

IAN OXLEY BSc (Hons)
Independent Forensic Consultant

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Professional Profile

I am an extensively experienced analyst and forensic scientist with both operational and leadership experience. As an analyst, I have been involved in the investigation of a wide range of crimes including, illicit drug importation, production and cultivation, food contamination, toxicology, alcohols, paints and heavy metals. As a trainer, I have trained scientific staff, police officers, customs officers, solicitors and magistrates. I have also trained international students both in the UK and in their home countries.

Academic Qualifications

Bachelor of Science with Honours in Applied Biology.

Forensic Science Career

I started my career in Forensic Science Service (FSS) Wetherby Laboratory in 1980 as an examiner in a combined drugs and toxicology team. As an examiner I also spent time working within the biology team developing skills in item recovery, fibre analysis and traditional blood grouping methods and working with other evidence types.

I became the site operator for the Gas Chromatograph Mass Spectrometer (GC-MS) providing an analytical service to the site analysing samples from drugs cases, toxicology cases and arson investigations.

As a case reporting officer, I reported cases involving drugs of abuse and toxicology cases and was also an authorised analyst under the Road Traffic Act, reporting blood and urine alcohol levels in drink/drive cases.

As a senior forensic scientist, I reported more complex and larger drugs cases including importation, production and cultivation cases. I was the site lead on drugs and trained, mentored and coached colleagues within the laboratory.

I attended scenes of crime involving assaults, illicit drug production facilities, tablet production, crack production, powder re-blocking and cannabis cultivations to ensure the scene was safe and to gather all the appropriate evidence. I also attended scenes of crime where drug trace evidence had to be recovered and assessed, this involved examinations of premises, vehicles, clothing and other related items.

I regularly trained investigators at Harperley Hall, Durham, Bishopgarth, Wakefield and Custom House, London, including the National Drugs Expert Witness Course at Bishopgarth. This involved training investigators for both the police and HMRC in all aspects of drug related examinations.

I acted as Forensic Adviser to HMRC when they moved their forensic contract from LGC to the FSS, having daily interactions assisting them to develop forensic strategies in large drugs importations, fuel laundering and fraud cases.

I regularly trained customs investigators and rummage crews in setting forensic strategies and identifying, recovering and preserving forensic evidence.

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I developed, resourced and implemented a new integrated approach to service delivery for HMRC. Moving to managing a team of forensic scientists with different skills to better meet the need of HMRC investigations. This allowed the team to deliver a more integrated approach to investigations having drugs, fingerprint, DNA, photography, document and mobile phone skills within a single team.

I have managed a range of forensic science delivery teams including drugs and analytical chemistry for a range of high-profile customers including police forces of the North East of England, Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), the Counter Terrorist Unit and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Any other relevant information

Having left the FSS I have project managed the setting up of a new analytical facility for a pharmaceutical analytical company. This involved purchasing new equipment and overseeing the fitting of new equipment alongside the relocation of existing equipment. All of this had to be documented and carried out under the quality system without impacting on the quality of the output to the customer. These skills have been useful in helping other customers setting up new laboratory facilities.

As a lead trainer, I developed and delivered a training course to the Libyan Forensic Service as part of an MSc in Forensic Science. I subsequently provided in country support when the students returned to Libya.

As a consultant to the UN I have supported the delivery of a national drugs analytical service, this has included in country support and training for the staff and advice on new instrument specifications. I have also worked with the UN on the development of a toxicology service within the West Bank, which is designed to be an outsourced service managed through a toxicology hub within the Ministry of Justice and will include staff training.

As a consultant to the EU I have supported the delivery of training to the forensic science service within Kazakhstan.

As an expert witness to the defence I have examined and given evidence in a wide range of drug related cases in the UK.

Internationally I have worked for the defence in drug related cases in Brunei, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa and Thailand. This has included some cases that have involved the death penalty for drug importation.