

Programme Specification for Postgraduate Programme Leading to: MSc Media and Communications

Applicable for all postgraduate students starting after 1st of September 2022

Version No.	Date	Notes – QUALITY ASSURANCE USE ONLY	QA
<u>1</u>	December 2021	Modified programme from Sept 2022 (major modifications)	BJR
1.1	March 2022	JR5618 replaced by JR5624 Block codes added Route code added	BJR

Postgraduate Taught Programme	
1. Awarding institution	Brunel University London
2. Teaching institution(s)	Brunel University London
3. Home College/Department/Division	College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences/Dept. of Social and Political Sciences /Division of Social Science and Communication.
4. Contributing College/Department/Division/ Associated Institution	None
5. Programme accredited by	N/A
6. Final award(s) and FHEQ Level of Award	MSc Media & Communications FHEQ Level 7
7. Programme title	MSc Media & Communications
8. Programme type (single honours/joint)	N/A
9. Normal length of programme (in months) for each mode of study	FT: 12 months PT: 24 months
10. Maximum period of registration for each mode of study	Normal or standard duration plus 2 years up to a maximum of five years.
11. Variation(s) to September start	None
12. Modes of study	Full time and part-time
13. Modes of delivery	Standard
14. Intermediate awards and titles and FHEQ Level of Award	Postgraduate Diploma in Media and Communications FHEQ7 Postgraduate Certificate in Media and Communications FHEQ7
15. UCAS Code	N/A
16. HECoS Code	100444
17. Route Code	6F77PMEDIACO
18. Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external and	UK Quality Code for Higher Education

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Location: <https://intra.brunel.ac.uk/s/QSO/Team/Programmes/Templates and Proformas/Programme Specification Templates>

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internal reference points used to inform programme design	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement (There are no subject benchmarks at postgraduate level, but we have referred to the QAA undergraduate benchmarks for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies) Brunel 2030 Brunel Placement Learning Policy, as published under the 'Placements' section of the ' Managing Higher Education Provision with Others ' page.
19. Admission Requirements	Details of PGT entry requirements are provided on the University's and College website. Levels of English for non-native speakers are outlined on Brunel International's language requirements pages.
20. Other relevant information (e.g. study abroad, additional information on placements)	Students will be offered short 4 week placements as part of a work placement module.
21. Programme regulations not specified in Senate Regulation 3. Any departure from regulations specified in Senate Regulation 3 must be stated here and approved by Senate.	N/A
22. Further information about the programme is available from the College website.	https://www.brunel.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/Media-and-Communications-MSc

23. EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

The fundamental philosophy underpinning the programme is the development of critically engaged students who have a detailed and meaningful understanding of the history, theoretical perspectives and practices of media and communications. We aim to instil a critical knowledge of how the development of structures of power, control and ownership of the media has led to systemic discrimination in the media industry, and how media is mobilised in activism, resistance and in social justice movements. This includes a focus on issues of media imperialism, colonialism, exclusion and hegemony. We aim to provide students with the knowledge, critical analytical skills and practical skills necessary to forge creative and innovative ways to challenge and correct imbalances of power in the media and creative industries, and in society at large.

Students will come from a range of academic backgrounds (predominantly Media, Cultural Studies, Arts and Social Science subjects) and will gain a critical understanding of the rapid changes in media communications and their social and cultural consequences in an international context, and consider how their own backgrounds can enable them to influence creative alternatives to dominant media forms. The educational aims are:

- To introduce students to the relevant media and communications theories and critically analyse media and communication processes historically and in contemporary society;
- To develop in students the ability to analyse and evaluate media and communications practice creatively and with a global awareness;
- To equip students with the skills to pursue further advanced academic research or to take up employment within the media, broadcasting or creative industries in an ethical manner (e.g. as communications or press officer, e-learning technologist, journalist).

24. PROGRAMME AND INTERMEDIATE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding (K) cognitive (thinking) skills (C) and other skills and attributes (S) in the following areas:

Masters FHEQ Level 7	Category (K = knowledge and understanding, C = cognitive (thinking) skills, S = other skills and attributes)	Learning Outcome	Masters Award Only	Associated Assessment Blocks Code(s)	Associated Study Blocks Code(s)	Associated Modular Blocks Code(s)
Masters and FHEQ level 7						
	K	1. To explain the fundamental significance of the media in understanding and interpreting contemporary society.				CO5601 Media as Power CO5603 Digital Audiences and Identities CO5607 Digital Media Career Development
	K	2. To use cutting-edge concepts, theories and methods for understanding the changing world of media and communications.				CO5602 Analysing the Media CO5605 Social Media and Society CO5608 Political Satire and Comedy CO5600 Written Dissertation
	K	3. To examine the historical origins, contexts and consequences of global media and communications.				CO5601 Media as Power CO5606 21 st Century Media Bodies
	K	4. To evaluate the significance of media and communications in the formation of social structures and social change.				CO5604 Media Production as Activism CO5605 Social Media and Society CO5606 21 st Century Media-Bodies
	C	1. To explore media texts via description, critique, and/or processes of media production.				CO5601 Media as Power CO5602 Analysing the Media CO5603 Digital Audiences and Identities CO5605 Social Media and Society
	C	2. To demonstrate competence as a				CO5602 Analysing the Media

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		researcher in the field of media and communications.				CO5606 21 st Century Media Bodies CO5607 Digital Media Career Development CO5600 Written dissertation
	C	3. To engage with issues and practices of activism and social justice in media and communications.				CO5601 Media as Power CO5604 Media Production as Activism CO5608 Political Satire and Comedy
	S	1. To identify methods and techniques in media and communication studies applicable to the student's own research.				CO5602 Analysing the Media CO5605 Social Media and Society CO5608 Political Satire and Comedy CO5600 Written dissertation
	S	2. To organise ideas and express them effectively in written, oral or practice-based forms.				CO5601 Media as Power CO5603 Digital Audiences and Identities CO5604 Media Production as Activism CO5606 21 st Century Media Bodies CO5607 Digital Media Career Development CO5600 Written dissertation
	S	3. To adopt a self-reflexive approach which demonstrates a critical awareness of the student's own work and any relevant ethical considerations.				CO5602 Analysing the Media CO5605 Social Media and Society CO5607 Digital Media Career Development CO5608 Political Satire and Comedy
	S	4. To formulate creative and innovative ways of using or interpreting media, in order to challenge and correct imbalances of power.				CO5601 Media as Power CO5603 Digital Audiences and Identities CO5604 Media Production as Activism CO5606 21 st Century Media Bodies
	S	5. To demonstrate self-direction and originality in writing an independent extended research project which requires engagement with research ethics.				CO5600 Written dissertation

Learning/teaching strategies and methods to enable learning outcomes to be achieved, including formative assessments

The main learning and teaching methods used to teach the theoretical and research knowledge listed above are lectures, fieldtrips, workshops, student-led seminars and individual tutorials. Students are provided with comprehensive outlines for each module which explain both the topics covered and the appropriate reading for the module. Students are, as appropriate for advanced study, expected to source their own readings. Seminars provide a learning environment encouraging independent thought, self-reflection and dialogue (for example, students will present their own work in progress for constructive class discussion) and interrogate at an advanced level the inter-relationship between media theory and practice, and the role of media in contemporary and historical power relations and inequalities. Formative assessments on individual work are used in modules to provide feedback on student progress. In the second and third terms, students write a dissertation. They are prepared for the project through workshops in terms 1 and 2 and then the major project in the final term facilitates a progressive development of their interpersonal, research, project management and theoretical skills. The dissertation module is a taught module and includes lectures and workshops on ethics, writing at length, methods and governance to prepare students for independent research at an advanced level. Students will also be encouraged to attend fieldtrips that will help them to relate theoretical frameworks to empirical settings.

Summative assessment strategies and methods to enable learning outcomes to be demonstrated.

Systematic knowledge and understanding is acquired and tested by essays, reports, blogs and creative practice, along with a written dissertation. Assessment is via formal written work and practice-based projects, which the module leaders deem to be the most effective way of assessing the extent to which students have gained knowledge and understanding of the topics listed. However, it is realised with the international diversity of students on this programme that early diagnostic written work is crucial in assisting those students to achieve the required learning outcomes. Thus, short formative assessments have been incorporated into modules where it is appropriate to do so. Through these assignments diagnostic assessment can be made of a student's capacity to write essays, and their level of competence in written English – and indeed makes it possible to check on issues such as plagiarism. Appropriate remedial advice and support is then given with bespoke sessions on academic writing and information literacy. In addition, early feedback to students proves to be very important in their trajectory to meeting learning outcomes. Students can utilise this feedback to help prepare a longer and formally assessed summative essay or creative practice piece.

Summative exercises are expected to show familiarity with the appropriate literature, methods and professional practices in media and communications. These criteria are clearly set out in the Handbook for Taught Master's Degrees which the College makes available to every Masters student at the outset of the programme. The assessment methods utilised tests these skills through a shared emphasis on approaching a task or problem via a process of individual research, analysis and creative interpretation. All require clear, well-evidenced argumentation, and all call upon a degree of creative thought, imagination and independence of mind.

The range of assessments ensures that different areas and expressions of knowledge in both theoretical and professional terms, national and international contexts are developed and tested. Conventional essay formats used on modules assess students understanding of the socio-cultural contexts and implications of media studies, as well as assessing students' understanding and evaluation of debates and methodological approaches current within the academic study of media. The successful completion of the Dissertation is required for the award of MSc and demands sustained engagement, advanced knowledge and higher order cognitive skills.

Marking criteria for written work emphasises the importance of lucidity, well-researched arguments underpinned by evidence, and independent, evaluative thought. Marking criteria for practical components emphasise the importance of innovative, creative, industry standard solutions to tasks. The modes of assessment demand require excellent time and self-management skills.

25. Programme Structure, progression and award requirements

Programme structures and features: levels, assessment blocks, credit and progression and award requirements

- **Compulsory block:** one which all students registered for the award are required to take as part of their programme of study. These will be listed in the left hand column;
- **Optional block:** one which students choose from an 'option range'. These will be listed in the right hand column;
- A **core assessment** is an assessment identified within an assessment block or modular block (either compulsory or optional) which must be passed (at grade C- or better) in order to be eligible to progress and to be eligible for the final award. All core assessments must be specified on the programme specification next to the appropriate assessment or modular block:

Where students are expected to pass the block at C- or better, but not necessarily all elements, then the block itself is core.

e.g. AB5500 Project (40)
Core: Block

Where only some elements of assessments are required to be passed at C- or better, these will be identified by listing each element that is core

e.g. ABXXX1 Title (XX credits)
Core: 1 & 4

Where students are expected to pass all assessments in a block then this will be identified. By setting the assessment this way, students are also required to pass the block by default. This will be identified thus:

e.g. ABXXXX Title (XX credits)
Core: All, Block

- A **non-core assessment** does not have to be passed at grade C- or better, but must D- or better in order to be eligible for the final award.

Masters and FHEQ Level 7	
Compulsory assessment block codes, titles and credit	Optional assessment block codes, titles and credits
Compulsory study block codes, titles and credit volume	Optional Study block codes, titles and credit volume

<p>Compulsory modular block codes, titles and credits</p> <p><u>Term One modules</u></p> <p>CO5601 Media as Power 15 credits (Part-time year one)</p> <p>CO5602 Analysing the Media 15 Credits (Part-time year one)</p> <p>CO5603 Digital Audiences and Identities 15 credits (Part-time year two)</p>	<p>Optional modular block codes, titles and credits</p> <p>Full time – 12 months</p> <p><u>Term One modules</u> (Students take 15 credits) One to choose:</p> <p>CO5604 Media Production as Activism (15 credits) 15 credits (Part-time year two)</p> <p>JR5624 Journalism and Contemporary Politics (15 credits) (Part-time year two)</p>
<p><u>Term Two modules</u></p> <p>CO5605 Social Media and Society 15 Credits (Part-time year one)</p> <p>CO5606 21st Century Media-Bodies 15 Credits (Part-time year one)</p>	<p><u>Term Two modules</u> (Students take 30 credits) Two to choose:</p> <p>CO5607 Digital Media Career Development 15 Credits (Part-time year two)</p> <p>CO5608 Political Satire & Comedy 15 credits (Part-time year two)</p> <p>JR5622 Fake News, Images and Websites 15 Credits (Part-time year two)</p>
<p><u>Term One, Two and Three</u></p> <p>CO5600 Written Dissertation (60 Credits - Core) Part-time year two</p> <p>Part time – 24 months It is advised that part time students take 30 credits of modules per term over 24 months. In the first year they will be required to take Media as Power and Analysing Media in term 1. It is advised that students start their dissertation module in Term 3 of Year 1 and it will be core for year two of PT study.</p>	
<p>Masters and FHEQ Level 7 Progression and Award Requirements</p> <p>As per Senate Regulation 3</p> <p>PGDip may be awarded by substitution of the dissertation for the following modular/assessment blocks in the taught part of the programme:</p> <p>CO5601 Media as Power CO5602 Analysing the Media</p>	

Please note: this specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods can be found in the modular block, assessment and study block outlines and other programme and block information. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University from time to time and whenever a modification occurs.