist with or support a forensic investigation in the workplace;
CLO2*Apply knowledge and critical understanding of the scientific principles which underlies forensic practice and their application to solve problems in a forensic context;
CLO3*Demonstrate a knowledge of legislation and legal procedures;
CLO4 Describe and critically discuss methods of acquiring, interpreting and analysing data;
CLO5 Identify and select appropriate practical, presentational and statistical methods;
*These Learning Outcomes are aligned to the QAA subject benchmark statements for Forensic Science (2012)

Skills, qualities and attributes

By the end of the course you should be able to:

CLO6 Apply scientific principles and methods to the solution of problems;
CLO7 Formulate and test hypotheses;
CLO8* Collect, analyse and interpret data from a variety of sources

CLO9 Handle competently materials and equipment;
CLO10*Prepare and present scientific reports;
CLO11 Select and use appropriate information technology and literature resources;
CLO12*Communicate effectively in a variety of formats;
CLO13 Work independently and as part of a team.
CLO14*Evidence commitment to continuing professional development.

*These Learning Outcomes are aligned to the QAA subject benchmark statements for Forensic Science (2012).

8. Learning and teaching methods

The teaching and learning strategies for this course have been developed to support your acquisition of the knowledge, understanding and skills expected of a professional forensic scientist. These are based on accreditation bodies like the Chartered Society for Forensic Sciences and the QAA subject benchmarks for Forensics. Autonomous learning is encouraged and motivated within the course through the following practices:

- Interaction with other students through work based in small groups.
- Presentation of concepts and findings to fellow students and tutors: this will help you to organise your thoughts and reflect on your understanding.
- Discussion of your ideas with tutors. Both self-directed and staff-directed investigation is important to the development of your learning autonomy.
- The application of the knowledge that you have gained within modules. The careful progression between the levels in the course ensures that you build upon and develop earlier knowledge and skills.
- Work experience and mini-projects based on industrial problems.

You will be expected to take progressively more responsibility for your own learning at each level.

Course delivery is supported by strategies to encourage you to consolidate and apply your knowledge. In order to realise the course aims, the following practices are adopted:

- Lectures are used to introduce and develop concepts and to explore their application.
- Directed reading is used to supplement the concept development initiated through the lectures.
- Laboratory sessions are used to develop your practical skills and to underpin the lectures and directed reading.
- Seminars and workshops are used to consolidate the application phase of your learning process: sometimes these will be integrated with the lectures.
- Small projects in various modules help you to learn how to plan and execute investigative work.
- At level 5 you will undertake training events and workshops to develop theoretical and practical skills.

All modules have a site on NOW, the Nottingham Trent University Online Workspace. NOW provides important information on each module, such as the syllabus, teaching schedule and assessment plan. Most module sites also store lecture notes and past examination papers, and provide links to other internet sites which are useful for that particular module. NOW also has a site that provides information at course level, such as notices and electronic versions of course handbooks, etc.

9. Assessment methods

The course uses a variety of assessment techniques to ensure that you can demonstrate the range of learning outcomes. Subject knowledge and understanding is mainly tested through unseen examinations, coursework essays, coursework/laboratory reports and project reports, presentations and courtroom skills cross-examinations. These also assess a range of transferable skills, including confidence in written communication.

Simulated problems are used to assess problem solving skills and evidence interpretation – these are usually assessed through unseen examinations.

Laboratory experiments are used to test a range of practical skills and those outcomes associated with hypothesis testing and data capture and interpretation. Typical assessments include laboratory experiment write-ups, coursework reports and project reports and presentations.

Portfolios are used to enable students to demonstrate progression of skills and encourage the use of reflective practice as part of professional development.

The projects assess an important range of skills relevant to the world of work, including technical and numerical skills, command of relevant software, technical skills presentations skills, team working, leadership and time and resource management. This is especially true of the final year research project.

As well as formal assessments, the programme incorporates formative and diagnostic assessments – through these staff will provide you with more informal feedback on your progress and development.

In summary, the list of assessment methods includes:

- Unseen examinations
- Computer-based assessment
- Self/peer assessment
- Laboratory skills
- Laboratory reports
- Skills portfolios
- Essays, assignments, summaries and abstracts
- Data interpretation
- Oral and electronic presentations

10 Course structure and curriculum

The FdSc Forensic Science is a 2-year, full time course. A FdSc degree is awarded to students who successfully complete 240 credit points. A Certificate of Higher Education is awarded to students who successfully complete 120 cp at Level 4 but less than 120cp at Level 5.
Students who gain an overall grade of Low 2:1 or more at the end of Level 4 can be offered to fast track to the level 5 of the BSc (Hons) Forensic Science.
The FdSc Forensic Science course is a modular based degree, which addresses key aspects of biology, chemistry and the law. The modules selected on the degree are designed to meet the course learning outcomes. There is an emphasis on practical work involving laboratory techniques, data handling and interpretation.
Modules are mainly 20cp at level 4 unless otherwise stated. At Level 4 and 5, all modules are core (compulsory).

Level 4 (120cp)
All year Core:

FORE10001 Intro Forensic Biology (20cp)
FORE10004 Forensic Chemistry for Foundation (20cp)
CHEM10141 The Forensic Process (20cp)

CHEM10211 Introduction to Forensic Analysis (20cp)
FORE10003 Professional Skills for Forensics (20cp)
FORE10002 Technical Skills for Forensic Science (20cp)

Level 5
All Year
FORE2000x Forensic Practice (120cp)

The level 5 year is based on students demonstrating their Forensic skills and knowledge to build an evidence base that could be matched against the National Occupational Standards for forensics. The year will allow students to develop essential laboratory skills, apply knowledge of good laboratory practice, show team and independent working and learn about specific Forensic disciplines. There is also an opportunity to work on a project provided by a real Forensic company or supplier. This will also incorporate professional practice and ensure you develop a good understanding of employability.

On successful completion of the module student will be awarded a pass, commendation or distinction Foundation Science award, they can then transfer to level 5 of the accredited BSc (Hons) Forensic Science course or use credits elsewhere to top up to an honours degree.

11 Admission to the course

Entry requirements.

For current information regarding all entry requirements for this course, please see the 'Applying' tab on the NTU course information web page.

Prospective students with non-standard entry qualifications will be assessed on a case by case basis.
Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) can be either Certificated (APCL), where learning has been assessed and has led to academic credits, or Experiential, (APEL) whereby learning has been achieved outside education or training systems. This will also be assessed on a case by case basis in line with university regulations and policy.

12 Support for learning

We will work with you to ensure that you settle into your new academic environment and that your studies go well, and you will find that there are lots of people to support you at Nottingham Trent University.

All students at Nottingham Trent University have full access to Student Support Services. In addition, School based support networks are in place to offer you support, guidance and advice on academic and personal issues. Within the course, students experience the full support of the Forensics Team. The Head of Department, with support from the Course Manager, Module Leader(s), and Personal Tutor, takes responsibility for student support and guidance. The Module Leader will offer guidance and support to students taking each specific module.

Academic staff can be contacted by e-mail, telephone, letter, or in person.

As a new student you will experience a minimum of a 3-day induction period at the commencement of your first academic year. Induction and your personal tutor will inform you about:

- Student Support Services at University, School and Course level;
- University policies and procedures on academic systems;
- Personal development planning;
- Timetable issues, room allocations and location;
- University, School and Course Handbooks;
- Enrolment procedures;
- Computing, IT and Library services;
- Health and Safety procedures.

During your induction you will be assigned a Personal Tutor and informed about the best way to get in touch with your Course Leader and Module tutors. Every year, you will have regular time-tabled sessions with your Personal Tutor, in small groups. Your group tutorials will help you to reflect on your approaches to study and make connections between modules, integrating material from across the curriculum and encouraging you to achieve your maximum potential. You will also have an opportunity to discuss and deal with any personal or course-related issues which may be affecting your studies and get advice on what support the university can offer. Personal tutorials can also be used for personal development planning and skills development.

Student Mentors are also used to provide you with learning support. Student Mentors are typically students at Level 5 and above of their course, who provide some form of mathematics, academic writing or module-specific support. Such support is usually available on a 'help desk' basis.

The University provides a wide range of student services, where you can get support and advice on issues such as finance, dyslexia and disability, and personal problems.

http://www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/index.html

13 Graduate destinations/employability

Graduate employability is fundamental to the strategic aims of Nottingham Trent University, and this is reflected by our consistently high standings in the UK University league tables for graduate employment.

By the end of the course you will have developed a range of transferable skills, making you more attractive to potential employers.

The course produces foundation degree graduates in forensics who can fill technician positions in science fields; however, the vast majority of students continue their studies to achieve an honours degree at Nottingham Trent, before entering employment.

The University's Employability team helps you to seek suitable employment. It offers sessions on such topics as interview technique and filling in application forms, and well as having psychometric tests available to see what type of careers suit your personality.

14 Course standards and quality

All aspects of quality management within the School are in accordance with the University's Academic Standards and Quality Handbook.
The Course Management Team, which includes the Course Manager and Module Leaders, oversees the operational arrangements for the Course. In addition, the Course Committee and Staff Student Collaborative Committee, central to which are the student representatives, meets regularly throughout the year to review, evaluate and develop the Course.
Formal Course monitoring takes place at the end of each module through the administration of questionnaires offering closed and open-ended questions, which is in addition to informal feedback received from students throughout the year.
Overarching responsibility for quality control lies with the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee whose remit is to provide guidance and support to academic Courses.
External Examiners offer further quality control through monitoring academic standards, moderation of assessment tasks and processes. Course monitoring is a continuous process by which a course team, primarily through course committees, keeps under review the effective operation and currency of its course. An interim 'health check' of the course takes place annually. Every three years, Periodic Course Review provides the opportunity for course teams and Schools to take stock by considering the full range of evidence available.

15 Assessment regulations

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

16 **Additional information**

Collaborative partner(s):

Course referenced to national (QAA) Benchmark Statements: **Forensic Science (2012)**

Course recognised by:

Date this course specification approved: **25 September 2018**

Any additional information:

This course is mapped against the QAA Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (2015)