

Programme Specification for Postgraduate Programme Leading to: MSc Media and Communications (Media Practice)

Applicable for all postgraduate students starting in September 2022

Version No.	Date	Notes – QUALITY ASSURANCE USE ONLY	QA
1	December 2021	First version - codes required	BJR
1.1	March 2022	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 / 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 and Communications (Media Practice) FHEQ7
7. Programme title	MSc Media and Communications (Media Practice)
8. Programme type (single honours/joint)	N/A
9. Normal length of programme (in months) for each mode of study	12 months F/T 24 Months P/T
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 & Communications FHEQ7 Postgraduate Certificate in Media & Communications FHEQ7
15. UCAS Code	N/A
16. HECoS Code	100443 (50%) 100444 (50%)
17. Route Code	84HGPMCOMP

18. Relevant subject benchmark statements and other external and internal reference points used to inform programme design	<p><u>UK Quality Code for Higher Education QAA Subject Benchmark Statement</u> (There are no subject benchmarks at postgraduate level, but we have referred to the QAA undergraduate benchmarks for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies) <u>Brunel 2030</u></p> <p>Brunel Placement Learning Policy, as published under the 'Placements' section of the '<u>Managing Higher Education Provision with Others</u>' page.</p>
19. Admission Requirements	<p>Details of <u>PGT entry requirements</u> are provided on the University's and College website.</p> <p>Levels of English for non-native speakers are outlined on Brunel International's <u>language requirements</u> pages.</p>
20. Other relevant information (e.g. study abroad, additional information on placements)	<p>All students are required to undertake empirical research as part of their dissertation. Many students on this programme are from overseas, and may wish to undertake that empirical work outside the UK.</p>
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.	Link to programme information on the College website

23. EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

The fundamental philosophy underpinning the programme is the development of a sophisticated understanding of the ways that creative media practice can be used to engage critically with contemporary issues in society. Students will develop a detailed and meaningful understanding of a full range of media practices, including audio and video production, journalistic storytelling, and interactive digital media creation. In tandem with learning these creative media production techniques, we aim to instil a critical knowledge of how these skills can be used to forge creative and innovative ways of challenging and correcting imbalances of power in the media industry and society more broadly. Thus, the pathway builds on the foundations of the standard route MSc programme, which foregrounds engagement with key theoretical frameworks of social justice and media activism, enabling students to apply this knowledge via a variety of creative means and develop the modern digital media methods necessary through which to communicate their own ideas more effectively.

We will encourage students who come from a wide range of academic backgrounds and who will bring their own perspectives and creative approaches. The pathway is designed to be inclusive of diverse forms of media practice and responsive to the differing cultural contexts of global media production, forging students into a creative partnership with their lecturers and encouraging them to consider how their own backgrounds can enable them to produce creative alternatives to dominant Western media forms. Our specific goals are as follows:

- To develop a broad range of practical skills that will enable students to interact with contemporary media in a variety of creative and thought-provoking ways.
- To build on the foundations of the core MSc in Media and Communications by enabling students to use creative practice to analyse global media and communication processes, both historically and in contemporary society.
- To equip students with the skills to pursue further advanced academic research, especially via practice-based means.
- To prepare students for employment by providing them with the practical media and communication skills necessary for a career within the media and creative industries, or to use these techniques as a media creator for NGOs, charities and other ethically-informed activist groups.

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 CO5609 Digital Multimedia Dissertation
	K	3. To examine the historical origins, contexts and consequences of global media and communications.				CO5601 Media as Power CO5610 Media and Social Justice
	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 CO5610 Media and Social Justice
	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 & Society
	C	2. To demonstrate competence as a researcher in the field of media and communications.				CO5602 Analysing the Media CO5607 Digital Media Career Development CO5609 Digital Multimedia Dissertation

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

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	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 CO5610 Media and Social Justice 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 CO5610 Media and Social Justice CO5608 Political Satire and Comedy CO5609 Digital Multimedia 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 CO5610 Media and Social Justice CO5607 Digital Media Career Development CO5609 Digital Multimedia 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
	S	5. Use practical production techniques to create a media product which challenges dominant discourses in media and communications				CO5604 Media Production as Activism CO5610 Media and Social Justice CO5609 Digital Multimedia Dissertation
	S	6. To demonstrate self-direction and originality in a written and practice-				CO5609 Digital Multimedia Dissertation

		based independent extended multimedia project which requires engagement with research ethics.				
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Learning/teaching strategies and methods to enable learning outcomes to be achieved, including formative assessments

The pedagogical approach is informed by the core educational aim of developing a sophisticated understanding of the ways that creative media practice can be used to engage critically with contemporary issues in society. In order to achieve this, the learning and teaching strategies align with an ongoing engagement within the Sociology and Communications subject team to decolonise teaching and research, by using media practice to interrogate and intervene in social and cultural debate.

A collaborative creative process will be established via practical workshops and exercises during term one, which will build student initiative and facilitate the development of advanced technical skills. Formative assessments on individual work will be used to provide an ongoing dialogue with students about their creative development in order to prepare them for the modules available in term two, which offer a range of perspectives and approaches, from social media cultures through to media and social justice.

In the third term, students are required to produce a practice-based multimedia dissertation, which will synthesise the critical knowledge and skills development of the first two terms within a media project designed by the student and informed by their own cultural background and experiences. Preparatory lectures and workshops on media ethics, research and practice methods are delivered over terms one and two, and this final major project facilitates a progressive development of the students' practical, interpersonal, research, project management and technical skills.

Across the course's theoretical and practical modules, teaching methods include lectures, practical workshops and exercises, 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 but, as appropriate for advanced study, they are also 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 theory and practice particularly at an international or global level.

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

Practical work is assessed by a range of activities throughout the programme, some individually and some collaborative. Assessed practical exercises and projects require increasingly more complex knowledge of contexts and techniques throughout the programme. In addition, and in keeping with the theory-practice interface focus of the programme, all practical modules assess students' theorisation and critical reflection on their work. The assessment methods used 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. Marking criteria for practical components emphasise the importance of innovative, creative, industry standard solutions to tasks. Practical projects require students to develop and test project management and interpersonal skills, culminating with the successful completion of a practice-based multimedia dissertation, a requirement for the award of MA which demands sustained engagement, advanced knowledge and a synthesis of the practical skills learned on the course.

Systematic knowledge and understanding is acquired and tested by essays, reports, blogs and creative practice, along with a multimedia 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 essays 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. 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 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 the theory 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 digital media. The combination of written and practical work and their different demands 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

N/A

Optional assessment block codes, titles and credits

N/A

Compulsory study block codes, titles and credit volume	Optional Study block codes, titles and credit volume
<p>N/A</p> <p>Compulsory modular block codes, titles and credits</p> <p>All CO compulsory modules are 30 credits unless otherwise indicated. The dissertation is 60 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>N/A</p> <p>Optional modular block codes, titles and credits</p> <p>All optional modules are 15 credits unless otherwise indicated.</p> <p><u>Term One modules</u> One to choose from:</p> <p>CO5604 Media Production as Activism 15 Credits (Part-time year two)</p> <p>JR5616 News, Features and Reviews 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>CO5610 Media & Social Justice 15 Credits (Part-time year one)</p>	<p><u>Term Two modules</u> Two to choose from:</p> <p>CO5607 Digital Media Career Development (New theory/practice module) 15 Credits Part-time year two</p> <p>CO5608 Political Satire & Comedy (New theory module) 15 credits Part-time year two</p> <p>JR5621 Reporting Social Justice (MA International Journalism) 15 Credits Part-time year two</p>
<p><u>Terms One and Two</u></p> <p>CO5609 Digital Multimedia Dissertation 60 Credits (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, although they will be allowed to take more or less as they require. It is advised that student start their dissertation module in Term 3 of Year 1 and it will be core for year two of PT study.</p>	

Masters and FHEQ Level 7 Progression and Award Requirements

As per Senate Regulation 3

PGDip may be awarded by substitution of the dissertation for the following modular/assessment blocks in the taught part of the programme:

CO5601 Media as Power
CO5602 Analysing the Media

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.