

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	BA (Hons) Digital Media and Communication The BA (Hons) Digital Media and Communication is a BA (Hons) degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA first cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	BA Digital Media and Communication Diploma of Higher Education Digital Media and Communication Certificate of Higher Education Digital Media and Communication
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:	Three years full time, September start
<u>QAA subject benchmarking group(s):</u>	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	N/A
Date of course validation/review:	February 2015
Date of programme specification approval:	July 2015
Valid for cohorts	2017-18
Course Leader	Dr Heidrun Herzogenrath-Amelung
Westminster course code	BAJMC01F (FT)
JACS code	P300 (Media Studies)
UCAS code and URL:	PP39, westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all undergraduate 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: westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply

Aims of the course

The BA (Hons) Digital Media and Communication (DMC) is a communication degree for the twenty-first century. It is not tied to a particular media industry, but instead recognises the ongoing practical and conceptual convergence between technologies, industries, and modes of communication. DMC graduates will be skilled researchers, critical thinkers and creative communicators. They will understand the production, distribution and uses of networked digital media, and will have informed critical perspectives on the social and cultural significance of mediated communication. DMC graduates will have developed high-level skills through a rigorous programme of academic study, through producing websites to a professional standard, and through devising and conducting an original research project. Many DMC graduates will no doubt aim for careers in the creative industries, but the programme will also enable them to work across a broader range of sectors and professions, through its strong emphasis on the key transferable skills that have always been central to an education in the humanities or social sciences — skills in research and analysis, critical thinking, and communication.

The degree comprises three linked strands of modules, each of which is delivered across levels 4, 5 and 6.

The **academic strand** (180 credits) develops learners' understanding of the social and cultural uses of mediated communication. All core modules in this strand are led by research-active staff from Westminster's world-leading Communication and Media Research Institute (CAMRI); their own original research informs their teaching, ensuring that learners are taught by people at the forefront of the field. Core modules explore: the relationships between media and society; internet cultures and social media; the most important ways in which media and communication have been theorised and understood; and communication in its global contexts, with perspectives from around the world, drawing on CAMRI's international expertise. Option modules explore: creativity; the information society; cultural industries and media markets; media policy and regulation; and media audiences/users. In addition, there is also scope for learners to complement their programme of core and option modules with up to one elective module from across the faculty or the university at each level of the degree to combine breadth and depth of learning (up to 60 credits total).

The **research and communication strand** (80 credits) develops learners' abilities in research and analysis, critical thinking, and clear communication. As with the academic strand, all core modules are led by research-active members of CAMRI. This strand includes both a traditional dissertation and a professional experience placement in the final year; the alignment of these two within the same strand emphasises the importance of academic skills for professional practice. At level 4, research and communication skills are a key feature of core modules: learners will develop as writers, and learn to retrieve and evaluate information from a range of sources. They will become familiar with major resources including key databases and peer-reviewed journals, and will learn core conventions of academic culture such as referencing and

bibliographies. They will learn effective presentation and discussion skills. At levels 5 and 6, learners will explore fundamental methods of primary research in the media environment, and will be introduced to basic quantitative and qualitative methods, while developing an understanding of research ethics and of different approaches to research epistemology. The double-weighted dissertation at level 6 draws together the key learning outcomes from this strand and from the academic strand in a capstone project: learners will devise, conduct and communicate an original independent research project, under the individual supervision of a researcher from CAMRI.

The **media production strand** (100 credits) develops learners' skills in web production and design, including producing to a professional standard for mobile platforms and devices. All modules in this strand are led by active practitioners. Web production and design assignments are linked and integrated with key concepts from core modules in the academic strand. At Level 4, learners will acquire skills in hand-coding websites, using current industry-standard tools (e.g. HTML5, CSS, jQuery, Photoshop, content management systems). They will develop skills in analysing and critiquing web design principles in practice. At levels 5 and 6 learners will create more sophisticated digital artefacts with enhanced interactivity and functionality for users, and will use concepts of narrative and story-telling in their projects, while also learning to optimise their work for tablet and mobile devices. The capstone for this strand is the Digital Media Production Project at level 6, for which learners will consult and collaborate with a non-profit organisation to develop that organisation's online presence.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement, and the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall **knowledge and understanding** you will gain from your course (KU).
- **Graduate attributes** are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA).
- **Professional and personal practice learning outcomes** are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP).
- **Key transferable skills** that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (KTS).

Course learning outcomes are delivered across all modules, not just core modules. Note that individual modules have their own learning outcomes, which are detailed in their module handbooks. The course outcomes for each level are as follows:

Level 4 learning outcomes: Upon completion of level 4 you will be able to:

- L4.1 Demonstrate understanding of a range of approaches to studying media and communication (KU).
- L4.2 Discuss key technological, social and cultural aspects of the internet and networked digital media (KU).
- L4.3 Identify, locate and interpret a broad range of secondary research materials from the field of media and communication (e.g. learners will understand principles of peer-review and academic journals, and will become familiar with the most important of these journals and with key relevant databases) (KU).
- L4.4 Demonstrate introductory web production and design skills: for example, building a simple website with hand-coded current HTML, and optimising images for the web (PPP). L4.5 Use further skills in web production and design, including using HTML and CSS to structure and control presentation (PPP).

- L4.6 Write in a range of genres and registers appropriate to the academic and social media environments, including familiarity with the conventions and requirements of academic writing (GA).
- L4.7 Lead, contribute to, and participate effectively in discussions, both in-class and online (KTS).
- L4.8 Manage independent study time and take responsibility for learning, with guidance (KTS).

Level 5 learning outcomes: Upon completion of level 5 you will be able to:

- L5.1 Compare and contrast key concepts from the study of media and communication (KU).
- L5.2 Demonstrate a deeper understanding of the social and cultural dimensions of communication media (KU).
- L5.3 Understand and evaluate a range of methods used to conduct primary research in media and communication (KU).
- L5.4 Critically evaluate web design principles and practices (PPP).
- L5.5 Create more sophisticated websites with enhanced interactivity through introductory scripting tools such as jQuery (PPP).
- L5.6 Cultivate and demonstrate an entrepreneurial approach to web production and design (GA).
- L5.7 Develop and use strong discussion and collaboration skills, both in-class and online (GA).
- L5.8 Consolidate and extend writing skills across a range of genres (e.g. reports, essays, research proposals, and writing for the web) (KTS).
- L5.9 Manage independent study time and take responsibility for learning, with some guidance (KTS).

Level 6 learning outcomes: Upon completion of level 6 you will be able to:

- L6.1 Devise, develop and conduct an original independent research project using appropriate methods of primary research (KU).
- L6.2 Explore and critically evaluate a range of specialist perspectives on aspects of media and communication (KU).
- L6.3 Design and create an independent digital media production project to a professional standard (PPP).
- L6.4 Demonstrate awareness of graduate opportunities for employment and/or further study and of how to present and market the skills and experience gained through this course (PPP).
- L6.5 Develop leadership, project management, organisational and entrepreneurial skills through managing time, resources and other stakeholders effectively to complete a project with an external organisation (GA).
- L6.6 Use discussion and collaboration skills of a professional standard, both in-class and online (GA).
- L6.7 Demonstrate advanced skills in critical thinking through making, appraising, evaluating and defending arguments (KTS).
- L6.8 Use and extend writing skills of a professional standard across a range of genres (e.g. research reports, essays, reviews, writing for the web) (KTS).
- L6.9 Manage independent study time and take responsibility for learning, and reflect critically on this process (KTS).

How will you learn?

The learning and teaching methods on the course are directly related to the learning outcomes identified above. DMC learners are taught by a team of leading professors, which both reflects and ensures the programme's strong academic ethos — all core modules in the academic strand at Level 4 are led by full professors from CAMRI, as are the dissertation at Level 6 and the majority of the option modules at Levels 5 and 6 (Professors Barnett, Fuchs, Gauntlett, Meikle, Steemers, Thussu).

At all levels teaching includes a range of delivery modes, from lectures and seminars on the one hand, to practical workshop sessions, demonstrations and hands-on exercises on the other. From their first semester, Digital Media and Communication learners will write with and for each other online, and will engage with their teachers and fellow learners in collaborative online environments. They will learn to create websites that address and explore concepts from the course, and to research, analyse and communicate ideas in a range of ways appropriate to a broad spectrum of career paths.

In-class contact time represents only a proportion of study for each module, and is part of a wider process of preparatory and follow-up reading and critical reflection by learners. The out-of-class independent study time is self-managed by learners, with guidance from academic staff, so offering scope for creative experimentation, exploration and the emergence of the autonomy required in professional life.

Different modules engage students with different ways of learning, to help support a variety of learning styles and personal development. While the majority of teaching is conducted face-to-face, we also support our modules with online material through the University's Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment. This material may include practical examples, technical support, key references, discussion groups and lecture notes. In addition, DMC modules make extensive use of a range of social media and other online platforms.

How will you be assessed?

All assessment is of coursework; there are no exams. Learners produce a varied range of artefacts for assessment, including essays, websites, research reports, seminar presentations, social media contributions such as blog posts, and group and individual creative projects.

Each module will include a piece of formative assessment. You will receive feedback on this, but the assessment will not count towards your overall marks for the module. Rather, the purpose is to help you learn and prepare for those assignments whose marks do count. Formative assessment is assessment for learning. Each module will also include between one and three pieces of summative assessment. You will receive feedback on this and the assessment will count towards your overall marks for the module. This is assessment of learning. Some modules include synoptic assessment. This means that one assignment task may be part of two modules that you take at the same level, and that this assignment assesses your learning on both those modules.

Employment and further study opportunities

A University of Westminster graduate will be able to demonstrate the following five Graduate Attributes:

- Critical and creative thinker
- Literate and effective communicator
- Entrepreneurial

- Global in outlook and engaged in communities
- Social, ethically and environmentally aware

DMC graduates will be able to pursue careers across a wide range of sectors and professions, because of the degree's key focus on those transferable skills that have always been central to an education in the humanities or social sciences. These are skills in research and analysis, in critical thinking, and in communication; DMC graduates will have developed these to advanced levels, along with their knowledge and understanding of networked digital media and their social and cultural contexts, and their high-level skills in practical web design and production. They will be creative, adaptable, thoughtful, and resourceful, and will be able to work both independently and collaboratively in positions that require abilities in finding, analysing and communicating information and ideas.

DMC, like all University of Westminster courses, capitalises on the benefits that London as a global city and as a major creative, intellectual and technology hub has to offer for the learning environment and experience of its students. Key modules will include field trips and excursions to cultural institutions and media organisations (e.g. to relevant art exhibitions or to the offices of relevant firms and/or institutions).

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.

All learners on the BA Digital Media and Communication complete a Professional Experience module in their final year, and are encouraged to pursue work experience from Level 5 onwards; the university careers office is the main hub for this, and all learners should take advantage of what the careers service can offer from the start of their degrees (e.g. vacancies, internships, placements, CV advice, practice interviews and many other services). The degree also enables graduates to enroll for further higher degree courses — such as a Masters degree — either at Westminster or beyond.

Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Credit Level 4				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
4MEST009W	Internet Cultures	Core	20	10
4MEST010W	Introduction to Web Production and Design	Core	20	10

4MEST016W	Media and Society	Core	20	10
4MEST015W	Media and Globalization	Core	20	10
4MEST012W	Intermediate Web Production and Design	Core	20	10
Various	Cluster Option (see below for details)	Option	20	10
Various	<u>Faculty Elective</u>	Option	20	10
Various	<u>University Elective</u>	Option	20	10
Award of Certificate of Higher Education available				
Credit Level 5				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
5MEST007W	Theories of Media and Communication	Core	20	10
5MEST008W	Advanced Web Production and Design	Core	20	10
5MEST015W	Researching Media and Communication	Core	20	10
5MEST009W	Design for Mobile Platforms	Core	20	10
5MEST010W	Creativity	Option	20	10
5MEST011W	Cultural Industries and Media Markets	Option	20	10
5MEST012W	Information Society	Option	20	10
Various	Cluster Option (see below for details)	Option	20	10
Various	<u>Faculty Elective</u>	Option	20	10
Various	<u>University Elective</u>	Option	20	10
Award of Diploma of Higher Education available				
Credit Level 6				
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS
6MEST006W	Dissertation	Core	40	20
6MEST007W	Digital Media Production Project	Core	20	10
6MEST008W	Professional Experience (DMC)	Core	20	10
6MEST009W	Contemporary Issues in Media Policy	Option	20	10
6MEST010W	Transforming Audiences	Option	20	10
Various	Cluster Option (see below for details)	Option	20	10
Various	<u>Faculty Elective</u>	Option	20	10
Various	<u>University Elective</u>	Option	20	10
Award BA available				
Award BA Honors available.				

At Level 4, students can choose one option. At Level 5, they can choose two, one of which has to be a Digital Media and Communication option module. At Level 6 students choose two options from either the Digital Media and Communication course or Digital Media cluster

options listed below.

Digital Media cluster options

At Level 4, they will be able to choose from the following cluster options:

- 4JRNL005W Introduction to Consumer and Lifestyle Journalism
- 4JRNL006W Journalism: Stories and Histories
- 4MEST014W Celebrity Culture and the Media (run by the PR and Advertising Course)

At Level 5, students will be able to choose the following Digital Media cluster option:

- 5JRNL006W Multimedia Storytelling and Production (run by the Journalism Course)
- 5JRNL007W Journalism, Politics and the Media (run by the Journalism Course)
- 5PURL001W Advertising and Promotional Culture (run by the PR and Advertising Course)

At level 6, students will be able to choose from the following cluster and Faculty option:

- 6MEST009W Contemporary Issues in Media Policy
- 6MEST010W Transforming Audiences
- 6JRNL003W Specialist Journalism 2 (cross Faculty option)

Faculty and University electives

Students will also be able to choose from a number of elective modules, offered by the Media, Arts and Design Faculty and the university as a whole. A full list of electives can be found on the University's Westminster webpages.

The Media, Arts and Design Faculty electives will aim to encourage collaborations between courses and across clusters. At the moment, these modules are still in development. However, one Faculty elective is currently running and available for Digital Media and Communication students to choose – Creative Encounters, which is offered at Level 5.

The Westminster electives will be available to students across the whole of the University. As with the Media Arts and Design electives, these modules aim to encourage collaboration - this time across faculties. They will directly address the distinctive series of Graduate Attributes that all Westminster degrees aim to encourage and develop (outlined in detail on in this document). They will give students the opportunity to pursue interests beyond their specific degrees and to network with students outside of their home courses and faculties. At the moment, these electives are still in development but they will be available for students to choose at all levels of their degrees.

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

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

Digital Media and Communication is managed by a course leader — a member of academic staff who takes overall responsibility for coordinating the degree. Each student is also allocated a personal tutor, who will meet with them throughout their course to discuss progress and provide guidance. DMC is part of a group of related courses in the Faculty of Media, Arts and Design. The Dean of the Faculty and other senior staff provide support and management, enhancing the specific role of the course leader. A course committee made up of staff and students meets at least once each semester, and all modules are monitored and reviewed regularly. All core modules (and many options and electives) are led by staff who are active researchers and/or professional practitioners: this means that they are engaged in developing knowledge in their respective areas and are able to bring this perspective to their teaching.

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. Students¹ 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 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.

¹ Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

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

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2013. 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 Student Experience Survey which seeks the opinions of students about their course and University experience. Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

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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