KING'S FORENSICS

KING'S College LONDON

MSc/MRes Forensic Science Welcome Handbook

Dr David Ballard 2025/6

@KingsForensics

Welcome to the MSc/MRes Forensic Science Programme

I hope that you are having an enjoyable summer and are looking forward to starting your Forensic Science MSc/MRes course in September. We have a designed a programme where you are taught by a range of internationally recognised forensic experts and practicing forensic scientists, and we hope that you will find it engaging.

A general introduction to the programme, including some practical information for your studies, will occur in person at Waterloo on Friday the 26th of September. This will also provide a chance for you to get to know your study groups and the other members of the forensic science programme. The following week will see you completing chemistry catch-up and chemistry laboratory skills sessions, before teaching commences on a wider range of topics. All specific timetabling information, including some extra induction sessions and events laid on by the Faculty, will be communicated to you centrally by King's.

I look forward to welcoming you to King's and hope that you will find your year in London both fascinating and enjoyable.

Best wishes,
David

Dr David Ballard, Programme Director

King's Forensics Website

https://www.kcl.ac.uk/lsm/research/divisions/aes/research/kings-forensics/index

Key Dates

Teaching begins on Monday 29th September, with an induction session the previous Friday (the 26th of September). Dates are indicative and may be subject to change

Semester 1: Teaching - Monday 29th September – Friday 19th December 2025
Semester 2: Teaching - Monday 19th January – Thursday 2nd April 2026

Exam Period 1: Monday 5th January – Friday 16th January 2026
Exam Period 2: Tuesday 5th May – Friday 8th May 2026
Exam Period 3: TBA August 2026 (Resit and Replacement examinations only)

Project Induction: Monday 9th May – Friday 15th May 2026
MSc Research Project: Monday 18th May – September 2026
MRes Research Project: Monday 18th May 2022 – January 2027

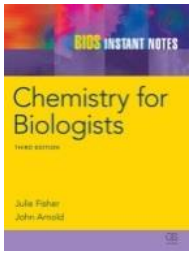
The Team

Programme and Module Lead	Dr David Ballard
Module Leads	Prof Denise Syndercombe Court Dr Nunzianda Frascione Dr Matteo Gallidabino Dr Lucinda Davenport Dr Federica Giangasparo

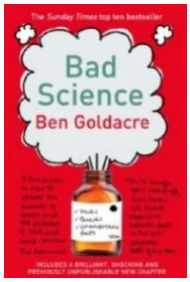
Post-doctoral Researchers and the PhD students (many of them Forensic Science MSc graduates) also make a valuable contribution. In addition, external experts routinely contribute to the teaching of this course. Some of these experts will be your project hosts and hopefully your future employers.

Potential reading before starting the course

If you are not confident about your chemistry knowledge, and want to brush up before starting the programme, then the following sections in the below book may help you. There is however no requirement for you to complete this before the programme starts.



BIOS Instant Notes in Chemistry for Biologists Third Edition Julie Fisher, John Arnold
ISBN: 978-04156-800-35
https://www.crcpress.com/BIOS-Instant-Notes-in-Chemistry-for-Biologists/Fisher-Arnold/p/book/9780415680035
Sections A- F, H-N and Q are especially useful.



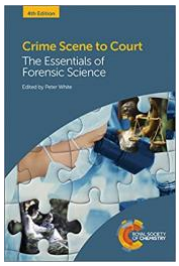
One of the most important skills for you to acquire is critical assessment. Reading this entertaining book or listening to Ben Goldacre's TED talks is an excellent way to get you started http://www.4thestate.co.uk/book/bad-science/

Recommended textbooks for the MSc programme

Please be aware that the recommended text books will be freely available in the library (likely in electronic and physical format). Go to this link for our Online Library once you have access as a new student. You can also purchase new or second-hand copies via the usual marketplace online companies or bookstores, and sometimes our alumni will sell their copies. Each module will have a reading list and you will be able to access this once you have access to the KCL online platform, KEATS.

Listed below are some of the key resources that you are recommended to use for the year:

7BBFM126: The Forensic Process

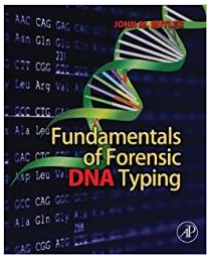


Crime Scene to Court: The Essentials of Forensic Science
4th Edition, Peter C. White (Ed), Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, UK, 2016
ISBN: 978-78262-446-2

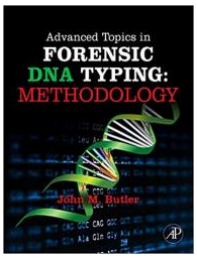
7MRFFS01: Analytical Chemistry for Forensic Science and Toxicology

Analytical Techniques in Forensic Science, 1st Edition
Rosalind Wolstenholme, Sue Jickells, Shari Forbes.
ISBN: 978-11199-782-82

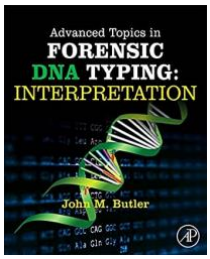
7BBPM027: Forensic Genetics



Fundamentals of Forensic DNA Typing
John Butler
ISBN: 978-01237-499-94

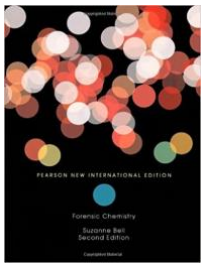


Advanced Topics in Forensic DNA Typing: Methodology
John Butler
ISBN: 978-07237-451-32



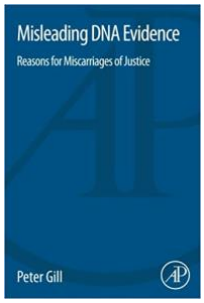
Advanced Topics in Forensic DNA Typing: Interpretation
John Butler
ISBN: 978-01240-521-30

7BBFM127: Forensic Chemistry



Forensic Chemistry (2nd Edition)
Susan Bell
ISBN: 978-12920-204-40

7BBFM128: Forensic Biology



Misleading DNA Evidence: Reasons for Miscarriages of Justice
Peter Gill
ISBN: 978-01241-721-42

Please also check individual KEATS module pages for recommended reading. Further recommended reading may also be provided by your lecturers during/after lectures. Last but not least, please conduct your own research to find relevant scientific articles or reviews.

Occupational Health requirements and Hepatitis B immunisation

You will be sent a questionnaire from Admission or Faculty; please complete and return as instructed. The information is required to ensure you are up to date with health requirements for this county and to find out whether there are any potential health risks involved in your chosen programme of study. You will be asked if your studies involve:

- Clinical contact with patients
- *Work with patient specimens/work with human tissue products*
- Work with genetically modified organisms or pathogens (biological agents that are harmful to human health
- Risk of exposure to environmental or human pathogens (eg water systems, soils etc)
- Risk of exposure to respiratory sensitiser etc.

The only one you need to select is the one relating to patient specimens (human tissue) as highlighted above.

Forensic Scientists will routinely come into contact with contaminated evidence samples. In order to minimise the risk of infection it is a Health and Safety requirement that they are immunised against Hepatitis B. You are strongly advised to begin your course of injections as soon as possible, either through your own doctor or via occupational health at King's once you arrive (we will provide more information on this option once you are settled in London). The present immunisation regime requires 3 injections at 3-month intervals. This is followed by an antibody titre test and possibly a fourth injection if your antibody level is not sufficiently high. Hep B boosters can be administered by the college health service after your arrival.

Some of the placement laboratories will only take students who are fully immunised against Hepatitis B.

Accommodation

If possible, we recommend not to sign a 12-month contract with private landlords as many of the research projects (May – September 2026) will be outside King's / London. However, if you are allocated King's accommodation and have to sign a 12-month contract with King's, then we are able to help you terminate that contract early. It is likely that some of you will be required to spend about 3-months outside London for your summer project, and this may mean you have to move out from London. There will always be projects offered within King's and London, however if you are restricted to choosing projects only in London, then this will limit your project choices.

Equipment

You will require a laboratory coat, goggles and a calculator for your time at King's College London. They will be available from King's for a deposit (refunded at the end of the course). You will also

be provided with a laboratory notebook, and scene suit. You will receive further information at the start of the course.

Study Skills & Support

We continue to support you once you arrive at King's by providing a series of courses via the **King's academic skills for learning (KASL)** https://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/studyskills/home. During your journey you'll also have access to **King's Learning and Skills Service** (KLaSS) and **LinkedIn Learning.**

Student Services: King's offers a wide range of student services including accommodation, IT, health and wellbeing support and careers advice. Student services offer practical and professional advice and guidance to support you before, during and after your time at King's. https://self-service.kcl.ac.uk

Life at King's

King's is a vibrant student community that offers lots of activities and opportunities to meet new people. These include sports clubs, societies, volunteering opportunities, student media, campaigning groups and many more. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/student-life.

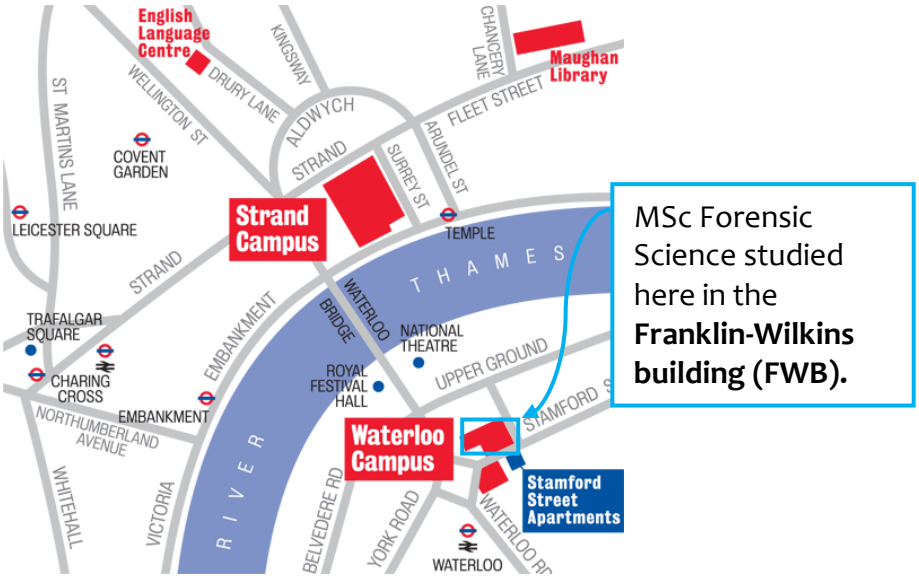
Career guidance
The team of King's careers & employability provides an outstanding range of career guidance and professional development support, including workshops, career fairs, employer events, structured online modules, employability awards, individual appointments, and much more. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/careers

Living in London
To make the most of life in the capital visit https://www.kcl.ac.uk/new-students. You'll find information regarding setting up bank accounts, travelling, exploring the city, etc.

The campus

To find out more and to view the video guide to our Waterloo campus and local community please go to:

https://www.kcl.ac.uk/visit/waterloo-campus



We are all here to welcome you to the MSc/MRes Forensic Science programmes and King's College London.

Dr David Ballard

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