UNIVERSITY OF FORWARD THINKING WESTMINSTER⊞

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award	**MA Data, Culture and Society** The MA Data, Culture and Society is a Masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards	Postgraduate Diploma Data, Culture and Society Postgraduate Certificate Data, Culture and Society
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution	
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Harrow Campus and Cavendish Campus
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month	One-year full time, two years part time day/evening. September start.
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	The following benchmarks have been consulted: Characteristics Statement Master's Degree (September 2015) Computing (2011)
Professional statutory or regulatory body	N/A
Date of course validation/review	July 2018
Date of programme specification approval	September 2018
Valid for cohorts	From September 2019-20
Course Leaders	Jacob Johanssen and Philip Twroga
Course URL	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Westminster course code	PMDAT01F (FT) PMDAT01P (PT)
JACS code	100755 Data management 100440 Digital media
UKPASS code	P09FPDAT (UK Pass FT) P09MPDAT (UK Pass PT) D09FPDAT (FT Direct entry) D09MPDAT (PT Direct entry)

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: westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Recognition of Prior Learning

Applicants with prior certificated or experiential learning at the same level of the qualification for which they wish to apply are advised to visit the following page for further information: westminster.ac.uk/recognition-of-prior-certified-learning.

Aims of the course

The *MA Data, Culture and Society* has been designed to provide you with the opportunity to study at postgraduate level:

- The main ways in which social and data scientists have used and analysed the role of data, and how to develop, evaluate and apply research and the use of software to evaluate data-related phenomena.
- An analytical, interdisciplinary approach to data and datafication which takes account of their broader historical, economic, political and social contexts.
- The factors which shape data and digital media policies in modern society.
- The range of cultural responses and the changing character of human subjectivity which have emerged as societies are further shaped by datafication.
- The debates about the nature of modern societies and the roles which data play in politics and everyday life.
- The way data systems work from a practical perspective

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.

Students who complete the *MA Data, Culture and Society* can work in a wide variety of sectors connected to data in different ways: media and creative industries, research and policy, data and knowledge-based companies, data management. Many of the jobs that will be needed in the coming decades have yet to be developed, the nature and scope of transformation that is ongoing will challenge the traditional silo approach to employment and require cross-subject, multi-skilled digital knowledge.

University of Westminster's *MA Data, Culture and Society* acknowledges this need and aims to develop its content with a focus on student perspectives beyond completion of the programme by equipping them with the ability to adapt to the needs of employers and society. This course addresses the current and emerging need in organisations that deal with data to have employees who understand the relationship between data and society, compliance and ethical and legal issues in a number of roles such as: Marketing Insights; Marketing Data Manager; Archivist; Social data analyst; Data analyst; Data specialist; Investigative analyst; Data policy advisor; Customer data analyst.

The skills provided in this course also enable students to be fully prepared to further study opportunities such as MPhil, PhD or other modalities of research that could also lead to future paths within the academic world.

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.

Knowledge and understanding (KU)

By the end of the MA Data, Culture and Society, students will:

- KU1: have a deep and systematic understanding of the role data play in diverse societies;
- KU2: have a comprehensive understanding of the key theories to explain the role of data in various societies;
- KU3: have a comprehensive understanding of the key research methodologies and approaches relevant to the fields of media and communication / data science;
- KU4: have a comprehensive understanding of tools and approaches to data management, data storage, data visualisation
- KU5: have undertaken independent research related to the political, economic, cultural and/or sociological factors which shape the practices and outcomes of processes of data production and use, including users' responses to them.
- KU6: have been introduced to methods and skills which students use for creative purposes of creating, analysing and visualising data.

The core course specific modules address these course learning outcomes as follows:

- Data and Society 1 (KU1, KU2)
- Data and Society 2 (KU3, KU5, KU6)
- Data System Concepts and Fundamentals (KU3, KU4, KU6)
- Major Project (KU1, KU2, KU3, KU4, KU5, KU6)

Specific skills (SS)

On completion of the course, students will have developed the following subject-specific skills:

SS1:   Ability to interpret the role data and datafication play in diverse societies;
SS2:   Ability to analyse, in depth, and critically assess relevant theories;
SS3:   Ability to interpret the context in which data are generated, used and stored, using a variety of approaches, judging the appropriateness of the methodologies used, and recognising alternative approaches;

SS4:   Ability to design and undertake a substantial independent piece of research in the field of media and communication / data studies to address significant areas of conceptual and/or empirical knowledge which will require the extensive use of a variety of information resources. In doing so, they will select and apply appropriate methodological approaches and critically evaluate their effectiveness.

SS5:   Ability to make use of software for the purposes of creating, retrieving, storing and visualising data for creative-analytical purposes

The core course specific modules address these course learning outcomes as follows:

- Data and Society 1 (SS1, SS2)
- Data and Society 2 (SS1, SS3, SS4)
- Data System Concepts and Fundamentals (SS3, SS4, SS5)
- Major Project (SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5)

Key transferable skills (KTS)

Upon completion of the course students will have developed a number of general rather than discipline-specific skills which any practitioner must have if s/he is to be successful. These Key Transferable Skills developed and assessed at postgraduate level are:

KTS1 **Group working**: Students will be able to (a) work effectively within a group both as group leaders and/or group members; (b) clarify tasks and make appropriate use of group members abilities; (c) negotiate and handle conflict with confidence; and (d) participate effectively in the peer review process;

KTS2: **Accessing Learning resources**: Students will be able to locate and use a full range of learning resources to carry out literature reviews and engage in research activity;

KTS3: **Self-evaluation**: Students will be able to reflect on their own and others' performance; participate effectively in the peer review process and analyse and identify ways to improve practice; know how to advance their knowledge and understanding, how to recognise their development needs and develop new skills to a high level;

KTS4: **Management of information:** Students will be able to competently undertake research tasks with minimum guidance; sieve through information clutter to identify relevance, to organise and present information effectively using different media;

KTS5: **Autonomy:** Students will be independent and self-critical learners, who can act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks and who will be able to guide the learning of others;

KTS6: **Communication:** Students will engage confidently in academic and professional communication both orally and in writing with others, reporting on action clearly, autonomously and competently;

KTS7: **Problem solving:** Students' abilities in independent learning and self-evaluation will equip them to regard problems as challenges and adopt the problem-solving approach required for professional life and continuing professional study, including making professional and ethical use of others where appropriate.

All optional modules contribute in some way to the acquisition of these transferable skills. The following shows how the above key transferable skills are mapped to the *core* course modules:

- Data and Society 1 (KTS2, KTS3, KTS4, KTS5, KTS6, KTS7)
- Data and Society 2 (KTS1, KTS2, KTS3, KTS4, KTS5, KTS6, KTS7)
- Data System Concepts and Fundamentals (KTS1, KTS4, KTS5, KTS7)
- Major Project (KTS2, KTS3, KTS4. KTS5, KTS6, KTS7)

Learning, teaching and assessment methods

Teaching and learning on the course is defined to be appropriate to the needs of each module. The course is of an interdisciplinary nature and therefore features a variety of assessment methods. Assessment criteria vary according to the module discipline. The teaching and learning methods on the course include the following:

*Lectures***:** These are designed to give you a general overview of the topic and are usually concise, topical and interactive. If you do not understand a point, or disagree with it, feel free to ask questions or argue your case.

Seminars: These are designed to encourage students to discuss a topic, based on the lecture and their reading. Sometimes individual students will be asked to introduce a specific topic in a seminar.

*Individual Reading***:** A written list of recommended reading for each topic will be given out at the beginning of each module. This reading list represents a basis for exploration of the subject and students are expected to go beyond the reading list and seek out other material.

Computer Lab Use: Students will engage in practical use of software and code using University computers and software through the guidance of an instructor.

*Presentations***:** The intention of asking students to give individual presentations is to give them experience in presenting ideas and arguments concisely, to familiarise them with the preparation and use of visual aids, and to teach them how to interact with an audience. In some modules individual presentations will be formally assessed for clarity of argument, evidence of reading and presentational style.
Even where the individual presentation is not formally assessed, students will normally be given feedback on their performance. Group presentations are designed to give experience of working on a particular topic as a member of a team, so that students learn how to divide up topics, work to a schedule and co-ordinate presentation.

*Workshops***:** These are designed so that students work in a group in class on a particular topic, often using a real scenario or current example. Led by specialist staff, they enable everyone in the group to work intensively, pool ideas and solve problems together.

*Independent Research***:** Student led project work involving interviews and other external contact and research activity, leading to the assessed dissertation.

Assessment:

This course focuses on imparting knowledge and skills. The assessment strategy is designed to facilitate and test this process. Your progress will be assessed by a variety of methods which we have carefully developed in order to equip you with the course skills identified above as well as the transferable critical thinking and problem solving skills that you would expect to learn on any postgraduate course.

The assessment criteria for oral presentations and written assignments are clearly set out in each module handbook. In addition, you will be provided with a full brief for each assessment in the relevant module handbook, and the brief will be discussed in class with an opportunity to ask questions. Throughout the different modules, a variety of assessment methods is used. These range from group research projects, to presentations and written assignments (essays). There is one exam as part of the Data System Concepts and Fundamentals module in this course. In Semester 3, students shall undertake an individual research project (Major Project) which can either be a written dissertation or a creative, practical project accompanied by a written report.

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**
7BDIN008W	Data and Society 1	Core	20	10
7BDIN009W	Data and Society 2	Core	20	10
7BUIS030W	Data System Concepts and Fundamentals	Core	20	10
7BDIN011W	Major Project	Core	60	30
7MEDS010W	Social Media: Creativity, Sharing, Visibility	Option	20	10
7MEDS005W	Political Economy of Communication	Option	20	10
7PIRS025W	The Politics of Global Complexity	Option	20	10
7BUIS031W	AI and Society	Option	20	10
7BUIS009W	Data Visualisation and Dashboarding	Option	20	10
7CLST024W	Digital Cultures	Option	20	10
7MEDS004W	Critical Theory, Social Media and the Internet	Option	20	10
7COMM010W	Policies for Digital Convergence	Option	20	10
7BUIS008W	Data Mining and Machine Learning	Option	20	10
7LLAW032W	Legal Aspects of Electronic Commerce	Option	20	10
	Or another Level 7 Module as agreed with the Module Leader			

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

Full-time students will complete the course in one year, part-time students in two years. Over this one year (full-time students) or two years (part-time students) students will take the equivalent of six (20 credit) taught modules. In addition they will complete a (60 credit) Major Project module based on independent research leading to a dissertation (60 credits) which is submitted at the end of August of the first year (for full-time students) or at the end of August of the second year (for part-time students). Alternatively, students can also produce a practical piece (artefact) which is accompanied by reflective report (60 credits).

The Major Project dissertation / artefact should include primary research on a subject chosen by the student but which is relevant to the MA and is agreed with the supervisor.

In semester one, full time students take three taught modules (of 20 credits each).

Of these, two are compulsory (Data and Society 1; Data System Concepts and Fundamentals). In the second semester students take three 20-credit taught modules. Of these, one is compulsory (Data and Society 2). In addition, students take the compulsory Major Project module in Semester 2 (taught element). On this module, students learn about the major project research process and present their topics in the form of presentations. In Semester 3, they undertake independent study under the guidance of a dissertation supervisor personally assigned to them. The final dissertation / project, to be delivered by the end of August, will be worth 60 credits.

Part-time students will take the compulsory taught module (Data and Society 1) plus another taught module in semester one of the 1st year. In semester two of the 1st year, they will take one compulsory module (Data and Society 2) and one optional module. In their second year of study, part timers will take one optional taught module in each semester. In addition, they have to take the compulsory Data System Concepts and Fundamentals module in Semester 1 and the compulsory Major Project module in Semester 2. In Semester 3, students undertake independent study under the guidance of a dissertation supervisor personally assigned to them from the beginning of the semester. The final dissertation / project, to be delivered by the end of August of your second year, will be worth 60 credits.

Professional Body Accreditation or other external references

N/A

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at
westminster.ac.uk/academicregulations

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

- The Course is taught in the College of Design, Creative and Digital Industries. It is based in the Westminster School of Media and Communication with additional support from the School of Computer Science and Engineering. The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

- Jacob Johanssen, Course Leader responsible for day to day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum. He can be contacted on extension (x68377) or by email: j.johanssen@westminster.ac.uk.

- Philip Trwoga, Deputy Course Leader, responsible for day to day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum. He can be contacted on extension (x5851) or by email: trwogap@westminster.ac.uk.

- Head of School: TBC

- Head of College: Professor Jonathan Stockdale

The Course Leaders will be responsible for:

- Admissions
- Approving students' programme of study
- Organisation of tutorial and supervisory support and pastoral care
- Co-ordination of Dissertation supervision
- Co-ordination of marks for assessment boards

- General management of the course

The **Course Team** reviews and develops the course and sets the framework for the above procedures, in which all members of course team participate. The Course Team of the MA in Data, Culture and Society consists, in addition to the course leaders, of Prof. Christian Fuchs, Prof. David Chandler, Dr. Pieter Verdegem and all other module leaders of modules included in the course.

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.

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 Campus Registry. 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.

Further information on Blackboard can be found at westminster.ac.uk/blackboard.

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. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

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 College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services 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. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at westminster.ac.uk/student-advice.

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at westminster.ac.uk/students-union.

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

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2018. 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 College 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 evidence of student achievement, reports from external examiners in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course.

A Course revalidation 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 Revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years 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 student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.
- There are also School Staff Student Exchange meetings that enable wider discussions across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College 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.

MA Data, Culture and Society

Semester 1

Data and Society 1 (Core) (20 credits)

Data System Concepts and Fundamentals (Core) 20 credits

Plus one 20-credit module

7MEDS010W Social Media: Creativity, Sharing, Visibility

7MEDS005W Political Economy of Communication

7BUIS008W Data Mining and Machine Learning

7PIRS025W The Politics of Global Complexity

7LLAW032W Legal Aspects of Electronic Commerce

Semester 2   Semester 3

Major Project (Core) (60 credits)

Data and Society 2 (Core) (20 credits)

Plus two 20-credit modules

7CLST024W Digital Cultures

Artificial Intelligence and Society

7MEDS004W Critical Theory, Social Media and the Internet

7BUIS009W Data Visualisation and Dashboarding

7COMM010W Policies for Digital Convergence

All modules are Level 7