BLACKBIRD FOR TRAINING

Digital Intelligence Research and Online Investigation Methods Course

3 – 7 January 2027
Online

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PARTNER



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Digital Intelligence Research and Online Investigation Methods Course

Ref: 103_363793 **Date:** 3 – 7 January 2027 **Location:** Online **Fees:** 2700 GBP

Introduction:

In this 1-week course you learn to run digital intelligence research and online investigation methods on publicly available information, from the first research question to a defensible written finding. You build a case report with an evidence annex and an ethics statement that you can reuse as a template at work. You need everyday confidence with web browsers and spreadsheets and some experience of research or checking facts; no coding is required. You practise on case studies drawn from due diligence, compliance, risk, security and journalism-style verification, working through real public records, images and posts.

Course Objectives:

- Draft a research plan that turns a business question into intelligence requirements and lawful collection limits
- Run structured searches with advanced search operators and log every query in a research activity log
- Score public sources with a reliability and credibility grading scale and record the grades in a source register
- Map relationships between organisations and events with link charts and timelines built from public records
- Test images, video and claims with reverse image search, geolocation and a competing hypotheses matrix
- Write an intelligence assessment with stated confidence levels and an ethics statement checked against Berkeley Protocol principles

Target Audience:

- You research companies, suppliers or counterparties for due diligence and compliance checks
- You analyse public information to assess fraud, reputational or third-party risk
- You support security or investigation teams by collecting and checking open source material
- You verify claims, images or video before they are used in reports or published work
- You prepare written findings that managers, legal teams or clients rely on for decisions



Course Outline:

Day 1: Plan the Research and Run Structured Searches

- Defining Intelligence Requirements With a Research Question Template
- Scoping Lawful Research Limits Using a Proportionality Checklist
- Applying Advanced Search Operators Across Several Search Engines
- Recording Queries and Captures in a Research Activity Log
- Build: Research Plan and Intelligence Requirements Sheet

Day 2: Assess Digital Presence and Grade Public Sources

- Mapping an Organisation's Public Digital Footprint With a Presence Matrix
- Reviewing Domain, Website and Company Registry Records
- Grading Source Reliability With a Two-Axis Credibility Scale
- Separating Primary, Secondary and Derived Public Information Sources
- Build: Source Register With Reliability and Credibility Grades

Day 3: Analyse Relationships and Interpret Location and Imagery

- Charting Entity Relationships With Link Analysis Diagrams
- Assembling Activity Timelines From Public Posts and Filings
- Geolocating Public Images Using Landmarks and Satellite Imagery
- Chronolocating Visual Content From Shadows, Weather and Metadata
- Build: Link Chart and Geolocation Worksheet for One Case

Day 4: Verify Findings and Write Intelligence Assessments

- Testing Images and Video With Reverse Image Search Methods
- Weighing Alternative Explanations With a Competing Hypotheses Matrix
- Expressing Analytic Confidence Using Standard Likelihood Language
- Structuring Findings Into a Key Judgements First Report Layout
- Build: Verification Log and Draft Intelligence Assessment

Day 5: Work a Due Diligence Case Study From Plan to Report

- Applying Berkeley Protocol Principles to Collection and Preservation Choices
- Screening the Case File Against Privacy and Data Minimisation Rules
- Rerunning Source Grading and Verification on New Case Evidence
- Peer Reviewing the Draft Report Against an Ethics Checklist
- Build: Final Case Report With Evidence Annex and Ethics Statement



Skills You Will Gain:

- Intelligence Requirements Planning
- Advanced Search Operator Use
- Digital Footprint Mapping
- Source Reliability Grading
- Link and Timeline Analysis
- Image Geolocation and Chronolocation
- Analytic Confidence Statements
- Evidence Preservation Documentation

Why Attend This Course:

- Leave with a case report template, evidence annex and ethics statement you can reuse on your next investigation
- Apply a proportionality checklist that keeps your research lawful, necessary and limited to public information
- Use a source register that shows reviewers exactly how reliable each piece of information is
- Practise verification steps on real images and posts so you catch false or recycled material before it reaches a report

Conclusion:

In your first week back, open the case report template and apply it to one live request, starting with the research plan and proportionality checklist before you search. Share the finished report and its source register with your manager or legal adviser and agree how findings and confidence levels should be presented. After first use, check whether every claim traces to a logged capture, whether personal data was kept to the minimum needed, and which searches you would plan differently next time.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What will you be able to do after this digital intelligence research and online investigation methods course?

You will plan lawful research on publicly available information, run structured searches, grade sources, verify images and claims, and write an intelligence assessment with stated confidence levels and a documented evidence trail that colleagues and reviewers can check.

What do you need to know before starting digital intelligence research and online investigation methods training?

You need confident everyday use of web browsers and spreadsheets and some experience of research, fact checking or analysis. No coding or specialist software skills are required, and every method is introduced step by step on case material.



What do you build during the digital intelligence research and online investigation methods course?

You build a research plan, a graded source register, a link chart and geolocation worksheet, a verification log and a draft assessment. On the last day these come together as a final case report with an evidence annex and an ethics statement.

How does this digital intelligence research and online investigation methods course differ from a cyber forensics course?

This course works only with publicly available online information and focuses on planning, source grading, verification and reporting. Forensics courses examine seized devices and system data, while introductory awareness courses stay at the conceptual level without hands-on case work.

