

Forensic Psychology (H002159)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 4.0 **Study time 120 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 2) Dutch Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Verbeke, Lize	PP07	lecturer-in-charge
De Clercq, Barbara	PP07	co-lecturer
Van Hiel, Alain	PP07	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

Master of Science in Psychology(main subject Clinical Psychology)	crdts	offering
	4	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Forensic Psychology, Psychology & Law, Criminological Psychology

Position of the course

This is an optional course in the master Clinical Psychology. This course adds to the multidisciplinary knowledge about criminal behavior. The specific goals of this course are the gain of insight in how Psychology and Law interact and are complementary to each other.

This is an in-depth course that extends upon bachelor courses including Social Psychology, Personality Psychology and Introduction into models in Clinical Psychology.

Contents

This course exists of three parts.

Part I focuses on the underlying mechanisms and developmental processes of different forms of antisocial/violent/deviant behavior (e.g. sexual violence, partner violence and radicalization). Etiological bio-psycho-social theories with attention for biological (e.g. neurological deviances), psychological (e.g. personality traits) and social (e.g. environmental factors) risk factors will be elaborated and discussed. Across different forms of antisocial behavior, an explicit developmental perspective is taken, focusing on early identification and the various developmental trajectories of antisocial behavior.

In Part II we focus on offender rehabilitation. Current leading models (i.e. the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) and Good Lives Model (GLM)) are discussed, including their implications for processes of risk taxation and – management and treatment. In this part, also a seminar is included, focusing on practice with risk assessment.

The final Part III elaborates on aspects of Legal Psychology, focusing on how psychological processes (e.g. memory, perception, social pressure) may influence legal practice. In this vein, we focus for example on the interrogation process, false confessions and witness statements.

In each part, we will focus on the translation of theoretical insights to clinical and criminological practice. Therefore, different guest speakers from different forensic contexts (e.g. police, forensic psychiatry) will be invited.

Initial competences

Credit of the courses from 'Block 2: Models in psychology' or having acquired the competences of these courses in another way.

Final competences

1. Being able to elaborate on the underlying mechanisms and developmental processes of different forms of criminal behavior.
2. Being able to link different frameworks of different forms of criminal behavior with each other.
3. Having knowledge on current leading models in offender rehabilitation
4. Being able to explain the role of psychological processes in legal practice.
5. Knowing how theoretical forensic psychological frameworks are translated in forensic psychological practice.
6. Being able to apply theoretical insights on forensic case studies

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Seminar, Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

During the lectures, we will focus on theory. The theory will be illustrated with examples from practice, case studies and exercises. Also different guest colleges with forensic practitioners are planned. Also a seminar involving risk assessment is included.

All lectures will be recorded. The recording will be made available for all students after the lecture. The seminar is not recorded.

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: The relevance of individual differences in a forensic (developmental) framework. Selected chapters from "Personality in context and development" (De Clercq, 2027).

Indicative price: € 35

Optional: no

Language : Dutch

Available on Ufora : No

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : Yes

Additional information: This book serves as course material for different lectures that address individual differences from, on the one hand, a developmental psychological and forensic perspective, and on the other hand through the link between certain maladaptive traits and offending behavior

Type: Handouts

Name: Handouts of the lessons - to be printed by the student

Indicative price: € 15

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

References

Bartol, C.R., & Bartol, A.M. (2012). Introduction to Forensic Psychology: Research and application. SAGE Publications.

Degrauwe, S., Dierckx, K., Van Bulck, V., Gouwy, M.-C., Verbeke, L., Vergauwe, J., & De Clercq, B. (2024). Goodenough care? How patients' perception of counselor's professional skills relate to everyday life in forensic longstay units. *Journal of Psychiatric Practice*, *30*(4), 284–291. <https://doi.org/10.1097/PRA.000000000000079>

Goethals, K., De Boeck, M., Dilliën, T., Huys, W., & Nuyts, A. (Eds.). (2020). *Handboek behandeling van seksueel afwijkend gedrag*. Gompel & Svacina.

Raes, J., Dierickx, S., Verbeke, L. & Verhage, A., (2025). Navigating the Complexity

of Gender-Based Violence: A Scoping Review, *Law & Criminology Journal* 2(1), 22-39. doi: <https://doi.org/10.21825/lcj.94082>

Verbeke, L., Dierickx, S., Groenen, A., Verhage, A., De Vocht, L., Raes, J., Glowacz, F., & Oger, N. (2026). *Ervaringen van vrouwen en mannen met gendergerelateerd geweld in België*. Instituut voor de gelijkheid van vrouwen en mannen.

Course content-related study coaching

Contact during the lessons; Interactive support through Ufora; Possibility for Individual appointments.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions, Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with multiple-choice questions, Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

INFORMATION END-OF-TERM ASSESSMENT

Exam with multiple choice and open questions, examining the content of the lectures and the seminar.

INFORMATION CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

Presence and participation at the seminar is obligatory. When the student is not present and/or does not participate at the seminar, it is not possible to succeed for this course. Students who were legally absent can participate at a replacement seminar at another date.

Calculation of the examination mark

All points (100%) are obtained on the written exam. The final score is the obtained score on the exam.

Facilities for Working Students

Students with a job have access to all online documents through Ufora. They are expected to participate at the seminar and the written exam.