

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

<b>Course Record Information</b>	
Name and level of final & intermediate Awards	BA (Hons) Journalism BA (Hons) Public Relations BA (Hons) Radio Production BA (Hons) Television Production Diploma of HE Certificate of HE
Awarding Body	University of Westminster
Location of Delivery	Harrow School of Media Arts and Design
Mode of Study	UG Full Time
UW Course Code	
JACS Code	Media P300; Journalism: P500, PR: P210, Radio Production: P312, Television Production: P311
UCAS Code	Journalism: PP35 Radio Production: P340 Television Production: P311 Public Relations: PP25
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	Honours Benchmark statements for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies: 3. Subject Knowledge & Understanding 4. Subject Skills 5. General Skills
Professional Body Accreditation	
Date of initial course approval/last review	2007
Date of Programme Specification	1990

### A. Admissions Requirements

Standard Entry Requirements: BBB at A Level (or equivalent points for other UK and non-UK qualifications)

Applicants who have achieved or are predicted to achieve this are invited for interview. At interview we look particularly for a critical awareness of the media and the ability think analytically. During the interview process applicants will be given a tour of our facilities, offered the opportunity to question us about the course and will usually be able to meet current students.

Applicants from outside the UK who are unable to attend an interview will be sent a questionnaire. They are usually interviewed by phone.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to achieve at least 6.5 in IELTS, or an equivalent English language standard, before entry to the course. Exception can be made for students who have already undertaken a previous course in an English language school or university.

We particularly welcome applications from mature students.  
For those applicants without the necessary FE qualification we implement the APEL criteria of evidence of work based learning and development of skills in the relevant production area.

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### **Aims of the course**

The BA Media degrees aim to provide you with the opportunity to study the mass media and to gain basic professional expertise in your chosen area of it. We aim to:

- a) develop the student's understanding of the social, political and economic context in which the institutions of mass communication operate;
  - b) provide students with the opportunity to develop, as a preparation for future professional practice, basic intellectual and practical skills in research, analysis, the use of information technology, organisation, planning and team work, writing/producing for different media and for different markets or audiences;
  - c) develop the student's analytical and critical insight into the products and practices of the mass media in order both to understand their social and cultural significance and to gain awareness of your own practice;
  - d) to provide students with knowledge and skills concerning media law, ethics, issues concerning production guidelines and acceptable practice and help students apply these in practical circumstances;
  - e) to provide students with a variety of modes of critical analysis applicable to the products of the media industries and to their own practice, in order that they may become aware of the cultural, social, economic, aesthetic and political significance of media artefacts;
  - f) to provide students with specific insights into the social context of media practices of particular relevance to those who intend to work in the media industries, making them more aware, more responsible and more adaptable in the face of technological and social change, both nationally and internationally;
  - g) enable students to gain professional expertise sufficient to enable them to gain firstly work experience and subsequent employment in either television or radio production, journalism or public relations;
  - h) to give students the opportunity to broaden their education by studying modules from other courses within the university;
  - i) to provide students with some experience of working in a professional context.
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### **C. Employment and Further Study Opportunities**

Graduates with a degree from one of the four Media courses will be in a position to secure employment in a number of sectors, principally media-related. Recent graduates have been employed by a number of notable media companies, including the BBC, Emap, ITV, regional and national newspapers, independent TV and radio companies, PR, marketing and research companies. The majority of graduates gain fixed term or permanent contracts.

The course aims to enhance graduate employability, particularly by focussing students to the more vocational aspect of the media industry, enabling them to use their practice-based skills and gaining footholds in companies with the help of work experience.

The degree also enables students to enrol for further higher degree courses (such as NCTJ/BCJT journalism programmes, or Masters programmes in a variety of subjects). Students have gone on to take Masters courses in international relations, history, and economics as well as media and communication related studies.

In addition each course fosters and maintains links with practitioners, for example there is a panel of industry advisers for Radio Production and the Public Relations course regularly holds events in conjunction with notable organisations, such as the Public Relations Consultants Association.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

## **Knowledge and Understanding**

### **Knowledge and Understanding Analysis**

At Level 4 students will gain a general understanding of the main theoretical approaches to studying the mass media and the institutional and social context within which the mass media operate.

At Level 5 students will learn about how different approaches to studying the media have emerged from a range of disciplines and gain an appreciation of the main chronological stages in media development over the last 120 years.

At Level 6 (taken in both years 2 and 3) students will gain an in-depth understanding of a number of particular areas of media analysis and media research techniques and be able to apply critically them to the analysis of media production, texts and consumption.

### **'Fusion' (i.e. part analysis, part practice)**

At Level 4, students will be provided with the tools, vocabulary and historical perspective required if they are to start engaging critically with print, audio and video texts.

At Level 5, students will explore in more detail the political, social and economic implications of social technologies.

### **Practice**

At level 4, students will gain a general understanding of industry practices and techniques in their chosen field of journalism or public relations or television or radio production.

At level 5, students will begin to learn to apply these techniques in the production of magazines, web sites, public relations campaigns, radio or television programmes.

At level 6, students learn to apply these techniques through the production of magazines, web sites, public relations campaigns, radio programmes or television programmes to basic publishable, broadcast or PR industry standards.

## **Specific Skills**

### **Analysis**

At Level 4 students will learn how to make basic analyses of media production, texts, consumption and policy and the relationship of media to society.

At Level 5 students have a solid grounding in the use of historical evidence in development a theoretical understanding of the media.

At Level 6 (taken in both years 2 and 3) students will learn how to make critical and more sophisticated analyses of media production, texts, consumption and policy and the relationship of media to society.

Also at Level 6 students will undertake a detailed piece of original research and produce a 12,500 word dissertation which presents the results in the context of their methodology and related to current media analysis.

### **'Fusion' (i.e. part analysis, part practice)**

At Level 4, students will learn how to examine critically the development of creative and investigative forms, allowing them to extend the breadth of their thinking regarding their practical discipline.

At Level 5, students will learn how to identify practical aspects of social technologies and interactive applications and integrate analysis with practice.

### **Practice**

At Level 4:

Journalism students will learn the basic techniques of news reporting and writing and feature writing and research, and be given an introduction to multimedia journalism.

Public Relations students will learn the basic techniques of public relations campaigns and public relations practice.

Television Production and Radio Production students will learn a selection of basic production skills in either television or radio: for example basic camerawork, lighting, video editing or radio studio skills, sound recording and editing, radio news writing and packaging.

At Level 5:

Journalism students will cover advanced news and feature writing, learn sub-editing, page design and lay-out. There will also be opportunities to take optional modules in broadcast journalism, advanced multimedia or specialist journalism.

Public Relations students will cover digital public relations.

Television Production students learn how to make documentary programmes, multi-camera production, how to make creative videos and promotional shorts.

Radio Production students will learn to make live radio programmes including talk, music and news, how to make radio documentaries and how to produce websites to accompany programmes and make podcasts.

At Level 6:

Journalism students will study in depth a particular area of journalism – e.g. fashion, business, culture or sports. They will learn how to produce a magazine or website to published standard, and produce a written feature for a commissioning editor

Public Relations students will learn how to devise, plan and implement a public relations campaign to professional standards and how to deal with some of the major issues of controversy in public relations. They will also cover Crisis Communications and PR Ethics and Law

Television Production students will work on two advanced production projects.

Radio Production students will learn to make a live radio programmes including talk, music and news to broadcast standard and to devise, research and produce a radio documentary to broadcast standard.

All students on all four pathways will complete a compulsory work experience placement.

### **Key Transferable skills**

All modules at all levels involve the development of a wide range of transferable skills including group working, learning resources, self evaluation, information management, autonomous action, communication and problem solving.

Group working is particularly stressed in most practice modules, for example in magazine and programme production. Self evaluation is also stressed in the critical report component of practice modules. Learning resource use, information management, communication and problem solving are particularly stressed in analysis modules through essay, report and dissertation writing, seminar discussions and presentations.

Autonomy is stressed in both analysis and practice modules.

In all these transferable skills there is no rigid and formal cut off between levels. We see a smooth progression from their introduction in level 3 to the student's achievement of entry-level professional standards at level 6.

### **Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods**

Teaching and learning on all analysis modules is by lectures (to introduce students to the subject matter), seminar discussion, guided reading and essay writing.

Teaching and learning on practice modules sometimes involves either or both lectures and seminar discussion, workshops and demonstration, tutorials and practical exercises. However the prime mode of practice teaching is by involvement in media practice and critical reflection.

All assessment is continuous. Analysis modules are assessed by essays, research reports and by seminar participation.

Practice modules are assessed by the products of media practice, by observation of individual contribution to group work, by peer assessment in some cases, and by critical reports.

## Course Structure

Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits or 8 modules per year. Each of the four courses has some core modules (of which some are course specific and some are common to all four courses), and some modules which are optional. The grids (preceding the module proformas in the Course Handbook) are a diagrammatic illustration of a student's progression through the course.

### Credit Level 4

Introductory Practice module (30 credits): Core	all courses
Media & Society (30 credits): Core	all courses
Understanding Public Relations (30 credits): Core	Public Relations only
Issues and Challenges in Creation Practice (15 credits)	Core Public Relations only
Story, Sound, Image & Text (30 credits): Core	all courses (except PR)
Practice module (15 credits): Core	all courses
Optional module (15 credits): Optional	all courses

Award of Certificate of Higher Education available

### Credit Level 5

(note students must take at least three level 6 analysis modules over years two and three)

Media Transformations (15 credits): Core	all courses
Network Society & the Media (15 credits): Core	all courses
Two practice modules (15 credits each): Core	all courses
Two practice modules (15 credits each): Optional	all courses
Two level 6 analysis modules (15 credits each):	Optional all courses

Award of Diploma of Higher Education available

### Credit Level 6

PR Ethics & Law (15 credits): Core	Public Relations only
Advanced / final project (45 credits): Core	all courses
Dissertation (45 credits): Core	all courses
Work Experience (0 credit: pass/fail): Core	all courses
One analysis module (15 credits): Optional	all courses
One analysis/practice module (15 credits): Optional	all courses

Award of BA available

Award of BA (Hons) available

NB: The choice of available optional modules may vary year by year.

### **Academic Regulations**

The BA (Hons) Journalism; Public Relations; Television; Radio Production and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called **Essential Westminster 2010/11** which is available at [westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster](http://westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster). The following regulations should be read in conjunction with the *Modular Framework for Undergraduate Courses* and relevant sections of the current *Handbook of Academic Regulations*.

A pass in a module is achieved when the overall mark is greater than or equal to 40%; with at least 30% in the final assessment and any qualifying marks and/or sets achieved as detailed in the module handbook.

### **Condoned Credit at Level 3 and Level 4**

A student may be awarded condoned credit at Levels 3 and 4 only, where he/she has achieved:

- a) an overall module mark of greater than or equal to 30% but less than 40%;
- b) an overall mark of 40% or greater but not reached the required qualifying mark(s) and/or qualifying set(s) as detailed in the module handbook; and
- c) attempted all referred assessment as offered by the Assessment Board.

Where a student, following a referral opportunity, is awarded condoned credit, the recorded module mark will be capped at 39%. Condoned credit will count towards any credit limits for specified awards. Where a student is awarded condoned credit in a module but subsequently achieves an overall pass within a retake module, credit may contribute only once to an award.

### **Progression**

To progress from Level 3 to Level 4 and from Level 4 to Level 5 in full time study, a student must achieve an average of 40% across 120 credits; to progress from Level 5 to Level 6 full-time study, a student must pass at least 165 credits, including 75 credits at Level 5.

To qualify for the award of the BA (Hons) Journalism; Public Relations; Television; Radio Production a student must:

- a) Obtained at least 360 credits including:
  - passed 75 credits at Level Four or higher and achieved at least a condoned credit in each of the remaining modules worth 45 credits at Level 4; and
  - passed a minimum of 120 Credits at Level 5 or higher; and
  - passed a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6 or higher.
- b) attempted modules with a maximum value of 330 credits at Levels 5 and 6
- c) Satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant course Scheme.

The class of the Honours degree awarded is decided by two criteria: the average of the best 105 credits passed at Level 6 being in the range of the class to be awarded, and the average of the next best 105 credits passed at Levels 5 and 6 provided the next best 105 credits passed are no more than one classification below this.

**It is a requirement, in each of the four courses that students must take and obtain a pass mark in the compulsory Work Experience module at Level 6 in order to graduate.**



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**Support for Students**

On arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Campus Administration. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes the Library which, across its four sites, holds printed collections of 356,000 books, 29,000 print and e-journals, over 45,000 electronic databases. Access to all the Library services is via a new new online service.

There are over 3,500 computers spread over the four University campuses available for students use. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students can access course materials and communicate with staff and other students via message boards.

At University level, Services for Students provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The International Education Office provides particular support for international students. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University.

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**Reference Points for the course****Internally**

The course has been designed to take account of the University's mission to provide education for professional life and to meet the requirements of the University Policies on skills development and employability. The course structure meets the requirements of the modular frameworks and the academic regulations of the University. Other reference points:

Harrow Campus Teaching and Learning Policy  
School (CCI) Assessment Strategy  
University Handbook of Academic Regulations  
University Quality Assurance Handbook

**Externally**

Panels of industry advisors

QAA Academic Infrastructure including Subject Benchmark statement(s), the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and sections of the Code of Practice

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/default.asp>

## **Quality Management & Enhancement**

### **Course Management**

For the BA Media degrees, the management structure supporting the course is as follows.

Many aspects of the day-to-day management is devolved to the four separate courses: Journalism, Public Relations, Television Production and Radio. Each of these has its own Course Leader and its own Course Committee.

- Course Leader responsible for day to day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum.
- Director of Undergraduate Media Studies takes responsibility for Quality Assurance and the student experience across the whole Media degrees programme.
- Director of Media Practice co-ordinates media practice teaching, technical resources and other income generating courses.
- Convenor, Media Analysis, who co-ordinates the analysis and fusion modules.
- Head of Department holds academic responsibility for the course and other courses within the Department;

The Department has one away-day per year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of its courses. Staff in the Department undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by their colleagues leading to staff development through course attendance or research activity. Staff in the Department attend events organised by the Campus Academic Standards and the Campus Teaching and Learning Groups around current teaching, learning and assessment issues.

### **Course approval, monitoring and review**

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 1975. The Panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other Universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic Course Review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills taught on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by School to ensure that it is running effectively and that issues that may affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from External Examiners to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Campus Academic Standards Group audits this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council of the University, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

### **Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various

For more information about this course:

Nila Gandhi (Admissions Office): [N.Gandhi@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:N.Gandhi@westminster.ac.uk)

Individual course enquiries:

Radio Production: Matthew Linfoot: [M.J.Linfoot@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:M.J.Linfoot@westminster.ac.uk)

Television: Jane Thorburn: [J.Thorburn@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:J.Thorburn@westminster.ac.uk)

Public Relations: Trish Evans: [evanstr@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:evanstr@westminster.ac.uk) ; Simon Goldsworthy  
S.Goldsworthy@westminster.ac.uk

Journalism: Jim McClellan: [J.Mcclellan@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:J.Mcclellan@westminster.ac.uk)

Please note – This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

