

Forensics for Crime Writers



Course outline

Course Tutor:

PROFESSOR ALLAN JAMIESON

Biog:

Professor Allan Jamieson is renowned for his entertaining yet informative talks on forensic science and has featured in many newspaper stories, TV in interviews and documentaries as well as consulting for crime writers and TV series such as *Waking the Dead*, *The Bill*, and *The Loch*.

DURATION: Full day course (10am-4pm) including sandwich lunch/teas/coffees

Course Content:

“Is forensic science all it’s cracked up to be?” From the reliable to the downright stupid, this course will take you through the entire crime scene to court process using examples of good science, bad science, good journalism and downright bad journalism. Sometimes accurate and real can be just as absorbing as speculative hyperbole.

Everyone is used to hearing about the magic of ‘forensics’ in solving crime. Less publicity is given to those cases where the ‘silent witness’ was a bit biased! The Forensic Institute has been involved in defence work for thousands of cases here and abroad, including the Omagh Bombing, death of Princess Diana and important appeal cases which have changed how forensic science is done. Using examples from this vast spectrum of cases from multiple murders to drink driving, we will explore the use of forensic science from a defence perspective. From the frustrations of Legal Aid to having to get English translated to English to be understood in a New York court, you will get an insight into what really happens in the whole ‘crime scene to court’ process.

The morning session will introduce the principles and practices used in forensic practice such as crime scene examination, fingerprints, and DNA, while the afternoon session will be more interactive and focussed on actual experiences in real cases. We will also discuss examples of poor journalistic understanding of forensic procedures!