Level 3 Examiners' Report

Criminology

Level 3 Applied Certificate/Diploma

Summer 2025

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025



Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	WJEC offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

[1] ***Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.***

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.wjec.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner | WJEC

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Contents

	Page
Executive summary	5
Unit 1- Changing Awareness of Crime	7
Unit 2- Criminological Theories	14
Unit 3 - Crime Scene to Courtroom	19
Unit 4 - Crime and Punishment	25
Supporting you – useful contacts and links	30

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Executive Summary

The Level 3 Applied Certificate and Diploma in Criminology continue to be popular and entries increased across all units in 2025.

In the fourth consecutive series of online moderation for Units 1 and 3, most centres followed correct procedures regarding the administration of the controlled assessment and samples, uploading all required documentation, including signed mark record sheets and quality assurance materials, in a timely and complete manner. However, several centres continued to exhibit non-compliance with WJEC guidance, leading to delays in the moderation process in both internally assessed Units.

Common and persistent administrative issues across both NEA units continue to be observed. These include incomplete samples, missing signatures, incorrect contact details on IAMIS, inadequate annotation, clerical errors and scanning errors, all of which hinder and delay the moderation process.

In both Units 1 and 3, plagiarism and the use of AI-generated content have increased, particularly in AC2.2 and AC3.2 in Unit 1 and LO3 in Unit 3. This must be addressed through vigilant teaching and assessment practices. Centres are urged to consult current Professional Learning materials and adhere strictly to specification content and assessment guidance to support fair, consistent, and timely moderation.

In Unit 1, the inclusion of hyperlinks within candidate submissions is not acceptable. Moderators cannot access external links; therefore, all work must be uploaded in accessible formats (e.g., Word or PDF). Centres must also ensure that both briefs and work are submitted when candidates make fresh attempts. Moreover, instances of overmarking and awarding credit for non-specification content remain problematic.

The Unit 2 examination successfully assessed all learning outcomes and covered a range of the assessment criteria (ACs). The demands were consistent with previous series, and some improvement was observed in candidate performance.

Candidates often demonstrated strong knowledge of topics assessed and many were able to utilise specialist vocabulary effectively. The assessment allowed candidates to demonstrate skills of identification, explanation, evaluation, and analysis and many were able to accomplish this confidently. Topics/questions that were well-understood included the explanation of deviance (1ai), identification and description of genetic and biological theories (1di, 1dii), social structure theories of criminality (2a), and evaluation of biological theories of criminality (3aii).

However, there were gaps in knowledge which affected the performance of some candidates. It is essential that candidates develop knowledge and understanding of the full specification and that all aspects of all ACs are covered. Some candidates need to improve their ability to apply criminological theories to individuals within scenarios. The focus should be on the connection between theory and individual rather than lengthy theoretical descriptions. The areas where these issues were seen and that require improvement included understanding the social construction of criminality (1c), demographic changes affecting policy (2b), how sociological theories inform crime control policies (2c), and discussion of newspaper campaigns influencing policy (2d).

Unit 3 saw standards consistent with 2024. Candidates generally showed strong knowledge, analysis, and evaluation skills. Work was well-structured, often using helpful sub-headings aligned with ACs.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Higher attaining candidates were able to select and apply relevant content and case studies, avoiding unnecessary narrative. Such material was often used effectively to address the various tasks. They were also able to fully engage with the demands of the tasks and ACs, using specialist terminology throughout.

Key areas for improvement include using knowledge and case studies effectively, avoiding unnecessary narrative and utilising the brief appropriately. It is only required in LO3 and candidates should not be penalised for lack of reference in LO1 and LO2.

The Unit 4 examination successfully assessed all learning outcomes and covered a range of the ACs and various command terms including describe, explain, evaluate, assess, and discuss were used. Some candidates struggled to engage effectively with these terms, meaning they found the paper more challenging than previous series. The question mark allocations of 4, 6, or 9 marks were appropriate for Level 3 candidates across a range of abilities.

Candidates produced a range of responses with the strongest answers fully meeting the demands of the questions and supporting their points with evidence such as real-life case studies, research, statistics, and other data. The use of specialist vocabulary was appropriate and often helped elevate responses into higher mark bands. Certain topics were generally well answered, including environmental tactics for social control (1b), the due process model of justice (1c), punishments aimed at preventing reoffending (2c), judicial processes in law making (2d), and the role of the police in social control (3d).

However, some candidates struggled with questions due to a lack of understanding of specific areas of the specification, such as the prison service's reach and practices (1a), inter-agency relationships (1d and 3a), and the weaknesses of the probation service (3b).

Areas for improvement include avoiding introductions and conclusions in responses and limiting the use of excessive case study narrative which can hinder time management and offer limited credit and ensuring all areas of the specification are covered.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

APPLIED CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA IN CRIMINOLOGY

Level 3

Summer 2025

UNIT 1 – CHANGING AWARENESS OF CRIME

Overview of the Unit

Comments made throughout this report are not to be taken as applying equally to all centres and do not detract from the overall improved good performance of many candidates and centres.

For this unit, Unit 1, it was now the fourth examination series where moderation was transferred to online only. Most centres have continued to deal with this change effectively, uploading the required documents promptly and in their entirety, including signed mark record sheets, the brief used by candidates, attached to the highest scoring candidate (including any fresh attempt briefs used), and centre Quality assurance documentation. Unfortunately, this is not the case for all centres. There are still instances of centres failing to comply with the instructions sent out by the WJEC and delays in moderation were seen as a result again this year. Centres must make themselves familiar with the process prior to submission to avoid unnecessary delays during the moderation process.

Administration issues continued to be an issue this year, and several delays were seen as a consequence. Incomplete samples, unsigned candidate and/or staff declarations on the mark record sheets and incomplete uploads of candidate work are not acceptable. We also saw instances where centres had incorrect contact information for the exams officer on Iamis, meaning that contact was made and no reply received until moderators chased centres at a senior level. It was also the case that when additional samples were requested by moderators that centres were querying why this was the case. When additional samples are judged to be needed and as such, requested, this judgement is not to be queried by centres, work should be uploaded in line with the timescale set by the WJEC. Again, doing this caused significant delays to the moderation process. There were many centres this year who had not used the updated AI Mark Record Sheet. Centres are reminded that this is the Mark record Sheet that must be used as we move into the coming academic year. All paperwork that should be used is easily accessible on the WJEC website, under the 'non-exam assessment' tab.

Please ensure that candidates work is submitted using Word or PDF to avoid access issues. A significant number of candidates presented their work for AC3.2 via a link. Under no circumstances should links be included in the candidates work. All work that is to be moderated should be presented to the moderator in an accessible uploaded form, and where necessary uploaded in colour for AC3.2 to ensure clarity and justifications for AC3.3 can be agreed during moderation.

Moderators will not and cannot click on external links so please ensure that copies of all materials produced for AC3.2 are visible to the moderator.

Centres should be mindful that where candidates have taken a fresh attempt, both briefs used and both pieces of work must be uploaded for the candidate. If the candidate is resitting in a different academic year this is not required.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Better examples of work provided detailed comments on the mark record sheet to justify the mark band awarded for each AC, highlighting the relevant mark band, inserting the mark and providing outlined focused comments in support of the performance on all mark record sheets submitted.

It is pleasing to see assessors again, engaging with key terminology found in both the specification and on the mark record sheet. Best practice was evident in centres where assessors provided concise justifications as to why the candidate had achieved high level performance or alternatively, reasons why the candidate could not achieve high level performance with improvement points listed. Good practice was also evident in those centres that included annotations throughout the internal assessment.

Unfortunately, we are still seeing work that has no annotation at all. This is not acceptable. Annotations must be evident within the main body of work to show the location of each assessment criteria. This does significantly assist the moderation process and is an approach all centres should adopt for future series. In some cases, centres merely noted the mark for each AC without providing any justification or comment on the mark record sheet and annotations were also omitted throughout the assessment. Annotation not only serves to support the assessor's decision but also assists in the moderation process. Failure to adhere to this makes the process very challenging for moderators as there is no justification behind assessment decisions.

Centres are reminded to take care when completing mark record sheets and when entering marks to avoid clerical errors, some centres had not paid attention to this detail, making extremely significant errors when submitting their centre marks. Centres are reminded that marks awarded on the candidates' work must match the marks awarded for each AC on the mark record sheet and must also correspond with the overall mark submitted on IAMIS. As in previous years, many times this series, this was not the case, and this delayed the moderation process for some centres.

Where centres have more than one assessor, internal verification (IV) should be completed to ensure consistency and adherence to standardised procedures across all assessors.

It is understandable that if there is only one assessor conducting the marking within a centre this IV process becomes difficult, however it is highly encouraged, perhaps in liaison with other local centres to maintain consistency. Face to face CPD sessions may provide opportunities to meet local centres.

This series, again, highlighted a few issues relating to plagiarism. Centres should be mindful of the resources that they use during lessons as these resources (class notes) are allowed to be used during the assessment, and naturally some replication occurs.

Centres are reminded that there are four briefs that centres can choose to use and these are found on the secure website. Likewise, centres are reminded that candidates are not allowed to see their brief prior to controlled assessment.

Comments on individual questions/sections

LO1: Understand how crime reporting affects the public perception of criminality

The ACs covered under this learning outcome were generally addressed well, showing a good understanding of the assessment requirements.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Task 1, which includes AC1.1 and AC1.2 requires the candidates to use the brief and analyse two crimes evident within it as well as explain reasons why those crimes (the two that they have analysed in AC1.1) go unreported. Some candidates tackled this well while others simply described the crimes and failed to analyse them using the criteria on the amplification and also missing out whether it was deviant/criminal behaviour. Several centres had taught content that is not on the specification for these AC's and assessed it as creditworthy. Only content on the specification is creditworthy here. Centres should ensure that candidates are taught the criteria for crimes on the specification, and when assessing that these crimes are also those on the relevant brief.

There was an improved response overall for AC1.2 in comparison to previous years, centres had clearly engaged with previous reports and CPD to ensure that this was well structured and organised. There were still instances where task 1 was far too long, in some cases three pages, this is not necessary, and centres are reminded that these are four-mark ACs.

As in previous series, personal reasons seemed to be covered far better by most candidates than social and cultural.

Task 2, which includes AC1.3, saw a mixture of responses in both style and content from centres. As was the case last year, while most are completing this to a good standard, there are still centres who are ignoring the consequences listed in the specification and crediting consequences that are not creditworthy. Centres must refer to the amplification section of the specification when teaching and assessing consequences.

At times centres had credited responses that were not discussed with examples of each, and often without a clear reference to whether the consequence is positive or negative, impacting marks awarded to those candidates.

Task 3, which includes AC1.4 and AC1.5 were much better attempted than previous years with clear use of examples to support responses, well done to these centres who had engaged with the annotated mark scheme, feedback on last series and CPD. Some Candidates however, tended to use generic, rather than specific examples which should be considered moving into the coming academic year. Unfortunately, these ACs are still demonstrating far too many instances of plagiarism, and at times a lack of preparedness.

AC1.4 still produced some issues of overmarking because of the lack of examples for each media type discussed and not all media types contained in the specification being covered, but this was a noticeable reduction compared to previous series. A reminder from last year's report that, candidate work should consist of clear description of the images and language used and a clear and detailed description of the difference between factual and fictional media. Candidates are also required to have more than one clear and detailed case study/example for each of the different media types. For example, for newspapers candidates may want to give examples of sensationalist headlines which are then supported by statistics on the images of victims or perpetrators used on front pages.

Again, when discussing impact for AC1.5, centres are reminded to follow the impacts that are highlighted in the specification.

Whilst a combination of these two ACs (1.4 and 1.5) is not an issue in and of itself, there are candidates who have taken this approach and limited the scope of their responses. In general, this approach saw candidates responding better to the assessment criteria for AC1.5, but for AC1.4 running too often into impact with few to no examples of how crime is represented, limiting marks awarded. A separation of the two AC's is recommended when addressing this task.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

LO2: Understand how campaigns are used to elicit change

AC2.1 requires candidates to compare campaigns for change and in order to reach the higher mark band; they must make that explicit link to their own campaign (the campaign designed in AC3.1) also. Without this explicit link they cannot reach the top mark band.

As outlined in the specification, the content should focus on comparisons which can be linked to the following**, but does not have to cover all**:

- Change in policy
- Change in law
- Change in priorities of agencies
- Change in funding
- Change in awareness
- Change in attitude

This AC again saw centres having clearly engaged with the annotated mark scheme and moderator reports from last year's series. There were examples of assessments that demonstrated a high understanding from candidates, which was clearly a result of excellent classroom practice.

As was the case last year, the best examples were those where candidates selected four/five (including their own) appropriate campaigns for change and compared the campaigns in depth, addressing key aspects such as purpose, success, aims and methods used etc.

It is noteworthy that there were instances of overly descriptive AC2.1 which involved the common method of describing each study with a little to no amount of comparison which tends to limit marks to a maximum of MB2 (if there is some comparison, without they are limited to MB1). Comparison should be sustained throughout the response, for MB3 a final paragraph with a comparison only to their own campaign is not sufficient.

The comparison should consider all aspects of the campaign such as the purpose, the people behind it, campaign methods etc. against real life campaigns for change.

Whilst the natural order of the controlled assessment suggests LO3 should be completed last, it may be advisable for some candidates to complete task 6, LO3 before task 5, LO2 to ensure that comparison of their own campaign is present, as, as in previous series there were instances where it was clear that candidates completing tasks in a task by task order, simply forget to go back to AC2.1 once they had completed LO3.

As has been the case in previous series, AC2.2 was largely well completed by candidates. Evidence of good practice was observed in sample assessments where candidates evaluated four media methods with clear links to existing campaigns which offered supportive evidence and well-reasoned judgements. However, this year saw a further increase in plagiarism and/or use of AI. Centres are reminded to be mindful of this as task 5 does not require much use of the contents of the brief (other than the comparative inclusion of the candidates own campaign in AC2.1) and as such pre prepared work is available to candidates to access online. This year also saw an increase in content not on the specification being credited by centres, such as petitions.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

A reminder again from the CPD programme and last year's report, this AC is worth 15 marks; and the amount of written work should reflect that. Candidates should be giving a definition of the media type, along with a good evaluation of that media type (from a campaign angle not a business angle where the campaign is one of advertising products in order to boost profits or raise brand awareness), detailing at least three advantages and three disadvantages and including an example of a campaign that has used that method with a measure of how successful it was for that campaign.

LO3: Plan campaigns for change relating to crime

As in previous series, this learning outcome was where we saw many of the issues concerning over-marking arising again, particularly AC3.2 where two methods/materials had been produced, and the candidate was awarded a mark in MB3/4. Some centres however, had clearly taken considerable time and effort to engage with the newly updated annotated mark scheme for LO3 (especially 3.2) resulting in accurate 'in centre' assessment of this Learning Objective.

AC3.1 Timelines were greatly improved overall this year, centres had applied feedback from last summer's series and that shared at CPD and as such produced well detailed, succinct timelines in line with the amplification on the specification. Whilst some centres had supported a GANTT chart, some had not and so it is noteworthy that, where candidates produce a GANTT chart, they must also include a description of their timeline/chart. A GANTT chart on its own is not detailed enough to award in Mark Band 3.

Again, as with last year, the most significant feedback linked to this learning outcome to come from this moderation series is the relevance of the chosen campaign for change. Whilst it was less prevalent this year that candidates had produced campaigns on health behaviours, candidates must still be mindful when selecting a campaign for change. In some instances, candidates were creating campaigns which were not appropriate for changing behaviour or were not in line with the Unit 1 assessment task. Largely this involved crimes not on the brief such as knife crime, sexual assault or child abuse. Campaigns on vaping should also be approached with caution, and centres should be clear on their judgment of them as a campaign for change relevant to the task, rather than a health campaign. Justification credited in AC3.1 should not be double credited in AC3.3. Where centres are crediting justification in AC3.1, centres should use annotation to make this clear, equally if credit is being awarded in AC3.3, this should also be made clear.

Candidates must pursue a crime that is highlighted in red – please do not remove these from the sheet during reprographics, they are there to help the candidates and ensure that the relevant crimes are clear for candidates.

Most candidates addressed AC3.1 in depth, creating a comprehensive plan of action for an appropriate campaign for change. Candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding of the AC requirements and were clearly well prepared by centres. The best examples addressed the following (as outlined on the specification):

- Aims and objectives
- Justification of choice of campaign
- Target audience
- Methods to be used
- Materials to be used
- Finances
- Timescales
- Resources needed.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

In most instances, the campaign materials which were designed as part of AC3.2 enabled candidates to achieve significantly high marks for this task. Evidence of excellent practice was observed by candidates who had designed several methods (minimum of 3) and demonstrated creative ability with the use of persuasive language, powerful imagery to stimulate interest and relevance to the appropriate campaign. Some centres however are reminded that these materials should be a minimum of 3 methods/materials, and they should be informative, call for action and visually stimulating. These should be produced in the body of work, no links should be included and PowerPoints for AC3.2 are inadvisable.

Centres should be reminded that for a 20-mark AC, the expectation will be that candidates produce a range of campaign materials. It was the case at times during this series that centres had awarded candidates in MB3 where they had created a single method/material, or multiple examples of one, for example a hoodie, a pen and a badge, which are all one example (merchandise) and should be awarded as such. Please be mindful that for candidates to be credited in 3.2 they need to produce materials and not simply describe them. The AC clearly states that they must 'Design'.

As with last series, it should be noted however, that the logo does not count as a method, nor do multiple examples of one method count as more than one method.

Again, centres can use any software they feel appropriate for their candidates to produce these materials, however, please be mindful of online applications that can be accessed outside of the controlled assessment room. If candidates are starting and finishing LO3 in the one session this is not an issue but if they start on day one and complete on day two, they have the potential to access the materials at home and work on them outside of the stipulated 8hrs – be mindful of this.

AC3.3 requires full justification for the need for the chosen campaign. Most candidates did well here, with better candidates justifying their materials in AC3.2 and including statistics and real-life cases in AC3.3 to help justify the need for their campaign. Candidates should be careful when combining this AC with AC3.2. When this approach is adopted, candidates tend to score significantly lower than when they are approached separately. As in AC 3.1 there were significant issues with centres double crediting justification between the two AC's, and where annotation was limited, it was hard for moderators to ascertain any justification for this.

Summary of key points

Task 1 – Crimes that are analysed must be evident in the brief. Once analysed candidates must explain the reasons why these two crimes go unreported covering both personal and social & cultural reasons. The amplification section of the specification provides the requirements for this.

Task 3: Candidates must endeavour to provide more than one example for each media type discussed in AC 1.4, and ensure they cover all media types on the specification here and not types or consequences not on the specification.

Task 5(a): Candidates must use comparative language to produce a sustained comparison of campaigns for change (avoiding unnecessary description), including their own campaign for Mark Band 3.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Task 5(b): Candidates must fully evaluate at least four types of media. Include an example of a campaign that used that media type and explain whether it was successful or unsuccessful for them by including a measure of some sort (number of shares, the law that was made a result of the campaign etc etc). For example, Sarah's Law/Claire's Law used public appearances as a method for their campaigns. We know that this method was successful for them and proved to be effective because the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme/Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme were introduced as a result. Candidates should not use business product examples (such as Coca-Cola/Nike) where the aim is to build profit or raise a business profile. Campaigns such as the Dove self-esteem project campaign to encourage young people to develop and maintain a healthy body image would be acceptable, as despite being a business the campaign is for change, not profit or brand publicity.

Task 6: The campaign for change must link with a crime that is evident in the brief.
The methods that are stipulated in the plan in AC3.1 must be produced and seen in AC3.2. These materials must be visible to the moderator and 'links to materials' should not be included. Centres should use clear annotation to clearly identify where credit has been awarded for justification, as well as to avoid double crediting.

Before conducting the assessment familiarise yourself with the controlled assessment handbook which will answer most of the questions you will have. Likewise, before marking the work, familiarise yourself with the annotated mark scheme which will help guide you through the marking process. Both can be found on the secure website.

Students must only see the tasks that they are completing that day. Do not give all 6 tasks out on day one if the intention is to only complete Tasks 1 – 4.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

APPLIED CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA IN CRIMINOLOGY

Level 3

Summer 2025

UNIT 2 – CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORIES

Overview of the Unit

The paper assessed all learning outcomes through a range of assessment criteria. In addition, the demands of the paper were comparable with previous series. Generally, answers showed good knowledge of the topics within the specification and often produced a range of specialist vocabulary. This confident approach enabled candidates to show their ability to address the skills of identification, description, explanation, examination, discussion, evaluation and analysis.

It is important that centres teach, and candidates have a clear awareness of all aspects of the specification and in particular the assessment criteria and content. A lack of knowledge in any area can significantly impact the quality of an answer. At times, development of analysis of a criminological theory to an individual named in a scenario requires improvement. In particular, rather than a lengthy description of theory, the emphasis should be on the links between the theory and the individual.

The following topics were well-understood or well-answered:

- Explanation of the term deviance (1ai)
- Identification of genetic theories (1di)
- Description of biological theories (1dii)
- Description of social structure theory of criminality (2a)
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of theories to explain the causes of criminality (3aii)

Areas for improvement include:

- Familiarity with all aspects of the specification including social construction of criminality (1c) and demographic changes in society affecting policy development (2b)
- Examine how sociological theories of criminality inform crime control policies (2c)
- Discuss one newspaper campaign that has successfully affected policy development (2d)

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 (a) (i) This question required only a brief explanation of deviance. Lengthy and detailed responses were not required. The better responses included a brief explanation with specialist terminology such as norms, values and mores. At times answers also contained types of deviance and informal sanctions such as name calling. It was important to adhere to the demands of the question and include a reference to the scenario. Most candidates complied with this and made a reference to Roy and his library visits. Mentioned less often was Roy's deviant behaviour in planning and committing burglaries. When an answer failed to include a reference to the scenario it was considered a limited response and did not have a reasonable focus on the demands of the question.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Candidates finished their answers in a variety of ways. Where Roy's noise in the library had been selected, answers often referred to deviancy by stating libraries are usually quiet places. Other candidates completed their answer by stating what type of deviance this was, often identified as odd deviance. Others decided to mention that Roy's criminal behaviour would also be deviant. The mean mark of 3.5 reflects the good overall performance on candidates in response to this question.

(ii) A well answered points-based question. Common responses included being grounded by parents, name calling, disapproving looks and being defriended on a social networking website. At times candidates were confused over formal and informal sanctions by incorrectly identifying fines and community service as being informal.

(b) Candidates were effective at naming acts that would be classed as criminal. On occasion the instruction to name 3 acts was missed resulting in a reduced mark.

(c) This question is the same as the title of assessment criteria (AC)1.2 and so the required response was the themes set out in the content section of the specification. A good response considered how changing norms and values in a society resulted in changing laws. This was usually followed by consideration of changing laws due to time, place and culture. A variety of examples were used to support, such as homosexuality, use of cannabis, adultery, smoking and jaywalking. Better responses showed how and why society's values changed, linking to topics such as religious beliefs, medical research and liberalism. Detailed responses also included the actual changes including names of legislation and resulting impact. Candidates were more likely to offer policy titles to support their answer when considering changes over time. For example, when looking at homosexuality responses would often refer to the Buggery Act 1533 or the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 as evidence making the explanations more effective. Weaker responses displayed a lack of familiarity with AC1.2. Some candidates explained the legal and social definition of crime or, in some cases, deviance as their answer, reading as if it were a possible answer to an AC1.1 question. This was the poorest performing of the 9-mark questions on the 2025 paper.

(d) (i) This question generally produced correct answers, with the XYY theory and twin studies being very popular. Theories were credited if they had a genetic aspect such as Eysenck's theory or Lombroso's theory.

(ii) A top mark band response would include a clear and detailed description of one biological theory of criminality, including use of specialist terminology. A link to criminality to account for the commission of criminal behaviour was expected. Responses which did not include this link were not considered to be clear and detailed and addressing all the demands of the question. Popular theories included the XYY theory, Sheldon's somatotypes and Lombroso's theory. Studies and research can enhance an answer, but they should not dominate a response and have a detrimental impact on the description of the reason for criminal behaviour. Centres should note that generally, evaluation will not be credited in a question where the command term is 'describe' or 'explain'.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

The exception would be if the evaluation contained credible description or explanation. Therefore, candidates should be discouraged from providing evaluative points as a conclusion or to finish a response.

Q.2 (a) This was an opportunity for candidates to produce a response using specialist vocabulary, together with clear references to crime. Some candidates were clearly unsure what the phrase 'social structure' theory was referring to and there were some responses that lacked focus or indeed any credit worthy material. However, many candidates had knowledge of this part of the specification and often selected Marxism or functionalism, both of which were often explained well with good use of terminology. Merton's Strain Theory was a common choice for functionalism.

(b) Many candidates did not appreciate the demands of this question, and particularly the reference to demographics and this was reflected in a mean mark of only 1.9. As a result, a number of responses focused on a change in behaviour rather than a change in demographic. Examples of these were smoking behaviour, drink driving and people openly identifying as homosexual. Because these were not demographic changes the demands of the question were not met. Better answers combined the explanation of the change in demographic and then provided an example of policy development to support. In most cases candidates were able to provide multiple examples of policy development particularly in relation to increased diversity and immigration. This question is an example of the need for candidates to be familiar with the entire specification.

(c) A common error of responses was a failure to include both theories and crime control policies. Many answers would include one but not the other. Some candidates were able to identify sociological theories and policies but often limited their marks and ability to enter the highest bands due to not making clear links between them. This was needed to fully meet the demands of the question and show understanding. Better responses also included an examination of the policies in terms of effectiveness, public perception and cost. Right realism and left realism were often the preferred theory choices, and these proved to be effective selections as candidates could consider the clear differences between the theories and then examine the policies which are at opposite ends of the political spectrum.

(d) Effective answers focused on campaigns that had heavy reliance on newspapers such as the campaign for Sarah's Law and the 'year and a day' campaign. Answers that could name the influential newspapers such as the News of the World and the Northern Echo often provided the most effective description about their impact. The strongest answers not only made reference to the newspaper but also considered the specific impact by mentioning maximising the followers, raised awareness of the issue and printed petitions. To meet the demands of the question, students needed to show knowledge of the policy that came about because of the campaign. Inaccuracies regarding features of Claire's Law or Sarah's law often appeared with candidates writing things such as 'this law allowed the public to have access to a person's full criminal history'. At times names and facts of campaigns were confused and responses described Claire's Law but called it Sarah's Law. Responses were able to gain marks for a description of a campaign that used newspapers as a general form of media.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

These answers tended to be less effective as they were less focused on descriptions around the impact newspapers had. It was often listed as a media platform used rather than a newspaper campaign.

Q.3 (a) (i) Top mark band answers provided a brief but accurate analysis of a correct type of theory with a link to Amanda, a link to criminality, and some specialist vocabulary. Most answers referred to Sheldon's theory on somatotypes and most links to Amanda referred to her being a personal trainer and a semi-professional weightlifter. Some candidates chose to apply twin studies rather than family studies/genetic predisposition. This was often done less effectively as answers had to make assumptions that Amanda and her sister were twins and these answers often lacked terminology.

(ii) Despite evaluation being a challenging skill there were many clear and detailed responses that suggested centres had been very effective in their teaching. The better responses contained a range of evaluative points with supporting evidence to explain why or how it linked to criminality. A small number of answers failed to adhere to the question and only evaluated one theory. Popular theories included Lombroso, Sheldon and XYY theory. Effective answers contained developed points with evidence in support, such as research or case examples. Examples of case examples included John Wayne Gacy being an XYY male or Phineas Gage for brain trauma. This was not always done in the most effective manner and often took a large portion of the answer as simply a repetition of the case facts. The more effective use of case studies was when candidates clearly stated how they support the theory but then also considered issues such as generalisability and reliability that come with case studies. Some candidates were able to confidently apply more complex concepts such as reductionism and determinism to evaluate critically. However, there were some answers that repeated the same evaluation points for both theories without elaboration or extension to clearly show knowledge. These repetitive points may have affected the ability of an answer to move higher up the mark bands and show greater understanding. There is no need to provide an introduction and conclusion to responses. It is more productive to start a response with a strength or weakness of a selected theory. Finally, candidates should remember that evaluation must relate to criminality rather than the theory in general.

(b) Popular choices to fulfil the demands of this question included Bandura and social learning theory and Skinner's operant conditioning theory. Better responses provided a clear and detailed focus on the demands of the question with an explicit link to criminality. Weaker answers often focused too much on the method of the bobo doll study rather than theory itself or a reference to the main findings. Where candidates explained Skinner's theory, responses often needed to focus on the full theory including positive/negative reinforcements and punishments to show a clear understanding and achieve full marks. Numerous answers described labelling theory and the effect of the self-fulfilling prophecy, which is not a learning theory.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

(c) Bandura's social learning theory was again a popular response to this question and was applied to Sophie's desire to be involved in criminality. Many candidates made good use of the opportunity to link to her mother's criminality and included a range of specialist terminology. For example, referencing 'she admires her mother's criminality' and' 'she desires the rewards her mother gains'. A small number of responses only provided a description of the theory, or a lengthy description followed by one or two sentences covering analysis. Better answers combined theory and analysis of Sophie's situation, for example, noting Sophia imitated the criminal behaviour of her mother, a role model, thus producing a concise and relevant response. Freud's psychodynamic approach was also used often. Such answers were more descriptive and less effective when analysing how it could be applied to the scenario, despite there being key opportunities to do so. As with other questions, unnecessary evaluation was often provided which did not receive credit and may have had an impact on time management.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

APPLIED DIPLOMA IN CRIMINOLOGY

Level 3

Summer 2025

UNIT 3 – CRIME SCENE TO COURT ROOM –

Overview of the Unit

There was an increase in the number of entries again for 2025 and the standard was in line with the 2024 series. Candidates, on the whole, performed well and were able to demonstrate strong knowledge and understanding as well as skills of analysis and evaluation. The structure of candidates' work was generally strong, with most presented in a coherent format. The use of headings and subheadings aligned to the assessment criteria was particularly helpful and should be encouraged.

It is encouraging to note that most centres continued to uphold the high standards expected for the controlled assessment and adhered to the necessary control protocols. Many centres also demonstrated strong engagement with the specification, preparing candidates effectively through a diverse range of resources to build skills and knowledge.

Most centres demonstrated excellent practice in the completion of required paperwork, for Unit 3, with clear annotations and well-reasoned justification for marks awarded. Centres must also ensure that marks are calculated and totalled accurately. Clear, well-reasoned marking supports both the assessor's decision and the moderator's understanding, helping to ensure fair and consistent outcomes for all candidates. When marking, centres should clearly indicate where evidence has been found in the candidate's work and provide a detailed justification in the mark record sheet. Copying the marking criteria is not sufficient, a specific rationale must be provided. While many centres adhered to these expectations, a significant number did not, which can hinder the moderation process.

As moderation continues to be conducted electronically, it is essential that all of the candidate's work is uploaded correctly. Recurrent issues have emerged again this series regarding the uploading and presentation of documentation, although it is encouraging that this is reducing. The most common problems included documents being scanned incorrectly (e.g. double-sided pages scanned as single, pages out of order, or missing key documents), all of which significantly hinder the moderation process. Centres must also ensure that there are clear and effective lines of communication between examinations officers, teaching staff, and WJEC. Delays in responses have once again disrupted the moderation process. Please refer to guidance provided by WJEC regarding the upload of candidate work and supporting documentation.

One area that continues to require clarification is the guidance and regulations surrounding the conducting of controlled assessments. While many centres have clearly followed the required protocols, some still need to give this aspect greater attention. It is therefore important to reiterate the JCQ and WJEC regulations regarding the conduct of controlled assessments.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Although WJEC-endorsed textbooks can be used to support teaching, they must not be used during the controlled assessment. Candidate responses should not rely heavily on textbook content. All work submitted must be the candidate's own. Candidates should not copy or rewrite paragraphs from textbooks into their notes. Where significant similarities to textbook material are identified in a candidate's work, centres must take appropriate action by identifying the plagiarised content and adjusting marks accordingly. This issue has become increasingly common, particularly in responses to Learning Outcome 3 (LO3).

Additionally, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) is an emerging concern. It is the responsibility of centres to remain vigilant during the teaching and assessment process. Any suspected use of AI must be investigated and addressed appropriately at the centre level. If any concerns arise regarding the use of AI or if clarification is needed, centres should contact the WJEC subject team directly for support and guidance. Please note the new declaration form signed by candidates and assessors identifies that they have not used AI in the completion of their controlled assessment. The use of this form became mandatory for submissions for the 2025 series. Should the updated form not be utilised future series, candidate work may be subject to a malpractice investigation.

As noted last year, there are still several centres that have incorrectly required candidates to reference the brief across all assessment criteria (ACs), applying mark restrictions when this is not done. It is important to clarify that the brief is only required for Learning Outcome 3 (LO3), and candidates should not be penalised for omitting it in LO1 or LO2. In fact, referencing the brief in these earlier sections should be actively discouraged, as it is not a productive use of candidates' time. However, if brief references appear in LO1 or LO2 and are relevant, they may be credited within LO3 as appropriate.

Higher-level candidates typically demonstrated strong selection of relevant information and avoided including unnecessary or unrelated case study details. They also engaged effectively with the assessment criteria, consistently using key terms throughout their responses. One important reminder relates to the use of key terminology: centres must not infer a candidate's understanding. Candidates must explicitly reference key terms in their work for them to be credited. This issue is most seen in LO1 and LO3.

Centres are reminded of the importance of engaging with both centre-specific feedback and general feedback across the qualification provided in the Examiner Report to ensure continuous improvement.

Comments on individual questions/sections

LO1

Generally, candidates demonstrated an excellent understanding when approaching this learning outcome and it was evident centres have been delivering this AC to a high standard to ensure candidates have a deep knowledge and understanding of the topic area. However, as in previous years, there are some issues seen within this LO1.

AC1.1: Centres must ensure that candidates directly address the command word to evaluate. High marks should not be awarded for responses that merely describe the roles of personnel involved. The focus of this AC is on investigation, with particular emphasis on the limitations of these roles. Therefore, responses should not shift focus toward trials or court proceedings. Candidates are expected to evaluate the effectiveness of personnel roles within the context of specific limitations as outlined in the specification—namely cost, expertise, and availability. These aspects are often overlooked or treated superficially. Merely listing or describing cost, availability, or expertise is insufficient; candidates must engage in evaluative commentary that demonstrates critical understanding.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

While case examples can be valuable in supporting points, they should not dominate responses. Overly detailed case studies detract from the candidate's ability to meet the evaluative requirements of the AC. Case material should be purposeful in its use to expand analysis and support evaluation, rather than replace it. Additionally, where roles such as forensic psychologists are referenced, candidates must clearly identify the specific role as seen in the specification i.e. forensic specialist. Centres should not infer candidates' intentions; key concepts such as cost, availability, and expertise must be explicitly referenced and critically explored within the context of investigations.

AC1.2: Candidates are expected to assess a range of investigative techniques in terms of their effectiveness within criminal investigations. The primary focus must remain on investigation, not trials. For example, discussions on eyewitness testimony (EWT) often emphasize the role of juries, which shifts the focus towards court proceedings. When this occurs, the content often overlaps with AC2.4 or 3.1, resulting in cross-crediting rather than meeting the specific demands of AC1.2. It is encouraging to see that centres are engaging well with the specification, and many candidate responses are of a high standard. However, to improve further, the following points should be observed, all interview techniques, whether involving eyewitnesses or experts, should be treated as a single technique. Likewise, all surveillance methods, profiling approaches, etc., count as one technique. If DNA is analysed under forensic techniques, it should not be reassessed in the same way under databases. Centres are encouraged to incorporate new and topical content each year to maintain variety and relevance. Suitable examples include the Gang Matrix, Interpol databases for databases, and computer forensics or data mining for forensics. As with AC1.1, case studies should be used to support and deepen assessment. However, candidates should select only the most relevant parts of the case to support their assessment. Overly detailed or descriptive accounts that do not serve an evaluative purpose may detract from the effectiveness of the response. A recurring area of omission is reference to the effectiveness of investigative techniques in relation to crime type or situation. While this is often demonstrated through case studies, all candidates should explicitly address this aspect in their work. Crime type/situation does not need to match those listed in the specification but must be clearly and explicitly referenced, not inferred.

AC1.3: In response to previous moderator feedback, many centres have attempted to address concerns around the transfer of evidence by producing overly lengthy responses. However, extensive writing does not guarantee the inclusion of key content and often limits candidates' ability to manage their time effectively. Centres should refer closely to the specification and ensure candidates cover both physical and testimonial evidence, with a focus on the processes involved: collection, transfer, storage, analysis, and the personnel associated with these stages. A balanced treatment of physical and testimonial evidence is not required—more detail on physical evidence is acceptable as long as all key processes are addressed. Common issues include, focusing solely on one type of evidence (typically physical) or only covering the collection stage, which is insufficient. Copying textbook lists of how different types of evidence are collected, rather than critically engaging with the processes. Including irrelevant content for testimonial evidence, such as witness rights in court or vulnerable witness protections, which do not meet the requirement to explore collection, transfer, storage, and analysis.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Trace evidence is appearing more frequently, which is positive; however, candidates must be clear and explicit when using it as an example of evidence transfer. Testimonial evidence often weakens responses when it strays into legal admissibility or types of testimony (e.g., hearsay), rather than focusing on the practical handling processes. A persistent issue is the vague treatment of evidence transfer. Phrases such as "transferred to the lab" are too general and do not demonstrate understanding. Instead, candidates should consider transfer in more specific terms, such as:

- How evidence is passed between personnel for examination
- Movement between the victim, offender, and crime scene
- Chain of custody protocols

Case studies are required for this AC and should be used to illustrate both physical and testimonial evidence types, with clear links made to the processes involved in the handling of evidence within those cases.

AC1.4: This was generally well addressed and saw strong candidate performance. In the majority of responses, candidates discussed all three relevant groups - suspects, victims, and witnesses. However, the discussion did not always fully align with the specification, which requires coverage of rights from arrest through to appeal. While suspects were typically discussed in detail, the appeal process for victims and witnesses was frequently overlooked. Despite this, full marks were often awarded, which suggests that this key omission was not always recognised by centres during assessment. The Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme is a useful example that can be applied to both victims and witnesses in the context of appeal, and centres are encouraged to promote its use to support comprehensive responses. It's important to note that this AC requires coverage of rights for all three individuals and suspects and victims and/or witnesses must be covered to appeal stage.

LO2

LO2 demonstrated excellent practice overall, with centres showing strong engagement with the specification, including effective use of the amplification section. This resulted in high-quality candidate work across the board. However, in some cases, there was an over-reliance on textbook material, which should be actively discouraged. While textbooks can be a useful reference, candidates should be encouraged to go beyond them to develop more comprehensive and analytical responses. For AC2.1 and AC2.3, it is essential that candidates incorporate relevant case law to provide a full and accurate description of the legal principles involved. Additionally, candidates should avoid using bullet points, as this format often limits the depth and clarity of their explanations, reducing the overall quality of the work.

AC2.1: This does not require reference to the threshold test but both pieces of legislation are required. Candidates are often having marks restricted when they do not include the threshold test, but this is not a requirement of the specification and marks should not be removed due to this.

AC2.2: The requirement to cover personnel can be achieved by embedding it within the response and does not need to be a separate section within the AC. This allows candidates to use their time more effectively in other larger ACs. Also, the criminal and legal procedures were often embedded within the AC. This AC does not require a case study so marks should not be restricted if this is omitted.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

AC2.3: This AC requires hearsay and exceptions as stated in the specification; exceptions is often omitted but this is necessary for full marks. Legislation again can be embedded throughout and is not needed as a separate section. Like AC2.2 this AC does not require a case study so marks should not be restricted if this is omitted.

AC2.4: This was generally very well addressed, with many exceptional responses across the cohort. However, some candidates approached this content in a manner too similar to ACs 3.1 and 1.2. For AC2.4, the focus should specifically be on how various factors influence the outcome of a criminal trial and their impact on the jury's decision-making. Candidates should provide a clear assessment of the significance of each influence and support their points with relevant case studies. Cases such as Christopher Jefferies, Colin Stagg, and Sally Clark were effectively used in higher-level responses. However, candidates must avoid lengthy case descriptions. Overly detailed case summaries often shift focus away from the intended aims of the assessment criteria. It is also important to clarify that juries are not considered part of the judiciary and therefore should not be discussed as a standalone influence. However, discussion of how judges, barristers, or the media may influence a jury is appropriate. A growing concern is the heavy reliance on textbook content, which can lead to similar responses. Finally, candidates should recognise that influences on trial outcomes can be both positive and negative and this should be explicitly discussed within their assessments.

AC2.5: This tended to be extremely well attempted and completed to a high standard across candidates with clear evaluation and supporting case law/evidence. However again a point to note is to reduce the reliance on the textbook for candidate responses. There is no requirement for cases for this AC so marks should not be restricted if this is omitted.

LO3

The feedback for this LO is similar in previous years, and again centres must address these issues to ensure candidates' success. Centres should be aware of the difference between ACs 3.1 and 3.2. On the whole, candidates distinguished clearly between the two ACs attempting each AC individually and in detail with separate references to the brief.

AC3.1: This was delivered with notable consistency across centres and candidates. However, centres should ensure that candidates are engaging with multiple sources of information beyond the textbook, as over-reliance on a single source often results in repetitive and limited responses. Similarly, the assignment brief scenarios alone are not a sufficient basis for a comprehensive discussion under this assessment criterion. Stronger responses effectively embedded relevant case studies such as Jeremy Bamber, Amanda Knox, the Hillsborough Disaster, Christopher Jefferies, Sally Clark, and Roy Meadows, to explore the use and evaluation of the information sources. It was particularly encouraging to see some centres incorporate new and emerging cases, demonstrating good practice and adaptability.

Most candidates were well-prepared and assessed a range of sources, including evidence, trial transcripts, media reports, legal judgments, and law reports. High-level responses considered key criteria such as bias, opinion, currency, circumstances, and accuracy. It is important to note, however, that not all information sources need to be used, and inclusion of case studies should be evaluative rather than descriptive. Less successful responses tended to summarise cases without applying the key evaluative terminology. These terms – bias, opinion, currency, circumstances, and accuracy – must be explicitly stated in the work; assessors should not infer their inclusion. A general or holistic reference to "validity" is not sufficient to award full marks. While it is not necessary for each criterion to be covered equally, the terminology must be appropriately and clearly applied throughout the body of the work.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Textbook overuse was again evident in this AC, often leading to irrelevant or duplicated content across candidates. Centres should actively discourage this approach and support learners in developing original, analytical responses tailored to the AC's requirements. If material from the assignment brief is referenced in LO1 or LO2, it is the centre's responsibility to clearly indicate where that content is being assessed in LO3, if relevant. Finally, the command word "examine" requires objective, analytical engagement. Candidates should avoid personal commentary or first-person statements and instead adopt a formal, evaluative tone throughout.

AC3.2: This too was generally well addressed, with most candidates demonstrating strong skills and the ability to draw objective conclusions supported by appropriate evidence. However, centres should continue to emphasise the importance of drawing from a range of information sources. Candidates must not rely solely on the assignment brief; while it provides useful context, a broader selection of relevant conclusions is necessary to fully meet the AC. It is encouraging to see new and current case studies being introduced; however, care must be taken with how these are applied. For example, while the Lucy Letby case may be used to discuss just sentencing, it is not yet appropriate to reference it as a miscarriage of justice or unsafe verdict, as this has not been officially determined. Centres are also reminded that criminal cases must be the focus – cases involving medical negligence fall outside the scope of this AC. Over-reliance on textbook content continues to be a recurring issue, leading to repetitive responses across candidates and limiting critical engagement. Centres are encouraged to guide learners in developing original, well-supported conclusions using diverse, credible sources. High-quality responses included a clear analysis of evidence, leading to objective, evidence-based conclusions. Candidates should avoid using personal opinions or first-person statements. Instead, conclusions should be drawn based on legal outcomes such as safe or unsafe verdicts, just or unjust sentencing, and miscarriages of justice. Importantly, safe verdicts and miscarriages of justice are distinct concepts and must be discussed separately, in line with the specification. An unsafe verdict does not necessarily mean the defendant is innocent or that a miscarriage of justice has occurred – this distinction should be clearly understood and explained and therefore need to be separate within the candidates work. Simply describing a case is not sufficient, candidates must justify why a particular case exemplifies a just or unjust outcome. If relevant content from LO1 or LO2 is used to support conclusions in AC3.2, centres should clearly annotate and justify its inclusion under LO3 to ensure appropriate credit is awarded.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

APPLIED DIPLOMA IN CRIMINOLOGY

Level 3

Summer 2025

UNIT 4: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Overview of the Unit

All learning objectives were covered together with a range of assessment criteria. This included a variety of command terms such as describe, explain, evaluate assess and discuss. At times candidates did find difficulty interacting with the command term in a question and centres are reminded that the exam board has published terms and definitions. Marks for questions were either 4, 6 or 9 and were suitable for candidates of all abilities at level 3 to access the paper. However, some candidates found the 2025 paper to be more challenging than the previous series.

There were a range of responses produced from limited, to reasonable, to clear and detailed. The strongest answers fully addressed the demands of the question. Support was provided by way of evidencing the points made. This deeper knowledge was shown by real life case studies, research, statistics and other data. Specialist vocabulary is always appropriate to use and can assist in an answer moving up the mark bands.

The following topics were well answered:

- Describe the environmental tactics and measures used by agencies to achieve social control (1b)
- Describe the due process model of criminal justice (1c)
- Assess one punishment that seeks to prevent reoffending (2c)
- Briefly describe one judicial process for law making (2d)
- Explain how the police act as a form of social control (3d)

Some candidates found certain questions difficult to answer due to a lack of understanding of the topic area/specification, including:

- Explain the reach and other working practices of the prison service in achieving social control (1a)
- Describe the working relationship between prisons and other agencies within the organisation of the criminal justice system (1d)
- Briefly describe the working relationship between the probation service and the courts (3a)
- Discuss the weaknesses of the probation services (3b)

Areas for improvement include:

- No introduction or conclusion is needed when answering any question
- Do not use copious facts from cases as limited credit would be available, and there may be a negative impact on time management.
- Ensure familiarity with all content of the specification. Questions will only come from the specification but can relate to any of the content.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 (a) A large number of responses clearly failed to understand the demands of this question which was reflected in the mean mark of 2.7. The question was based on the reach and working practices of the prison service as set out in assessment criteria (AC) 3.1. However, many candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with this content and interpreted the question as if it read 'does the prison service achieve social control?' Many answers failed to address the reach of prisons and instead focused on the aims of punishment . At times responses were generalised and failed to focus on working practices in the context of prisons. For instance, comments included prisons trying to achieve rehabilitation or prisoners, trying to achieve justice and protect society, without developing how such aims were achieved on a day-to-day basis. Stronger responses demonstrated a clear understanding by explaining working practices in detail, such as the use of incentive and earned privilege scheme and effectively explored both local and national reach. These candidates also showed an awareness of different prison categories of risk for male offenders, which added depth and relevance to their responses. A small number of answers focused on the police service rather than prisons.

(b) This was an effectively answered question where centres had prepared candidates well. Emerging this series was research utilised in support of the comments made. For example, this included Oscar Newman's work on defensible spaces and Alice Coleman's work on redesigning public housing estates. Many responses were clear and detailed and included a range of measures such as gated lanes, prison design and CCTV. The case of Damilola Taylor and the opportunities for criminal activity in stairwells was often seen in support. Occasionally answers included behavioural tactics and measures, such as ASBO's or CBO's rather than environmental ones.

(c) Overall, this was a well answered question with a mean mark of 3.2. Candidates managed the 'briefly describe' aspect of the question by selecting the appropriate amount of information to meet the demands of the question. Answers were therefore concise and focused. Points usually included innocent until proven guilty, the model being like an obstacle course, prioritising the rights of a suspect and minimising the powers of the police. Legislation in support often included references to safeguards under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 or the Human Rights Act 1998. Occasionally, responses included the crime control model for which no credit was achieved.

(d) Many responses struggled with understanding the demands of this question. The question did not require a disconnected answer explaining the roles of agencies. Nor was the procedure of a criminal case needed. There was a lack of accurate knowledge about relationships between the prison service and other agencies in the criminal justice system. For instance, the police do not generally provide an offender's routine transportation to and from the prison or the court. Prisoner escort and custody services are usually handled by private contractors. Police may get involved if the private contractors are unable to provide the transport or the police need to provide an escort for dangerous or high-risk prisoners. There was a general misunderstanding about the prisons having to return to court to seek permission when a prisoner is due for release either as entitled on a licence or by way of a parole hearing.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Another misconception is the prisons' working relationship with the Crown Prosecution Service. The CPS do not get involved in sentencing, do not visit the defendant in prison or get involved in their rehabilitation. The court does not generally get involved with the process when an offender is released from prison. Unlike many answers suggesting otherwise the court does not set the parole conditions, but rather this is the prerogative of the Parole Board. However, courts do get involved when the original community order is given out or is breached. Pleasingly, a number of scripts did include the Ministry of Justice's working relationship with the prison service including funding and the setting of policies. In addition, a defence lawyers professional visits for interview with a client prisoner was also mentioned. Responses often failed to mention charities or pressure groups who work regularly with prisons. Whilst it is acknowledged that this is a complex area, improvement in accuracy on the working relationships between agencies would benefit candidates enormously.

Q.2 (a) This question required candidates to discuss the concept of retribution, with a specific focus on the scenario provided. Most candidates demonstrated a general understanding of retribution and seized the opportunity to display a variety of specialist terminology. However, a minority failed to engage with the scenario as required, which limited the relevance and depth of their responses. Stronger candidates not only addressed the scenario effectively but also supported their discussion with relevant theoretical perspectives about the appropriateness of the 3-month prison sentence. Common errors included confusion over the meaning of the aim of retribution and the aim of rehabilitation. Several answers focused on a discussion of the best aim to achieve, which did not fully address the demands of the question.

(b) This question produced a variety of responses, often either falling into the category of a clear and detailed answer or a limited response. Stronger answers considered a range of evaluative points for both positive and negative aspects. Such points had support from reports, statistics and data focusing on pertinent limitations of the effectiveness of prisons. Many of the responses addressed the reference to the scenario and commented on the lack of effectiveness of short-term prison sentences. Recidivism rates contributed to clear and detailed responses at this point. At times answers lacked the deep knowledge of the problems in prison and merely touched upon relevant points. For example, budget cuts without detail or consequences of a lack of money. Many answers focused on the aims of punishment to evaluate prisons. This approach allowed many relevant points to be addressed but failed to fully address the demands of the question. Such approaches often only produced positive responses such as prison deters individuals from committing crimes or prisons provide rehabilitation, without consideration of a counter argument.

(c) Overall this was a well answered question. Community orders were the most common punishment put forward for assessment. This is understandable as it allows a large range of points to be considered. Answers seemed to go down the route of either assessing community payback or the rehabilitative programme element of a community order. Financial penalties and discharges were also selected as an appropriate punishment but overall produced less detailed and successful answers.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Many responses provided only a descriptive account of an alternative punishment without offering any assessment. Occasionally, candidates incorrectly focused on imprisonment, which could not be credited.

(d) This question asked candidates to briefly describe one judicial process involved in law making. However, a significant number of responses considered parliamentary law making and thus failed to achieve any marks. Some candidates appeared to be confused with regards to statutory interpretation and judicial precedent mixing up the 2 doctrines. However, most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of a judicial law-making process describing concisely with the use of appropriate specialist terminology. A recommendation for future improvement would be to avoid using copious facts of cases such as Donoghue v Stevenson. Such a technique uses time but adds little to the standard of a question, especially a 4 mark one.

Q.3 (a) As with question 1d, many candidates failed to show an understanding of the process of a criminal case, this impacted on being able to accurately describe the working relationship between the probation service and the courts. Some incorrect interpretations of the question considered the appropriateness of the 3-month prison sentence in the scenario and an explanation of the role of both agencies rather than their connections. As well as misconceptions about the probation service some answers considered the police service.

Stronger responses considered the pre-sentence report provided by the probation service and the support and advice, given to a judge, including oral reports.

(b) This question required a discussion of the weaknesses of the probation service and therefore candidates who wrote about the strengths of the service did not acquire any marks in that regard. Weaker responses were vague and contained unsubstantiated points. For example, a comment about budget cuts without any reference to values or consequences. Rarely were comments about a lack of protection to the public supported by case examples such as Jordan McSweeney or Zephaniah McLeod. Often answers were focused on the aims of punishment and failed to fully address the demands of the question. Stronger responses were well informed and contained a real focus on the weaknesses of the agency with evidence in support. Often references to the ill-fated Community Rehabilitation Companies and the negative consequences on those on probation appeared. These responses showed a clear understanding of the challenges faced by the probation service.

(c) A popular aim selected to answer this question was rehabilitation. This was supported by comments relating to treatment courses, such as alcohol and drug treatment, to address the root cause of the offending. Alternatively, reparation was considered with comments about community payback and the unpaid labour aspect of a community order. Issues that arose with this question included, responses addressed more than one aim and so answers became blurred and lacked clarity, for example, rehabilitation and deterrence. In addition, an aim was selected but the comments referred to a different aim.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

(d) A well answered question with many candidates demonstrating a solid understanding of key concepts such as deterrence and fear of punishment. Some responses also effectively included the use of coercion as a mechanism of control. Stronger candidates supported their answers with relevant theoretical perspectives, including the work of Hirschi and Reckless, which added depth to answers. Weaker responses failed to consider police powers such as stop and search, arrest and detention found within the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Tel: **029 22 404287**
Email: criminology@wjec.co.uk **OR** criminology@eduqas.co.uk
Qualification webpage: Level 3 Criminology WJEC **OR** Criminology Level 3 | Eduqas

See other useful contacts here: Useful Contacts | WJEC

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/

WJEC Qualifications

As Wales' largest awarding body, WJEC supports its education community by providing trusted bilingual qualifications, specialist support, and reliable assessment to schools and colleges across the country. This allows our learners to reach their full potential.

With more than 70 years' experience, we are also amongst the leading providers in both England and Northern Ireland.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk

© WJEC CBAC Ltd.2025