MSc FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

Canterbury
Choosing where to study for your MSc in Forensic Psychology can be a daunting task. At Kent, we offer a well-established, prestigious programme where you receive exceptional teaching in cutting-edge forensic topics within a highly esteemed university. Kent was ranked 16th in the UK in The Guardian University Guide 2016 and 17th* for research intensity in the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014.

Kent provides you with a challenging and stimulating course that opens up exciting opportunities for you and your future career in forensic psychology. Kent graduates are highly employable and past graduates from our programme are working all over the world in important and well-paid positions within prisons, healthcare and universities.

At Kent, the very best international researchers and practitioners, working at the forefront of their field, teach you the skills you need to engage with forensic psychology as a critical researcher and developing practitioner. As well as being highly knowledgeable about our field, we are also very approachable. We are a friendly and cohesive team, able to offer you a nurturing and positive environment where you can test the boundaries and develop your knowledge and skills.

Canterbury is a wonderful place to live and study and we invite you to visit our facilities and see what we have to offer.

Professor Theresa A Gannon
MSc Programme Director; Director, Centre of Research and Education in Forensic Psychology (CORE-FP) and the CORE-FP team

*of 122 universities, not including specialist institutions
INTRODUCTION

The University of Kent’s MSc in Forensic Psychology is one of the longest running and most prestigious programmes in the UK. Developed in 1995, it was one of the first forensic psychology programmes in the UK and has established a reputation for producing graduates of the highest quality.

The MSc is provided by a large team of forensic psychologists, many of whom are chartered, and all of whom generate cutting-edge research. It is this cohesive and highly knowledgeable team who supervise your work and support you in new challenges.

Kent psychology is world-leading

In the Research Excellence Framework 2014, 97% of research submitted by the School of Psychology was judged to be of international quality, and we were ranked 11th in the UK for research intensity by the Times Higher Education. The University’s Centre of Research and Education in Forensic Psychology (CORE-FP) is an internationally respected research centre in forensic psychology, which offers valuable opportunities for student and graduate members and provides the framework for the Master’s programme.

Within the Centre, we conduct internationally recognised research and practice and pass on knowledge and opportunities associated with our research and practice to students.

Making a difference

Our research makes a difference to society and, in the past, has led to amendments in UK legislation around mandatory polygraph testing for offenders, generated a new theory of gang membership, and produced the world’s first standardised treatment programme for deliberate firesetters. Our MSc students have worked with us on all of these achievements, gaining valuable experience, which ensures they stand out from the crowd when they seek employment.

CORE-FP’s external links

The Centre has extensive and longstanding links with forensic practitioners, academics and other professionals (such as those working in the fire service, police, Ministry of Justice and the NSPCC) both in the UK and overseas. These links mean we can provide opportunities for you to undertake voluntary work while studying for your MSc and also help you to secure paid employment following successful completion of your MSc. Employers recognise that graduates from the Kent MSc in Forensic Psychology are of the very highest quality.

“Getting to tour the prison and speak to prisoners themselves was a huge learning experience for me.”

MSc Forensic Psychology graduate
Learning from practitioners
Our module on the assessment and treatment of offenders is taught by leading forensic practitioners who work in prisons and in institutions such as Broadmoor Hospital and the Trevor Gibbens Unit in Kent. They treat and assess, on a daily basis, individuals who have seriously offended and are able to pass on the specialised skills needed to assess and treat these people.

Visiting prisons/hospitals
We broaden your experiences to ensure you can make the contacts needed to work as a practitioner or conduct research within secure establishments. Each year, we take small groups to visit stimulating and challenging secure establishments. You learn about the forensic establishment, talk with practitioner staff (often former Kent students), and may have the opportunity to talk with a person in prison or hospital who has offended. Past visits include: Broadmoor Hospital, Trevor Gibbens Unit, HMP Holloway and HMP Swaleside.

Meet the CORE-FP team

Professor Theresa A Gannon
Director of CORE-FP/ MSc Programme Director
Psychological characteristics and rehabilitation of offenders (male and female sexual offenders, firesetters).

Dr Emma Alleyne
Lecturer in Forensic Psychology
Psychological characteristics of street gang membership; socio-cognitive theories and models that help to explain gang membership and criminal behaviour; psychopathology and clinical treatment of firesetters and individuals who perpetrate animal cruelty.

Dr Caolte Ó Ciardha
Lecturer in Forensic Psychology
Cognition in offending behaviour; theories of adult firesetting; treatment needs and the evaluation of treatment for firesetters; indirect methods of assessing offence-supportive cognitions in sexual offenders, firesetters and other offending individuals.

Dr Afroditi Pina
Senior Lecturer in Psychology
Sexual harassment; psychological and practical consequences of women’s experiences of sexual harassment; the effects of rape-related beliefs on perceptions of rape victims and appropriate sentencing; the effects of sexual objectification on women.

Dr Nichola Tyler
Research Associate
Mentally disordered offenders, arson and firesetting, offence-related trauma and treatment provision within secure forensic hospital settings.

Dr Eduardo Vasquez
Lecturer in Forensic Psychology
General aggression and violence. Intergroup aggression, gang-related aggression. Alcohol and aggression; alcohol and intergroup relations.

Dr Jane Wood
Deputy Director of CORE-FP, Reader in Forensic Psychology
Psychological characteristics of gang members, jury decision making, rehabilitation of prolific offenders, bullying in schools and prisons.

Esmé Rigden
Programme Administrator
Manages the administration of the MSc in Forensic Psychology.

Carly Turnham
Recruitment, Admissions and Marketing Officer
First contact point for prospective students, admissions and interview days.

/ FIND OUT MORE
Please visit the Centre of Research and Education in Forensic Psychology (CORE-FP) website: www.kent.ac.uk/psychology/core-fp
ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

Our Forensic Psychology MSc offers you the opportunity to take the first steps to becoming a chartered forensic psychologist.

The programme provides the first year of professional training (academic element) needed for qualification as a chartered forensic psychologist, for those who intend to work as a practitioner registered with the UK Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

For over 20 years, the British Psychological Society has continuously accredited Kent’s MSc in Forensic Psychology.

The programme has been awarded Specialist Advanced Course recognition by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). This means that our MSc provides a recognised training route if you wish to continue your studies by studying for a research degree (PhD) in forensic psychology.

Learning how offenders think

This MSc is the only programme that offers an entire module on offender cognition. This module helps you to understand how offence-supportive thinking can increase the chances of rape, child molestation, violence and sexual murder. We also examine how such thinking is tackled in therapy with people who have offended using real examples.

Real-world skills

Our assessments are designed to teach you real-world writing skills such as: journal writing, risk assessment reports, court reports and government research reports. With the support of Forensic Psychology staff you are taught these skills, which ensure that you are highly competitive when you graduate. So, whether you decide to go on to become a chartered forensic psychologist, a PhD candidate, or a researcher you will be fully prepared.

Course content

The MSc has six compulsory modules:

- Assessment and Treatment of Offenders in Forensic Settings
- Advanced Statistics and Methodology
- Forensic Cognition: Theory, Research and Practice
- Forensic Research Project
- Psychology of Criminal Conduct
- Psychology of Law and Justice.

Assessment and Treatment of Offenders in Forensic Settings

In this module, you examine the variety of perspectives and practical methods employed by practising forensic psychologists in the treatment of both mainstream and psychologically disturbed individuals who have offended. You look at the assessment and treatment of male and female individuals who have offended sexually, violently, or using fire. Aspects such as learning disability, trauma, and addictions are also covered within the settings of special hospitals, regional secure units and prisons.

Advanced Statistics and Methodology

This module provides a postgraduate-level orientation to basic and advanced statistical and methodological issues in applied psychology. It is compulsory for all MSc students. Methodological issues considered include measurement validity and reliability.
and various research designs such as experimental, qualitative and correlational. The statistical techniques taught include exploratory data analysis; basic and advanced topics in analysis of variance, ANOVA; multiple regression; factor analysis; and structural equation modelling.

**Forensic Cognition: Theory, Research and Practice**

What sort of thinking occurs in men and women who sexually molest children, rape adults or commit acts of violence? Cognition is recognised as being a key component underlying the way people think and behave. In this module, you learn about the influential theories and latest research designed to help understand why individuals offend. You learn about treatment programmes designed to alter cognitive characteristics associated with offending in order to reduce recidivism. You also study fascinating social-cognitive phenomena associated with child and adult eyewitness testimony, and discover how memory can play havoc with the criminal justice system.

**Forensic Research Project**

In this module, you undertake your own empirical research on a specialist forensic topic. Guided by your supervisor, Kent offers you a very wide choice of areas of study and a wealth of experienced supervisors to choose from. You can choose a project that focuses on working with people who have offended, professionals who work with those who have offended, community members or students. Your supervisor works with you to ensure you get the very best out of your research and, if publishable, will work with you to ensure it is published in a reputable journal.

**Psychology of Criminal Conduct**

This module examines whether it is possible to assess criminal tendencies and how far personality factors can explain such tendencies. The study of offence behaviour and the contribution of investigative psychology to police work are investigated. You also explore in detail the concept of psychopathy and its relationship to offending. The origins of criminal tendencies in childhood, and its expression in adolescence are examined. Finally, you look at crime from the victim’s perspective, exploring the psychological consequences of crime.

**Psychology of Law and Justice**

When do we rightly blame someone for wrongdoing? How do models of blame inform our criminal justice system? In this module, we examine the actions of police, suspects, witnesses and the courts in turn. The police feature prominently in the early stages as they identify and apprehend offenders. Before a case comes to trial, opportunities for the suspect to confess and to bargain, implicitly or explicitly, over the precise charge will have occurred. In court, the prosecution and defence present their narratives of the events that are alleged to have taken place for a jury to consider. Following a guilty verdict, the judge comes to the fore and we examine factors determining sentence decisions and the influence of public opinion in the justice system. We conclude the module by examining the psychological effects that imprisonment can have on individuals who have offended.
In our most recent accreditation visit by the British Psychological Society, we were commended for our extensive links with forensic agencies and staff.

**Broadmoor Hospital**
CORE-FP has a well-established partnership with Broadmoor Hospital. We have been working with Broadmoor for over 20 years and this partnership has provided Kent students with stimulating and highly specialist knowledge about criminal behaviour and mental illness. Each year, forensic practitioners from the most famous forensic hospital in the UK come and teach our students key skills about how best to assess and treat high-risk individuals who have offended. A number of students also get the opportunity to conduct their research projects within Broadmoor Hospital. Examples of previous projects include research examining the defence styles of forensic patients and the treatment needs of key groups of patients. Many students on our programme also get an opportunity to visit Broadmoor on one of our ‘site visits’. In previous years, this has given students the opportunity to meet with patients from the hospital.

**Trevor Gibbens Medium Secure Unit (Kent and Medway Partnership Trust)**
Dr Lona Lockerbie is an honorary member of CORE-FP and the Forensic and Specialist Service Line Lead for Psychological Practice and Quality within the Kent and Medway Partnership Trust. She has employed several Kent graduates within her service and many work there today assessing and treating men and women with mental illness who have offended. Dr Lockerbie also welcomes students on the MSc in Forensic Psychology to conduct research within Kent Forensic Psychiatry Service so that they can experience the forensic environment – and the issues faced by staff and patients – first hand. Examples of previous projects conducted within Kent Forensic Psychiatry Unit include work examining: patients’ firesetting behaviour, offence-related trauma and the reasons patients are recalled to a secure forensic hospital.

“It was the practical aspects of the course that have really stayed with me. For example, the numerous trips to prisons, secure mental health facilities, and observing court cases both locally and at the Old Bailey.”

MSc Forensic Psychology graduate
The University of Kent’s Canterbury campus provides a stunning location for your studies and offers first-class academic and leisure facilities.

Outstanding facilities
The School of Psychology has state-of-the-art research facilities with specialised equipment such as eye-tracker technology, electroencephalography (EEG) equipment for monitoring brain function, brain stimulation and physiology laboratories, child-friendly testing spaces, a virtual reality laboratory, group dynamics laboratories and observation suites.

The University’s Templeman Library provides a wealth of resources and services to support study and research. Its extensive print and electronic collections are specifically aimed at supporting the courses and subject areas taught at Kent and include one of the country’s largest collections of books on psychology. Almost all psychology journals are available online. We also have a large collection of frequently used books and journals in the School’s MSc Resource Room and more specialised resources for postgraduate forensic psychology students in the Forensic Psychology Preparation Room.

Stimulating environment
The School of Psychology is home to a strong intellectual community in which postgraduates play a central role. Students and staff participate equally in the activities organised in areas in which they share an interest. There are weekly informal workshops convened especially for students and regular research colloquia to which distinguished external speakers are invited.

Staff from the University’s Research Services give regular updates and talks within the School, and meet and give advice to our students on research issues. We have an online Research Participation Scheme (RPS) to recruit undergraduate students, who participate as part of their course requirement. We also have a University-wide Research Participation Scheme (uwRPS), which draws on participants from across the University.

Beautiful green campus
Our campus has plenty of green and tranquil spaces, both lawns and wooded areas, and is set on a hill with a view of the city and Canterbury Cathedral.

Everything you need on campus is within walking distance, including a general store, a bookshop, banks, a medical centre and a pharmacy. The campus has its own cinema, theatre, music venue and a student nightclub. Kent has a reputation for being a very friendly university with a cosmopolitan environment. There are many restaurants, cafés and bars on campus as well as a sports centre and gym.

Attractive location
Canterbury is a lovely city with medieval buildings, lively bars and atmospheric pubs, as well as a wide range of shops. From campus, it is a 25-minute walk or a short bus-ride into the city. The attractive coastal town of Whitstable is close by and there are sandy beaches further down the coast. London is under an hour away by high-speed train.
The University of Kent has an excellent record for postgraduate employment: over 96% of our postgraduate students who graduated in 2014 found a job or further study opportunity within six months of graduation.

Career pathways
A postgraduate qualification from Kent opens up a wealth of career opportunities by providing an impressive portfolio of skills and specialist knowledge.

Our Forensic Psychology graduates gain employment in challenging and stimulating forensic environments. Recent graduate destinations include: clinical psychology training, the prison service, young offender institutions, the police, the Home Office, registered charities, magistrates courts, the NHS and private healthcare establishments.

Transferable skills training
As well as providing a first-rate academic experience, we want you to be in a good position to face the demands of a tough economic environment. Employers recognise that a postgraduate qualification demonstrates a wide range of skills. During your programme, you acquire a high level of academic knowledge and specialist practical skills. Kent also helps you to develop key transferable skills, such as the ability to adapt to challenges, analyse complex real-world problems and develop original ideas, which can be applied to all aspects of employment.

We also provide a comprehensive package of skills development training programmes, careers advice, and volunteering and paid work opportunities to help enhance your career prospects.

Kent’s Graduate School delivers the Global Skills Award programme for students following taught programmes of study, which is specifically designed to consolidate your awareness of current global issues and improve your employment prospects.

Careers and Employability Service
Our award-winning Careers and Employability Service can help you to plan for your future by providing one-to-one advice at any stage in your postgraduate studies. It also provides online advice on employability skills, career choices, applications and interview skills.

Further information
For more information on the careers help we provide at Kent, visit our Employability web page at www.kent.ac.uk/employability

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IMRESSIVE CAREER PROSPECTS

DID YOU KNOW?
Psychology at Kent was ranked 5th in the UK for graduate prospects in The Complete University Guide 2016.
Below, three of our recent graduates describe their experiences at Kent and how their studies help them in their current work.

Mehdi Alemohammad  
Trainee forensic psychologist at the Bracton Centre (NHS)  
‘I valued learning from experts who worked directly with offenders. The course benefits from well-known chartered forensic psychologists and researchers who work regularly with offenders. ‘I particularly enjoyed the regular seminars given by well-known forensic psychologists. The integration of theories with practical experience made learning much more pragmatic. There were also talks by police officers, volunteer organisations and firefighters, highlighting the need to think outside of the box and not to work in isolation. I attended field trips, ranging from a young offender institute (YOI) to a high security forensic psychiatric unit. Besides the obvious advantage of visiting and learning from these sites, this also helped me to develop a broader perspective of what is involved in forensic psychology. I am now using the skills I gained at the University working at a specialist forensic mental health service in Kent.’

Emma Barrowcliffe  
PhD candidate  
‘The decision to study a Master’s in Forensic Psychology at Kent was an easy one. Kent has a great reputation! I researched deliberate firesetting and managed to publish my Master’s thesis in a top journal. I snapped up the chance to come back to further investigate firesetting for a PhD, which I will complete next year.’

Jade Hutchings  
Trainee forensic psychologist, Young People’s Estate Psychological Services, NOMS  
‘My experience at Kent developed me into a well-rounded and confident graduate. I developed as much passion for my discipline as the lecturers who facilitated my learning. This prepared me for my future as a psychologist. Since graduating, I have worked as a psychology assistant and am currently a trainee psychologist, working towards chartered status with the British Psychology Society and registered status with the Health and Care Professions Council. ‘My work in secure settings has enabled me to gain experience in working with young people, female offenders and both male violent and sexual offenders. I am developing my skills in risk assessment, therapeutic intervention, consultancy, research and training. The initial solid foundation of theoretical knowledge and skills I gained at Kent continues to inform and support my development.’

To read more of our alumni stories, see www.kent.ac.uk/psychology
Entry requirements

Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) status

You are required to hold a Bachelor’s degree which makes you eligible for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society. GBC is the first step towards becoming a Chartered Psychologist. Usually, you will have this if you took an honours psychology degree in the UK accredited by the British Psychological Society. If your UK degree was not accredited, or if you hold a degree from overseas, you can still get GBC through having your degree assessed by the British Psychological Society or by taking a conversion course. Information about both options may be found by visiting the British Psychological Society’s website (www.bps.org.uk).

Academic qualifications

We are interested in dynamic and high achieving students who have a passion for forensic psychology. Competition to enter our programme is strong. You must hold either a high 2:1 in your degree (ie, an average of 65 or over) or else a low 2:1 alongside other indicators of strong academic potential. Academic results from institutions in other countries will be assessed individually according to this standard, as institutional practices and marking systems vary.

We are particularly interested in receiving applications from suitably qualified graduates who have direct experience of the application of psychological principles in custodial or other forensic settings. We do not reject applicants outright who have been unable to obtain forensic-related work experience, however. Examples of acceptable experience include working voluntarily (or in some cases paid) for victim support, the police, the prison service, the NHS or forensic-relevant charities.

How to apply

Applications are made online. Visit www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/apply-online/69 to make your application.

If the admissions criteria have been met, you may be called for interview by a panel of Forensic Psychology staff to assess your suitability for the programme. We do not admit anyone on to the MSc in Forensic Psychology without an interview. However, being called for interview is no guarantee that you will be offered a place. If you are applying from within the UK, we ask you to visit the University so that you can see our facilities and meet Forensic Psychology staff. For overseas students, we will conduct the interview by telephone.

Interviews will take place at set points in the year. To be considered for sessions in February, April and June, you should submit your application including transcripts and references by 1 January, 1 March, and 1 May respectively. A further interview date may be added, subject to the availability of places, at the panel’s discretion.
Fees and financial support

Tuition fees 2015/16

Our fees are highly competitive.

UK and EU students

Full-time | Part-time
---|---
£6,860 | £3,440 per annum

International students

Full-time | Part-time
---|---
£12,890 | £6,460 per annum

If you require financial support for your studies then you can explore the option of a professional and career development loan (www.gov.uk/career-development-loans). Loans can be obtained up to the value of £10,000. These loans are typically offered at a reduced interest rate. You should ensure that you apply for your loan well in advance (and no less than three months) prior to starting your course.

In addition, the University of Kent provides various opportunities for support with funding. Please examine our website – which is frequently updated – to see if you qualify: www.kent.ac.uk/scholarships/postgraduate

Professional training

All professional psychology training in the UK takes place at postgraduate level, and the minimum training period is the equivalent of three years’ full-time study and supervised experience.

The MSc in Forensic Psychology at Kent is accredited by the British Psychological Society as providing the first (academic) year of professional training for those who wish to qualify as chartered forensic psychologists. Graduates from the programme are then required to gain the equivalent of a further two years’ relevant experience under the supervision of a chartered forensic psychologist before qualifying for chartered status themselves. Once you qualify for Chartered status, you are able to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a forensic psychologist. You should contact the BPS directly if you have enquiries about the nature of the supervised practice element of qualification (www.bps.org.uk). You should contact the HCPC if you have any enquiries about registration under health and care professionals (www.hcpc-uk.org).

Please note that only students who gain a mark of 50% or above in every module, with an overall mark of at least 50%, are eligible for accreditation by the British Psychological Society.

Further information

We welcome enquiries about our programme.

If your enquiry is about the application process, then please contact:
Carly Turnham,
School of Psychology,
University of Kent, Canterbury,
Kent CT2 7NP UK
T: +44 (0)1227 824775
F: +44 (0)1227 827030
E: psypgadmissions@kent.ac.uk

If your enquiry is about the content of the programme, then please contact the Programme Director:
Professor Theresa Gannon
School of Psychology,
University of Kent, Canterbury,
Kent CT2 7NP UK
E: T.A.Gannon@kent.ac.uk

In the meantime, please take the opportunity to explore what we do at Kent through browsing the CORE-FP website www.kent.ac.uk/psychology/core-fp
European connections
Kent is known as the UK’s European university. Our two main UK campuses, Canterbury and Medway, are located in the south-east of England, close to London, and we also have study locations in Brussels, Paris, Athens and Rome.

We have a diverse, cosmopolitan population with 149 nationalities represented. We also have strong links with universities in Europe. From Kent, you are around two hours away from Paris and Brussels by train.

Research excellence
As a student at Kent, you are taught by leading academics, who produce research of international standing. Based on our excellent results in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF), Kent was ranked 17th* in the UK for research intensity by the *Times Higher Education*, confirming our position as one of the UK’s leading research-intensive universities.

Strong academic community
Kent’s postgraduate students are part of a thriving intellectual community. In addition to lectures, seminars and supervision, you benefit from a rich and stimulating research culture. We have also invested in Woolf College, a modern facility on the Canterbury campus dedicated to postgraduates, which combines accommodation with teaching and social space.

A global outlook
Kent has a great international reputation, attracting academic staff and students from around the world. Our academic schools are engaged in collaborative research with universities worldwide and we offer a range of opportunities to study abroad and an approach that is truly global.

The Graduate School
As a postgraduate student, you also have the support of the Graduate School, which promotes your academic interests, co-ordinates the Researcher Development Programme and the Global Skills Award, and facilitates cross-disciplinary interaction and social networking.

Funding
Kent provides a variety of financial support opportunities for postgraduate students. These range from research studentships, location-specific funding, sport and music scholarships, and funding specifically for overseas fee-paying students. For further information, see www.kent.ac.uk/pgfunding

Enhanced career prospects
At Kent, we want you to be in a good position to face the demands of a tough economic environment. During your studies, you acquire a high level of academic knowledge and specialist practical skills. We also help you to develop key transferable skills that are essential within the competitive world of work.

Location
Canterbury

Faculty
Faculty of Social Sciences

School
School of Psychology

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T: +44 (0)1227 824775
F: +44 (0)1227 827030
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Applications
Online at www.kent.ac.uk/courses/postgrad/apply

Further information
For information about applying to Kent, or to order a copy of the Graduate Prospectus, please contact:
Recruitment and Admissions Office, The Registry,
University of Kent, Canterbury,
Kent CT2 7NZ, UK
T: +44 (0)1227 827272
F: +44 (0)1227 827077
www.kent.ac.uk/pg

The University also holds Open Days and postgraduate recruitment events throughout the year. Please see www.kent.ac.uk/opendays
This brochure was produced in November 2015. The University of Kent makes every effort to ensure that the information contained in its publicity materials is fair and accurate and to provide educational services as described. However, the courses, services and other matters may be subject to change. For the most up-to-date information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/pg Full details of our terms and conditions can be found at: www.kent.ac.uk/termsandconditions

For the University to operate efficiently, it needs to process information about you for administrative, academic and health and safety reasons. Any offer we make to you is subject to your consent to process such information and is a requirement in order for you to be registered as a student. All students must agree to abide by the University rules and regulations at: www.kent.ac.uk/regulations
COME AND VISIT US

To find out more about visiting the University, see our website:
www.kent.ac.uk/visit