



Component Standard

Forensic Anthropology

Purpose

To ensure that students are provided with the necessary information in order for them to develop an understanding of the theory and application of anthropology routinely used in forensic science practice.

General Outcomes

The course should be designed to enable the student to:

1. demonstrate a thorough understanding of the normal human skeletal form and its variation between and within populations;
2. describe the biological processes that govern bone production and remodelling, including the biomolecular unit and the key differences between different bone types;
3. demonstrate an understanding of the physiological and structural interactions between the soft and hard tissues;
4. demonstrate an appreciation of the differences between the human and faunal skeletal form, including isolated and fragmented bones;
5. demonstrate an appreciation of the differences between the adult and non-adult skeleton, including isolated and fragmented bones;
6. describe the methods of differentiating bone which may be of forensic significance from bone of historical or ancient contexts;
7. discuss the principles of the creation of an osteological profile, including the underlying biological principles and the formation and application of metric and morphological techniques;
8. demonstrate the ability to accurately perform a range of techniques for determining biological sex, age-at-death, ancestry and stature from the human skeleton, including from isolated and fragmented bones;
9. demonstrate the ability to identify pathological and traumatic features on bone, describe their potential aetiology, and provide differential diagnoses where appropriate, and differentiate these features from a range of non-metric traits;
10. discuss the concept and key processes of taphonomic change, and explain how it can affect the accuracy, precision and interpretation of results from anthropological techniques of analysis;
11. understand the potential and describe the limitations of advanced analytical techniques that may be applied to the skeleton to gather further information pertinent to identification in the forensic context (e.g. DNA, stable isotopes, FTIR, CT);
12. discuss the history of forensic anthropology and the ethical aspects of such work, and critically evaluate the application of anthropological methods within the forensic context using case study examples.

It is noted that acquiring a good standard in forensic osteology and anthropology is only possible if a significant proportion of the course involves working with a large range of human skeletal remains or in some situations casts used to replace excavated bones. It is not enough for a student to just view one skeleton.