

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Course record information

Name and level of final award:	<b>MA Media Management</b> The Media Management is a Masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Media Management Postgraduate Certificate Media Management
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Westminster School of Media Arts and Design (Harrow)
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	One year (full time). September start. Two years (part time). September start.
<a href="#">QAA subject benchmarking group(s)</a> :	Subject benchmark statements Master's degrees in Business and Management 2007 (QAA 158 02/07)
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	N/A
Date of course validation/review:	July 2010
Date of programme specification approval:	July 2010
Course Leader:	Charles Brown
Course URL:	<a href="http://westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate">westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate</a>
Westminster Course Code:	PMJMC08F (FT) PMJMC08P (PT)
JACS code:	N200 (Management Studies), Media Studies (P300)
UKPASS code:	P035658

## Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here:

<https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply>.

## Aims of the course

The course aims to provide participants with skills, knowledge and tools required in order to pursue a successful career in media management. In doing so it seeks to give students an advanced understanding of the challenges facing the media organisations and enable them to participate fully in the identification and resolution of both strategic and operational challenges. After completing the course students should be able to:

- Identify and analyse strategic and operational opportunities and problems;
- Synthesise viable solutions and shape new initiatives;
- Implement plans, winning their acceptance within the organisation and transforming vision into reality
- Understand and respond to the operational demands of media organisations

More specifically, the course enables students to develop skills and expertise in managing:

- The nature and defining characteristics of the media and content industries;
- The specific strategic and commercial challenges associated with media management;
- The application of management tools and concepts within media organisations;
- The distinct challenges facing different media and content sectors including broadcasting, audiovisual production and distribution, and newspaper and periodical publishing
- The economic, social, political and cultural contexts within which media organisations operate;
- The economic structures of the media and content industries;
- The impact of new technologies upon media organisations, especially digitisation and the convergence of media distribution platforms;
- The economic factors involved in media production, consumption, technology and regulation;
- The role of regulation.
- The globalised nature of modern media;
- The formation and implementation of business strategy within a media context;
- Markets and business models for new and existing media products;
- Key operational functions and disciplines appropriate to the modern media firm.
- Managing creative individuals and creative processes
- Managing new media and interactive media

## Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

Graduates from the MA Media Management have found roles in a wide variety of media organisations including: CCTV, Hunan Television, State Administration of Radio Film and Television (China), the BBC, eBay, Screen Digest (UK) Deutsche Telekom (Germany) NTV (Russia) MBC (South Korea) NDTV, Hindustan Times (India) Welhoo (Finland) and Globo TV (Brazil). Success in their Masters degree has allowed many to move into more senior roles within the business they have been working in and to transfer to new sectors of the media.

## Course skills strategy

The skills strategy for the MA Media Management reflects the University's mission providing higher education "in both national and international contexts for the intellectual, social and professional development of the individual."

The MA Media Management is principally aimed at students who wish to progress their media careers by entering into managerial roles and wanting to acquire the strategic and operational skills necessary for them to function effectively in such a capacity.

The MA Media Management's approach is rooted in the critical analysis of media business and institutions and builds upon the experience and accumulated expertise of the University of Westminster's School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the Communication and Media Research Institution (CAMRI).

Knowledge of and insight into the nature of the media and content industries forms the foundation of Westminster's MA in Media Management. However, it also aims to provide students with theoretical and practical tools and skills derived from the field of business studies.

The MA Media Management course was initially devised bearing in mind the subject specific benchmarks set down by the Association of Business Schools. This revised course curriculum and learning outcomes reflects the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education document, *Subject benchmark statements Master's degrees in Business and Management 2007* (QAA 158 02/07).

Originally, developed in collaboration with Harrow Business School, the course design reflects the requirements of a specialist master's degrees either for career entry or career development (Type 1).

As discussed in our admissions policy suitable candidates will *typically* have a cognate first degree and at least one year's experience within a media organisation, usually in a creative, editorial or junior commercial function. Applications will be considered from recent graduates who can demonstrate the commitment to and ability to benefit from the course

The MA Media Management offers in-depth study in a particular specialist area. While it has a strong theoretical base rooted in both general management and business studies, the process and content of the programme has an emphasis upon practice, based on theory, and, "takes a critical perspective on both current practice and likely future developments (QAA 158 02/07: 2.9)." Although specialist, the programme situates the specialism within the context of the broader field of business and management (QAA 158 02/07: 2.13)."

While the course has a specialist focus it also develops understanding in the key areas highlighted in the guidance for generalist programmes, principally in

- The development and operation of media **markets**
- The expectations and behaviour of **customers**
- The sourcing and management of **finance**, and accounting and information systems
- The management of **people** within organisations (with particular reference to the problems of managing **creative** people)
- The management and organisation of **operational** processes and associated information and workflow systems.
- Understanding the impact of **communication and information technology** upon business models and the effective application of technologies in securing competitive advantage and developing new products and services
- The development of business policies and strategies by media organisations and stakeholders within media markets.

The course also engages, in varying degrees, with all of the 'pervasive issues' highlighted by the QAA including: sustainability, organisations, corporate social responsibility, diversity, business innovation, creativity, enterprise development, knowledge management and risk management.

The course team has sought to ensure that the curriculum and its learning outcomes encompass a range of skill types – sectoral, generalist and career entry.

## Course 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.

The skills strategy for the MA in Media Management reflects the University's policy of "Educating for Professional Life," and is designed to provide a broad range of transferable skills that equip students to develop careers as media managers

## Knowledge and understanding

Students completing the MA Media Management will be able to:

- Describe the overall structure and functions of the media industry from a management perspective;

- Critically assess the component sectors that together make up the media sector, as well as the differences between classic and new media;
- Draw upon and deploy key theoretical concepts and practical tools from the disciplines of management and economics that are relevant to the media industry;
- Be able, using a variety of tools and methodologies, to identify the environmental factors influencing decision making and analyse the contexts within which organisations operate;
- Identify and deploy methods to overcome barriers to strategic repositioning and organisational change;
- Identify and clarify the aims and objectives of media organisations and reflect them in the strategy formation process Identify and clarify the aims and objectives of media organisations and reflect them in the strategy formation process
- Describe the roles played by managers within various types of media and content organisation and demonstrate an awareness of the challenges posed by each industry sector and the success criteria used
- Understand the role of strategy formation inside the media organisation and the constraints and limits within which it takes place
- Critically evaluate and compare key approaches to strategy formation
- Evaluate the broad context within which problems and opportunities emerge within media organisations
- Plan practical digital media production and distribution initiatives
- Identify and reduce problems of inefficiency, excessive cost, low quality or inflexibility to change in media operations
- Plan workflows for converged digital media production and distribution
- Analyse and develop new media formats
- Analyse and manage media business processes
- Analyse and implement new management structures in media organisations
- Use change management methods to identify and manage resistance to strategic change
- Use project management methodologies to plan and implement a practical digital media distribution project
- Gain practical experience of implementing ideas of leadership in media project teams.

### **Specific skills**

Participants will be able to demonstrate a range of cognitive and intellectual skills together with techniques specific to media and management. On successfully completing the course students will be able to:

- Use theoretical concepts and managerial tools to identify problems and opportunities within the organisation and suggest appropriate responses and courses of action;
- Source and analyse quantitative data and be able to use quantitative methods in developing business strategy;
- Prepare and articulate the case for change or for the development of new projects, business initiatives and products;
- Identify the key tasks involved in preparing and writing a business plan;
- Evaluate, at a high level, potential technological, legal, commercial and creative responses to the opportunities and threats posed by new technologies;
- Utilise forecasting and scenario planning techniques in mitigating risk and developing corporate and product strategies;
- Deploy communication and leadership skills in implementing change;
- Analyse and evaluate potential commercial partners and devise strategies for the maintenance of partnerships and joint ventures;
- Formulate realistic implementation plans for media firm strategies;

- Devise processes and metrics for the implementation of change and the measurement of progress against milestones and goals;
- Adopt an integrated approach to operational management, ensuring alignment of operational and strategic concerns;
- Articulate a 'cross-media' view of the operational functions that exist within media firms and the common lessons that can be drawn;
- Planning and managing media creative and business processes
- Developing plans for implementing digital and converged media production and distribution;
- Developing and implementing a practical project for digital media content distribution and marketing.

### **Key transferable skills**

- Strategic analysis
- Leading strategic and operational change
- Analysing quantitative media market data
- Financial planning and management
- Business planning
- Developing and implementing digital marketing strategies
- Managing conflict
- Managing Diversity
- Motivating and rewarding team members
- Project Management
- Business Process Management
- Team and group working
- Leadership
- Negotiation
- Research skills
- Debating
- Consulting
- Application of methods and tools
- Identification and diagnosis of problem essentials
- Action planning
- Decision-making
- Critical analysis
- Creative thinking
- Independent learning
- Report writing
- Oral communication and presentation

Assessment is predominantly based upon coursework and the dissertation. For most modules coursework takes the form of projects or reports. A proportion of the mark for certain modules (10-20%) is based upon the oral presentation of the findings of the larger assignment or the presentation of initial research findings. Some assignments are group projects. A proportion of the marks for such projects are based on contribution an individual has made to the project and are based in part upon peer assessment.

### **Learning, teaching and assessment methods**

Today, the demands placed upon media managers at all levels are greater than ever. New distribution and media creation technologies are beginning to threaten long-established business models, and industry structures are starting to mutate. Media organisations need managers who can capture opportunities and deal with new disruptive threats. Moreover, after

decades of relatively continuous expansion media companies increasingly have to consider whether they are beginning to reach the limits of growth and deal with the problems that arise as finite markets continue to fragment.

The MA Media Management is designed to provide students with the analytical tools and managerial skills media companies require if they are to survive and prosper in this rapidly changing environment.

The twentieth century saw the steady growth and consolidation of the mass communication and content industries. At the start of the twenty first century, they represent a significant portion of international commerce and fulfil a pivotal role, providing crucial inputs and materials for the emerging knowledge economy.

The diversification and multiplication of communication platforms has been echoed by a growth in consumer demand for information and entertainment content. At the same time new demands are emerging, requiring bridges to be built with education and industry. Convergence with technology and telecommunications is also creating new opportunities, with many of the predictions and promises made in the 1990s, now being fulfilled. Technology companies are increasingly seeking partners capable of providing the content that will drive take-up of their hardware. Similarly, telecommunication operators need compelling content and applications to encourage consumers to embrace and use their new services.

For those working in the media industries the scope and scale of the creative commercial opportunities have never been as great. The challenges are also more profound.

Broadcasters, film and television producers and distributors, publishers and record companies have always needed able, entrepreneurial and creative managers to drive their businesses forward. Working within media organisations has required a proficiency in a wide variety of strategic and operational skills.

The MA Media Management takes an integrated approach to problem solving enabling the student to:

- Identify and analyse new market, strategic, technological and operational opportunities and problems;
- Synthesise viable solutions and shape new initiatives;
- Implement plans, winning their acceptance within the organisation and transforming vision into reality;
- Understand and respond to the operational demands of media organisations.

Media organisations have been at the forefront of globalisation and the MA Media Management has been designed to prepare students for the demands they will encounter within international media organisations. Similarly, it also examines the nature and impact of digital technologies, another key factor transforming media businesses.

Westminster's approach seeks to reflect the different ways in which these factors impact organisations and recognises the varying needs and objectives of public and private media entities. The course combines the resources of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication with the knowledge and expertise of Westminster's Communication and Media Research Institute, and its Business Schools

The course's unique perspective combines commercial and strategic insight with an approach that draws upon Westminster's internationally recognised strength as a centre for critical media research.

Based in London, one of the media capitals of the world, the MA Media Management also draws on the expertise of local and international media managers and media consultants and visiting international academics.

The course is aimed principally at candidates currently at an early stage in their media careers who are seeking to move into or progress in media management. Typical candidates may have acquired experience within journalistic or creative functions and are now seeking to move into a managerial or strategic function. It is designed to provide such candidates with the theoretical insight and practical skills required by such roles.

The content of the course will also be suitable for a small number of very good graduates with more limited work experience in media organisations. For example, the course will be suited to strong media, communications and social science graduates who wish to deepen their knowledge of media business and develop practical insights into the challenges facing media organisations. The course seeks to provide a solid foundation for students seeking to enter the media business or secure roles within academic, consulting and media research organisations.

Although the course includes *some* traditional lecture and seminar-based teaching, our aim is to adapt our teaching and learning methods to the needs of the individual student, allowing them to adapt their studies to their own particular career plan and objectives.

The MA Media Management incorporates a variety of different methods, including workshops, research-led study, case studies, workshops, simulations, class exercises and group-based projects.

## **Assessment**

During this course your work will be assessed in a number of different ways including: essays and reports, class presentations, case studies, and individual and group exercises. Below we outline the requirements concerning each of these forms of study. However, these range from traditional assignment formats such as essays and theses, to management reports, business presentations, designs, plans, process maps and a range of other business-oriented outputs.



## Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

Credit Level 7				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
7MECM001W	Dissertation	Core	60	30
7MECM002W	Media Management: Strategy, Context and Tools	Core	20	10
7MECM003W	Media Markets	Core	20	10
7MECM004W	Media Operations and Organisation	Core	20	10
2MECM005W	Responding to a Changing Media Environment	Core	20	10
2MECM006W	Strategy Implementation in the Media Firm	Core	20	10
2MECM007W	The International Media Firm in Transition	Core	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

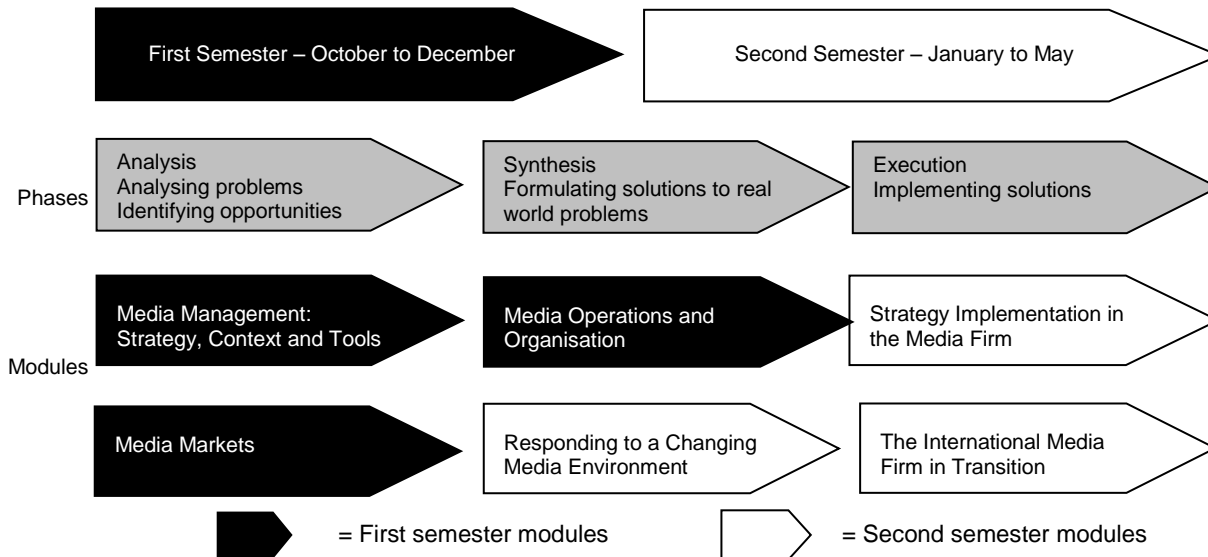
The course and its constituent modules will provide a structured approach to understanding and responding the challenges in the international media and content industries.

This course focuses on imparting both knowledge and skills. It employs a phased approach (illustrated below), each phase building upon the last, providing the tools necessary for genuine insight and the formulation of strategic and operational solutions within media organisations.

The full-time course will be taught in two semesters, the first running from September to December, the second from January to May, each consisting of three modules. In addition, students will attend seminars and tutorials supporting their preparation for the final project or dissertation.

- **Media Management: Strategy, Context and Tools** provides an overview of the course and the strategic and operational disciplines working within modern media organisations. The module addresses the contextual nature of strategy formation and analyses key drivers of change within media markets. As part of the process of examining such environmental factors the module also familiarises the student with key conceptual tools that will be deployed throughout the course.
- **Media Markets** introduces the student to the economic processes and structures that provide the context for decision-making and strategy formation. It develops their skills in the analysis of quantitative data concerning media market structures and trends. Students have access to a range of media specific databases to locate and analyse quantitative data. The module also addresses changing nature of revenue creation in the within media and content industries and the economic structure of a variety of media sectors including advertising, newspapers and periodicals, broadcast and cable, interactive media, and packaged content distribution.
- **Media Operations and Organisation** focuses upon the organisational and operational management techniques employed by media businesses. The module focuses on the changes to managing media as digitisation and convergence become more widespread.

- **The International Media Firm in Transition** explores the changing functions and practices of international media organisations and focuses upon a number of themes and trends manifesting themselves on an international level. The module will look at the ways in which media companies large and small – are responding to the challenges posed by new technology, new approaches to media regulation, and media concentration.



*Full-time course structure diagram illustrating thematic flow*

- **Responding to a Changing Media Environment** is designed to provide students with a toolkit of techniques and methods that enable them to refine concepts, formulate solutions to business problems, innovate and develop new products and services. Issues covered in the module include finance, securing investment, refining the business model, strategic design, content strategy and business planning.
- **Strategy Implementation in the Media Firm** deals with the transformation of strategic recommendations and planned solutions into saleable products, functioning services and organisational practices. The module teaches managerial techniques – such as project management, leadership and team working – oriented towards the articulation of corporate aims and their translation into programmes for change. It also addresses internal and external factors – institutional, commercial, and cultural – that can act as a break on organisational change and development.

In addition to the core taught modules students will also attend a weekly seminar programmes designed to prepare them for the researching and writing of their 15,000-word dissertation. The content of these seminars will include discussion of key thematic issues impacting upon students' dissertation concerns, workshop sessions and practical exercises dealing with research and analytic methods, and discussion of issues relating to the research and preparation of interviews.

Applicants join the course bringing with them a wide range of professional experience. While some students will have spent many years' working as journalists, producers, or junior executives others will have had more limited workplace experience. Course content and materials are designed to reflect this range of experience. Moreover, the MA in Media Management is designed to encourage knowledge transfer between students as well as between academic staff and the student body. The academic staff will also seek to quickly

identify gaps in knowledge highlighted in diagnostic essays, seminars and workshops and remedy any shortfall through directed study.

**Full-time** time students will take the course in one year.

Full-time students will start in September and take three core taught modules in their first semester (from September to January):

- **Media Management: Strategy, Context and Tools**
- **Media Markets**
- **Media Operations and Organisation**

and three more core taught modules in their second semester (January to May):

- **Responding to a Changing Media Environment**
- **Strategy Implementation in the Media Firm**
- **The International Media Firm in Transition**

They will attend Dissertation workshops and tutorials over both semesters to train them in research methods and help them choose a dissertation topic. They will choose a dissertation topic, be allocated a supervisor, research their topic and submit their dissertation at the end of August.

**Part-time** students will take the course in two years:

They will also start in September. In their first year they will take two core taught modules in the first semester:

- **Media Management: Strategy, Context and Tools**
- **Media Operations and Organisation**

and two more core taught modules in their second semester:

- **Strategy Implementation in the Media Firm**
- **International Media Firm in Transition**

In their second year they will take one core taught module in the first semester:

- **Media Markets**

and one more taught module in the second semester:

- **Responding to a Changing Media Environment**

In their second year part-time students will also attend Dissertation workshops and seminars in the first semester to train them in research methods and help them choose a dissertation topic. They will choose a dissertation topic, be allocated a supervisor, research their topic and submit their dissertation in August.

Intensive block mode provides an alternative model for the delivery of a two-year part-time course and is aimed at students who would find it difficult to secure day-release for studies. It is designed to be delivered in a number of extended weekend sessions (one a month during semester time) plus a two-week school offered at the end of the course. Intensive block mode provides the same amount of contact time and requires students to engage in the same

amount of self-directed study as the full and part-time study modes. The timing of assignments is the same as in the full-time and part-time modules.

Each module will include 36 hours of teaching and classroom contact with the exception of the module, 7MECM7005W, which occasionally offers additional afternoon sessions. Two modules are taught in parallel at any one time. Teaching in each module will be spread across three extended weekend sessions.

The typical extended weekend session in Year One would typically be three days (Friday to Sunday) although some may be longer. Each day will comprise 8 contact hours. Calendar changes, assessment timetabling and other logistical factors will mean some variation in the precise configuration of the teaching timetable.

Weekend sessions in Year Two will be 1.5 days in length. Students studying in intensive block mode will be expected to undertake at least 8 hours of self-directed study each week.

An illustrative calendar for part-time intensive block mode teaching can be seen in below.

### Year One

	Semester One				Semester Two			
	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
Induction	8 hours							
Media Management		12 hours	12 hours *	12 hours	8 hours *			
Media Markets					12 hours	12 hours	12 hours	*
Media Operations		12 hours	12 hours	12 hours *				
International Media Firm in Transition					12 hours	12 hours *	12 hours	*
Total monthly hours	8 hours (1 day)	24 hours (3 days)	24 hours (3 days)	24 hours (3 days)	32 hours (4 days)	24 hours (3 days)	24 hours (3 days)	

\* = Assignment delivery

### Year Two

	Semester Three			Semester Four			
	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
Strategy Implementation in the Media Firm	12 hours	12 hours *	12 hours	*			
Responding to a Changing Media Environment				9 hours	9 hours *	9 hours	36 hours (school) *
Dissertation (research methods and tutorials)				2 hours	2 hours	2 hours	4 hours (school)
Industry sessions							10 hours
Total monthly hours	12 hours (1.5 days)	12 hours (1.5 days)	12 hours (1.5 days)	11 hours (1.4 days)	11 hours (1.4 days)	11 hours (1.4 days)	50 hours

\* = Assignment delivery

The taught part of the course culminates in a two-week school, which will include sessions with visiting speakers, business planning sessions and other group work. The course will take place in April during the Spring break (although alternative dates in the calendar may be chosen). The school will also include the presentation of business plans to a panel of industry experts.

The schedules indicate the timings of assignments, which mirror those on the full-time and conventional part-time courses.

The last semester (Semester Four) will include research methods classes and tutorials with dissertation supervisors. During the course of the fourth semester students will choose a dissertation topic, be allocated a supervisor, research their topic and submit their dissertation four months later. The dissertation will be delivered at the end of August.

### **Professional Body Accreditation and other External References**

Westminster is a member of the Skillset Academy Network

### **Academic regulations**

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations)

### **How will you be supported in your studies?**

#### **Course Management**

The course is taught by the University of Westminster. The host school for the course is Media, Arts and Design:

- **Kerstin Mey, Dean of the School**, holds overall responsibility for the course, and for all courses run by the School of Media, Arts and Design.
- **Jonathan Stockdale**, is the Associate Dean for Postgraduate Studies.

The host cluster is the Media and Society within the School of Media, Arts and Design:

- **Charles Brown, Cluster Leader** holds overall academic responsibilities for all courses run by the Centre for Creative Industries Management.

The course team comprises:

In his capacity as course leader, **Charles Brown** ([brownch@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:brownch@westminster.ac.uk)), is also responsible for day to day and general management of the course in all its delivery modes and:

- Approving student study programmes
- Organisation of tutorial, supervisory support and pastoral care
- Co-ordination of marks for assessment boards
- Leading the Media Management and Responding to a Changing Media Environment modules and contributing to International Media Firm in Transition,

**Module leaders** oversee the delivery of all aspects of the module(s) they are responsible for. They consult students on matters relevant to their module. Module leaders are as follows;

- **Dr. Alessandro D'Arma** (darmaa@westminster.ac.uk) responsible for leading the Media Markets module and contributing to the module, Media Management.
- **Jack Soper** ([jack.soper@gmail.com](mailto:jack.soper@gmail.com)) leads the module, Media Operations.
- **Barry Flynn** (b.flynn@westminster.ac.uk) responsible for leading International Media Firm in Transition and contributes to Media Markets
- **Peter Block** (p.block@westminster.ac.uk) responsible for leading Strategy Implementation in the Media Firm.
- **Doug Specht** ([D.Specht@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:D.Specht@westminster.ac.uk)) is leader of the dissertation module with Ale
- **Dr Paul Dwyer** (dwyerp@westminster.ac.uk) contributes to the module Media Operations and Organisation. Paul is also the course leader for the MA International Media Business.

In addition, a number of visiting lecturers contribute to modules, providing industry expertise and insight. These have included: Rishi Dastidar (Archibald Ingall Stretton), Hugh Geach (BSkyB), Eric Guillaume (BBC.com), Ian Parkinson (former managing editor, Radio One), James Roberts (Media Consultant), John Sanderson (JFWS Ltd.), Michael Starks (BBC) John Thater (Thater Media) Peter Wesley (former head of marketing, Telewest).

It should be noted that module leadership responsibilities may be subject to change.

## Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Faculty Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students

## Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students<sup>1</sup> can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and

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<sup>1</sup> Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

## **Support Services**

The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

## **How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?**

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2010. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

## **How do we act on student feedback?**

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.
- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

- The University also has an annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.

**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.

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