

Criminology Project

If you would like to any more information about the course layout and assessment methods in the Diploma in Criminology, or the course content, see the Woking College website or feel free to contact me - amc@woking.ac.uk (Alison McGarvie - Course leader)

Equally if you have questions about this project or would like feedback, the please do contact me at the same address



Design a Prison

In this project you will design your own prison and justify the choices that you make, for example in terms of rules, security features, the structure of a prisoner's day, physical features of the prison, layout of a cell etc.

But first you have to decide what is the purpose of a prison. Prison could meet a number of different aims of punishment. Four of the most important aims are:

- **Retribution** - punishment inflicted out of vengeance for the crime they committed
- **Rehabilitation** - the act of restoring someone to normal life by reforming their character and behaviour
- **Public Protection** - Physically stopping the offender from committing any more crimes while they are locked up inside
- **Deterrence** - Making the offender decide not to commit crimes again in future to avoid going back to prison (individual deterrence) or making people in society decide not to commit crimes in the first place through fear of going to prison (general deterrence).

Stage One - Background research and Planning

- 1.1 To find out how existing prisons try to meet each of the aims of punishment
- 1.2 To decide which of the main aims of punishment you think should be most important when designing a prison

Stage Two - Prison Design

The type of prison you design will be much influenced by the aims of punishment that you want to meet. For example, if you think retribution or deterrence are most important, then you might decide to make prison an unpleasant experience. However, if you think the main aim is to reform offenders (rehabilitation), then you will put more resources into acquiring skills and experience or receiving treatments to help your prisoners in the real world after release. If public protection is the most important thing, then you will invest a lot in high tech security features.

Stage Three - Justification

Justify the choices you made in your design. Eg if you have put prisoners in uniform, explain why. If you have included a gym or a therapy room, explain why. Explain why you chose the layout, the rules etc. The best projects will show clear links between the design decisions and the research carried out in the planning stage.

STAGE ONE - RESEARCH AND PLANNING (3 hours)

1.1 Background Research

Use the links and questions to guide you in making a useful set of notes before you start your own design.

The additional reading links are optional, depending on how much time you have.

A) Find out about the Panopticon design. What is it and what is the aim of it in a prison?

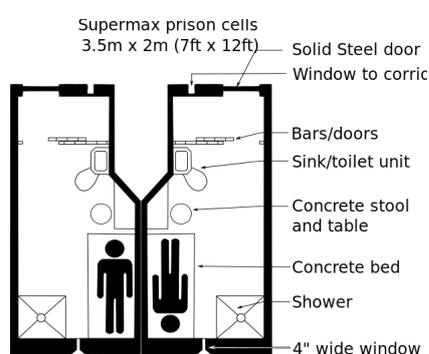
<https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Panopticon>

B) Find out about different types of prison design, eg the radial system at Pentonville prison, and how/why prisoners are often kept separate.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/7138110.stm>

C) Find out how the most maximum security prisons keep prisoners secure and what prisoners' lives are like. Think about the aims of punishment that might be achieved.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVCRjdN3UTM>



D) <https://theconversation.com/how-lessons-in-scandinavian-design-could-help-prisons-with-rehabilitation-106554>

How does prison design in Scandinavia differ from traditional UK designs?

How has this influenced prison design in some places in the UK, eg HMP Berwyn?

E) Find out about HMP Grendon and the culture of therapeutic care for prisoners there. What would this sort of prison look and feel like?

<https://www.communitycare.co.uk/2008/08/22/grendon-prison-a-model-for-therapeutic-care/>

F) Use this article to generate some ideas about your list of rules in prison

<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/PIB%20extract%20-%20Prison%20rules.pdf>

Additional reading - if you want more detail on some of the factors taken into consideration before designing prisons, this is a useful but quite lengthy article:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/architecture/how-to-build-better-prisons-new-designs-and-a-new-look-at-their-purpose-a6764021.html>

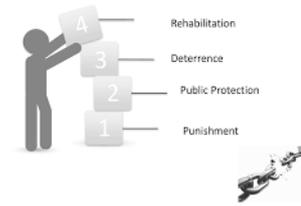
The Bromley Briefings give criminologists really useful data on what is going on in prison, how many prisoners do we have? What is the mix of gender and ethnic origin? How many prisoners reoffend and how quickly after release? You might find some of this data useful to help justify the choices you make in your own prison design.

<http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Portals/0/Documents/Bromley%20Briefings/Prison%20the%20facts%20Summer%202019.pdf>

1.2 Planning

Based on your research, which aims are you going to try to achieve in your own prison design, and why?

What are prison for?



Out of the examples of prison design, rules, facilities etc that you have read about, which features are you going to try to incorporate in your own design?

STAGE TWO - PRISON DESIGN (3 hours)

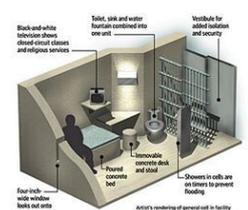
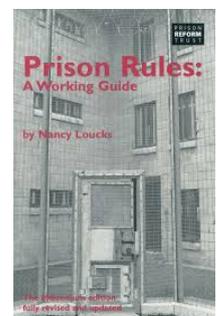
Your design work can be on paper or on a computer. The design will be influenced by prisons you have read about but you should not copy and paste from existing web resources. Make this your own original design.

In your designs include all of the following:

- An aerial (birdseye/top down) view of the prison - annotate key features with brief descriptions
- A schedule of a typical prisoner's day
- A set of rules that all prisoners have to abide by

Optional extras:

- Drawings of internal rooms/cells/features of the prison
- Rewards and Punishments that you want to include in your prison
- Number of prisoners and guards or other staff



STAGE THREE - JUSTIFICATION (2 hours)

Write a summary to justify the decisions that you made in your prison design. For example, you might want to explain your layout, colour choices, facilities offered, specific rules, how prisoners spend their time, whether they share a cell etc.

Imagine you are pitching this prison to a government department looking to build a new prison - try to be persuasive and show that your design is really well thought out and makes sense.

Try to link your justification in with your research. Eg if you read about a scheme run in another prison that seemed to work well, you might replicate it in your own prison. If you are trying to solve the problem of high re-offending rates amongst prisoners, this might influence some of the decisions you made in terms of how harsh the environment is, or instead how friendly and supportive it is.

Finally go back to the main aims of punishment that you set out to achieve in your prison - will the decisions you have made ensure that those aims are met?

This type of project will be one of the ways in which you are assessed in year one, alongside more traditional assessment methods such as exams.

However, prisons are not studied in depth until year two.
