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Refer to guidance notes for completion of each section of the specification.

Module Code:	SCI608
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Module Title:	Forensic Taphonomy
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Level:	6	Credit Value:	20
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Cost Centre(s):	GAFS	HECoS code:	101219
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Faculty:	FAST	Module Leader:	Amy Rattenbury
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Scheduled learning and teaching hours	24 hrs
Placement tutor support	0hrs
Supervised learning eg practical classes, workshops	0 hrs
Project supervision (level 6 projects and dissertation modules only)	0 hrs
Total contact hours	24 hrs
Placement / work based learning	0 hrs
Guided independent study	176 hrs
Module duration (total hours)	200 hrs

Programme(s) in which to be offered (not including exit awards)	Core	Option
BSc (Hons) Forensic Science	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pre-requisites
None

Office use only	
Initial approval: Feb 2018	Version no:1
With effect from: 01/09/2018	
Date and details of revision:5/8/20 Permanent change to scheduled learning and teaching hours and temporary change to assessment for 2020/21 post Covid.	Version no:3
22/9/21 Temporary assessment change extended for 21/22	

Module Aims

This module seeks to explore the processes involved in the burial of human remains and their subsequent decomposition. Students will be encouraged to critically examine current taphonomic research in relation to its ethical implications. This module aims to explain the post-mortem process of burial, decay, attrition, dispersal and re-exposure of human remains. It also aims to describe the biological and geological interactions that take place following death and deposition and how this information might aid the forensic scientist.

Module Learning Outcomes - at the end of this module, students will be able to

1	Critically appraise the concept of forensic taphonomy.
2	Recognise and categorise the features and processes of decomposition and assess the variables that affect post mortem interval.
3	Research and identify the role taphonomy plays in the search, location, and recovery of human remains and associated evidence types.
4	Critically evaluate current research in forensic taphonomy and related fields of study.
5	Debate the ethical considerations of working with human remains and to appreciate the variation in ethical considerations between populations.

Employability Skills The Wrexham Glyndŵr Graduate	I = included in module content A = included in module assessment N/A = not applicable
<i>Guidance: complete the matrix to indicate which of the following are included in the module content and/or assessment in alignment with the matrix provided in the programme specification.</i>	
CORE ATTRIBUTES	
Engaged	IA
Creative	I
Enterprising	N/A
Ethical	IA
KEY ATTITUDES	
Commitment	IA
Curiosity	IA
Resilient	IA
Confidence	I
Adaptability	IA
PRACTICAL SKILLSETS	
Digital fluency	IA
Organisation	I
Leadership and team working	I
Critical thinking	IA
Emotional intelligence	IA
Communication	IA

Derogations

None

Assessment:

Indicative Assessment Tasks:

Assessment 1: Essay relating to the ethical and legal implications in forensic taphonomy.
(2000 word count)

Assessment 2: Exam relating to the taphonomic changes in forensics and influencing factors
(2 Hrs)

Assessment number	Learning Outcomes to be met	Type of assessment	Weighting (%)
1	1, 4 & 5	Essay	50%
2	2 & 3	Examination	50%

Learning and Teaching Strategies:

Methods of delivery:

- PPT Lectures
- Directed discussions
- Case studies
- Problem solving exercises
- Directed study using VLE (Moodle)

Syllabus outline:

- Introduction to taphonomy within the forensic context.
- Stages of decomposition.
- Differential preservation of remains.
- Waterlogged environments.
- Burial contexts and their effect on decomposition.
- Search techniques (geophysics, soil analysis, cadaver dogs and landform mapping).
- Surface signatures of clandestine deposition.
- Behaviour patterns and strategies of disposal.
- Scavenging patterns and dispersal.
- Relative and absolute dating techniques.
- Forensic anthropology.

Indicative Bibliography:

Essential reading

Indicative Bibliography:

Pokines, J.T. and Symes, S.A. (2013) *Manual of Forensic Taphonomy*, Boca Raton: CRC Press.

Other indicative reading

Haglund, W. and Sorg, M. (Eds) (1996) *Forensic Taphonomy: The Postmortem Fate of Human Remains*, Florida: CRC Press.

Haglund, W. and Sorg, M. (Eds) (2001). *Advances in Forensic Taphonomy: Method, Theory, and Archaeological Perspectives*, Florida: CRC Press.

Hunter, J. and Cox, M. (2005) *Forensic Archaeology: Theory, Method and Practice*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Ruffell, A. and McKinley, J. (2008) *Geoforensics*, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Tibbett, M and Carter, D.O. (2008) *Soil Analysis in Forensic Taphonomy: Chemical and Biological Effects of Buried Human Remains*. Boca Raton: CRC Press.

Wagner, S. (2009) *Death Scene Investigation: A Field Guide*, Florida: CRC Press.