

# MSc in Forensic Psychology at Kent

“Life after studying – what our students say about us and what they are doing now”



**Psychology Assistant and Case Holder - Medway Secure Training Centre**

During my time at Kent, I experienced a great comfort within the department of Psychology and felt confident in approaching staff for guidance, information and general support in my studies. Studying at Kent, particularly at Masters level, has instilled within me a deep passion for my subject.

Prospective students can expect to study in depth the cognition of child molesters, violent and sexual offenders, experience an introduction to psychopathy, learn of the historical formation of gangs, their structure and psychological significance, and develop and understanding of the criminal justice system, amongst numerous other highly interesting subjects. Staff expertise in subjects such as prison gangs and child molesters, contribute to the dynamic nature of the course and provide students with real-life examples, processes of research and expert knowledge. Throughout the year-long course, contributions from outside agencies, such as staff from Broadmoor hospital, extended my learning and provided a variety of case study material, the opportunity to broaden my knowledge and experiences. Such external contribution of such a high level is rare in masters degrees and that Kent can boast such input, makes it a very desirable and popular course.

In September 2007, following completion of my degree, I remained at Kent and assisted Dr Theresa Gannon as a research assistant, conducting a pilot study of a newly designed assessment tool measuring offence supportive beliefs amongst violent adolescent offenders. In January of this year, I took up my current position at Medway Secure Training Centre, where we house up to 76 young people, aged between 12 – 18 years who are on remand or sentenced to detained training orders. In this position I hold a dual role. My primary role is as a psychology assistant, responsible for delivering 1:1 and 2:1 interventions with young people who have mental health needs such as depression, bereavements, anger management problems and inappropriate behaviour for example. My second role is a case holder, responsible for a total of four girls during their time at the centre



**Forensic Psychologist in Training, in the Sex Offender Treatment Programme Research and Evaluation Team in Interventions Group**

I studied for my MSc part time at Kent while I was working as a trainee forensic psychologist in a prison. Although it was hard at times, I found it really helpful to study while I was working, as I was able to apply what I was learning to my clinical practice. The course at Kent was varied, and I liked the fact that I was able to gain a good idea of the range of areas that a forensic psychologist could work in. The staff were supportive; my dissertation supervisor (Dr. Jane Wood) encouraged me to publish my research project, and we're going to present the paper at a conference in Cape Town this summer. The statistics lectures were really well put together, and inspired me to become more involved in research. I now work for the Prison Service Interventions Group, where I work on the research and development of offending behaviour programmes, and provide training and support for staff delivering programmes.



**PhD student in Forensic Psychology**

After completing the Forensic MSc course at Kent I stayed on at the University to undertake a PhD in Forensic Psychology. My research focuses on the cognitions of rapists and rape prone men, examining the organisation of thoughts and beliefs of these men, and how these beliefs can affect social processing, and ultimately behaviour. I chose to continue my studies here at Kent due to the strong Forensic Psychology department. I received such excellent tuition, guidance and support from the lecturing staff, and particularly from my project supervisor, Dr Theresa Gannon, that continuing my studies here seemed like the natural choice.

The Forensic Psychology MSc course taught me so much, and provides an excellent starting point for anyone who wants to continue with a career in Forensic Psychology. The course manages to teach a broad range of topics, whilst examining all the key issues in great depth. I would certainly highly recommend the course at Kent to applicants, as I learnt such a great deal from it.



**Assistant Clinical  
Psychologist at Trevor  
Gibbens Unit, Maidstone  
(Medium Secure Unit).**

I completed my MSc in Forensic Psychology over part time 2 years from 2005-2007. Although not my favourite part of the course, I appreciated the strong emphasis on statistics and research methodology. I now feel confident in undertaking research and evaluation projects in my current role as an Assistant Psychologist, and my skills in this area are building all the time.

I did enjoy the more practical and applied elements of the course. It was fantastic to have guest speakers visit and give lectures on their areas of expertise. It really demonstrated how the theory links with practise, and gave a more realistic impression how a career in forensic psychology may develop.

The department's links with secure hospitals, prisons etc. are very helpful in order to get to know key people in the field. I visited a medium secure unit on a field trip and am now employed there as an assistant psychologist. I am currently working on Stage 2 of my Forensic Chartership and enjoying the challenge.