**Criminology some introductory texts**

If you have a textbook for Sociology then you could do much worse than to familiarise yourself with the chapters there – to give an overview of our course and as an introduction to studying crime. However, Criminology at university will also use a range of disciplines - psychology, forensic science, history, etc.

It is easy to fall into the trap of starting with a whole Criminology coursebook such as [Chris Hale et al](Chris%20Hale%20et%20al), [Eamon Carrabine et al](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Criminology-Sociological-Introduction-Eamonn-Carrabine/dp/1138566268/ref%3Dsr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=Eamonn+Carrabine&qid=1592584241&s=books&sr=1-2) or [Tim Newburn et al](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Criminology-1-Tim-Newburn/dp/1138643130/ref%3Dtmm_pap_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=) (or the latter’s [Key Readings](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Key-Readings-Criminology-Tim-Newburn/dp/1843924021/ref%3Dsr_1_21?crid=9RMPQ0KUUMI6&dchild=1&keywords=criminology&qid=1592566732&s=books&sprefix=criminolo%2Caps%2C230&sr=1-21) book). However, though it may be useful to look at the contents pages or dip in for things that appeal these are likely to be expensive and off putting (suppose we asked you to read the entire text your Sociology textbooks in advance of starting the course?).

Fortunately introductory texts are also available which will help gain an overview of the discipline as well as help you with personal statements and interviews – maybe even with starting an EPQ.

I would particularly recommend the following:

* Sandra Walklate’s [Criminology: the Basics](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Criminology-Basics-Sandra-Walklate/dp/1138803448/ref%3Dsr_1_13?crid=9RMPQ0KUUMI6&dchild=1&keywords=criminology&qid=1592566732&s=books&sprefix=criminolo%2Caps%2C230&sr=1-13) is a useful text – and in a little more than 200 pages reviews a great deal of the material covered over a degree.

And Oxford’s Very Short Introduction series which also have two very useful works

* Tim Newburn – [Criminology](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Criminology-Very-Short-Introduction-Introductions/dp/0199643253/ref%3Dsr_1_15?crid=9RMPQ0KUUMI6&dchild=1&keywords=criminology&qid=1592566732&s=books&sprefix=criminolo%2Caps%2C230&sr=1-15) smaller, slimmer, slightly less systematic than Walklate but certainly readable
* David Canter – [Forensic Psychology](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Forensic-Psychology-Short-Introduction-Introductions-ebook/dp/B005OQGCKW/ref%3Dsr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=canter+david&qid=1592584405&sr=8-1) for those either coming to this from a psychological perspective or who feel that this might be a gap in understanding for them

Other good texts

* David Canter’s [Mapping Murder](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Mapping-Murder-Secrets-Geographical-Profiling-ebook/dp/B07NZX4BSX/ref%3Dsr_1_5?dchild=1&keywords=canter+david&qid=1592584405&sr=8-5) has been of real interest to applicants in the past with its focus on geographical and psychological profiling.
* Ray Bull et al’s [Criminal Psychology: A Beginner’s Guide](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Criminal-Psychology-Beginners-Guide-Guides/dp/1851687076/ref%3Dpd_sbs_14_2/258-2838752-6387945?_encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=1851687076&pd_rd_r=e0095b38-ba41-4e1f-9976-154a1368a942&pd_rd_w=1H6U6&pd_rd_wg=5ExI7&pf_rd_p=2773aa8e-42c5-4dbe-bda8-5cdf226aa078&pf_rd_r=TCED1NG6KZHWHZP311GT&psc=1&refRID=TCED1NG6KZHWHZP311GT) looks readable but I’m not familiar with the text,

On our own Sociology Course Sudhir Venkatesh’s [Gang Leader for a Day](https://www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=venkatesh+gang+leader+for+a+day&crid=1LTOS5DOVEJGG&sprefix=venkatesh%2Caps%2C201&ref=nb_sb_ss_i_1_9) gives a great account of how to and how not to conduct research and will supplement your work on Research Methods and Crime & Deviance admirably. There are multiple copies in our library and so readable.

Useful memoirs from a career criminal’s perspective are out there – notably Noel Smith’s [A Loaded Gun and a Few Kind Words](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Few-Kind-Words-Loaded-Autobiography/dp/0141015799/ref%3Dsr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=a+gun+and+a+few+kind+words&qid=1592820397&s=books&sr=1-1) (he spoke very well at a student criminology conference we attended) or even John Mc Vicar’s memoir (currently out of print – but avoid the terrible film of the book).

And finally David Downes and Paul Rock’s [Understanding Deviance](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Understanding-Deviance-Guide-Sociology-Rule-Breaking/dp/0198747349/ref%3Dpd_sbs_14_1/258-2838752-6387945?_encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=0198747349&pd_rd_r=8762dd3d-ef41-4c19-b6ef-7c850c4afcec&pd_rd_w=v09Se&pd_rd_wg=f17w3&pf_rd_p=2773aa8e-42c5-4dbe-bda8-5cdf226aa078&pf_rd_r=RS8BZB5PRAX5TPYST4E6&psc=1&refRID=RS8BZB5PRAX5TPYST4E6) is an increasingly bulky text for undergraduate students but has been the basis for almost every sociology textbook section that I have seen. Even an older edition than the one listed will give useful extension reading for students in their second year looking for discussion of key areas on the Sociology of Crime and Deviance section of the course.

Apologies but all the links above are to the [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) site. Many of these links may have useful preview and review facilities and possible access through Amazon Marketplace to second hand texts. More ethical booksellers are also available. And I have avoided anything that says “Teach Yourself” or “for Dummies” but these may have useful material. The point is to read something.

Final suggestion – the FutureLearn platform offers short free courses which are provided by universities and their [Crime and Criminology](https://www.futurelearn.com/subjects/politics-and-society-courses/crime-and-criminology) page offers a range of Criminology material suitable for the locked down in addition to their [Preparing for University](https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/preparing-for-uni) course.