Programme Specification

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER⌗

Course record information

Name and level of final award	• Master of Arts - Media, Communication and Development The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible
Name and level of intermediate awards	• Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Media, Communication and Development • Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - Media, Communication and Development
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Primary: Harrow Secondary/Tertiary Locations: Marylebone
Language of delivery and assessment	English
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
Professional statutory or regulatory body	N/A
Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length	• MA Media, Communication and Development FT, Full-time, September start - 1 year standard length • MA Media, Communication and Development PT, Part-time day, September start - 2 years standard length
Valid for cohorts	From 2026/7

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 programme

The MA Media, Communication and Development aims to provide students with the opportunity to study at graduate level. The course has been designed to match the University's mission to provide education for professional life and meet the University policies on skills development and employability. The course structure follows the requirements of the modular frameworks and the academic regulations of the University. The aims of the course includes.

- The main ways in which social scientists have analysed the processes of development and the role of the mass media in it, from a variety of critical perspectives.
- The key policies, actions and impact of state and non-state institutions within the area of development.
- The factors that shape mass communication policies in developing countries.
- The theoretical and practice issues in media and development.
- The major debates about media and development.

And to:

- Research and write your own thesis on an area of media and development.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. career/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.

The MA Media, Communication and Development course will enable some of you to build on knowledge, skills and background in working for governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, and a range of international business organisations. Such graduates will return to more senior posts with improved skills, knowledge and qualifications gained from their year with us. At the same time, the course provides skills, knowledge and appropriate preparation for those seeking employment in such fields or, indeed, wanting to prepare for further studies for higher a higher degree, including a PhD. We envisage that after obtaining knowledge and skills from the course, some are more likely to apply for jobs at development organisations that include, Oxfam, Save the Children, Red Cross, ActionAid, DfiD, Intermedia, BBC, Institute of War and Peace, Christian Aid, WACC, OneWorld and War on Want.

Graduates of other Masters' courses offered by our School have found jobs in middle- and upper management in media industries, as well as the broader private (e.g. consulting, development and advertising firms) and public sector (e.g. government ministries, regulatory authorities), international organisations and NGOs. Some graduates also continue and undertake PhD research. Success in the Master's degree will allow many who have been in development or media jobs before joining the course to move into more senior roles within their companies or organisations, and to transfer to new sectors. Former and current students from the Media and Development post graduate programme work in nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and charities including the Royal Society for the Blind, the Red Cross, Global Witness, Africa Fact-Checking, and internationally, in DfiD, BBC Media Action, BBC News Service, political associations and international institutions including the UN.

The skills strategy for the MA Media, Communication and Development 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 or enhance careers in the media and communication fields.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements of what successful students have achieved as a result of learning.

These are threshold statements of achievement 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)

Cognitive Skills, are learning outcomes that help build conceptual understanding that is necessary to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems and comment on research.

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

Level 7 course learning outcomes: upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- 001 Demonstrate a deep and systematic understanding of key theories, policies, and practices in development, and critically evaluate their application in diverse contexts. (KU CS)

- 002 Critically analyse the dynamic relationships between media and development, demonstrating advanced insight into how communication practices shape and are shaped by global development processes. (KU PPP CS)

- 003 Critically apply and evaluate major communication theories to investigate and interpret emerging issues and practices in media and development. (KU CS)

- 004 Demonstrate a comprehensive and critical understanding of key research methodologies and approaches relevant to media and communication, including awareness of alternative methods and the ability to evaluate their ethical implications within diverse research contexts. (KU KTS SS CS)

- 005 Demonstrate the ability to identify, manage, and make effective use of a wide range of information and learning resources, applying advanced research and digital literacy skills to support independent inquiry and informed decision-making . (KU KTS SS CS)

- 006 Work effectively as part of a group, demonstrating advanced collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills in managing complex tasks within media and communication contexts. (PPP KTS SS CS)

- 007 Exercise high-level self-direction and initiative in planning, critiquing, and continuously developing knowledge and skills, demonstrating autonomy, resourcefulness, and resilience. (KU PPP KTS)

- 008 Communicate ideas, arguments, and research findings clearly and persuasively, in both written and oral forms, using appropriate media and technologies. (PPP KTS)

- 009 Students will demonstrate autonomy in learning and critical self-evaluation, approaching complex problems as opportunities for professional and academic growth. They will apply advanced problem-solving strategies appropriate to their discipline, exercising professional and ethical judgment in engaging with and drawing on the expertise of others. (PPP KTS)

- 010 Ability to design and undertake a substantial independent piece of research in the field of media and development. (KU KTS SS CS)

How will you learn?

Teaching methods

Teaching and learning on the course is defined to be appropriate to the needs of each module. The teaching and learning methods on the course include:

Lectures: These are designed to give you a general overview of the topic. 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. Individual students can be asked to introduce a specific topic in a seminar.

Individual Reading: A written list of recommended reading for each topic will be handed 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 other material.

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 work on the topics, work to a schedule and co-ordinate presentation.

Workshops and Classes: These are designed so that students work in a group in class on a particular topic. Led by specialist staff, they enable everyone in the group to work intensively, pool ideas and solve problems together.

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

Assessment methods

This course focuses on imparting knowledge and skills. The assessment strategy is designed to facilitate and test this process. The assessment criteria for oral presentations and written assignments are clearly set out in the course handbook.

Graduate Attribute	Evident in Course Outcomes
Critical and creative thinker	001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010
Literate and effective communicator	004, 006, 008, 010
Entrepreneurial	009
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	001, 002
Socially, ethically and environmentally aware	002, 003, 004, 006, 007, 009, 010

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. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules

Level 7

Full-time students will complete the course in one year. Over this year students will take the equivalent of six (20 credit) taught modules and a (60 credit) Dissertation or Professional Project module. The Dissertation or Professional Project should include primary research on a subject chosen by the student, which is relevant to the MA Media, Communication and Development course and is agreed with the supervisor.

Part-time students will complete the course in two years, covering 60 credits in the first year. In the first year they will take the compulsory taught modules, Understanding Media: Questions, Theory, Practice, and Critical Approaches to Global Development, and Communications Policy and Global Development. In their second year of study, part-timers will take Doing Media Research: Methods, Evidence, Ethics and two option modules. In addition, they have to take the compulsory Dissertation or Professional Project module worth 60 credits.

Module Code	Module Title	Status	PT Year (where applicable)	UK credit	ECTS
7COMM003W	Communication Policy and Global Development	Core	1	20	10
7MEDS011W	Critical Approaches to Global Development	Core	1	20	10
7MEDS027W	Understanding Media: Questions, Theory, Practice	Core	1	20	10
7MEDS019W	Advanced Independent Study (Dissertation or Professional Project)	Core	2	60	30
7MEDS022W	Doing Media Research: Methods, Evidence, Ethics	Core	2	20	10
7COMM007W	Digital Media Business: Strategy and Entrepreneurship	Option	2	20	10
7MEDP001W	Digital Media Production	Option	2	20	10
7MEDS018W	Fundraising for Social Justice	Option	2	20	10
7COMM006W	Media Audiences in the Digital Age	Option	2	20	10
7MEST003W	Media Work Experience	Option	2	20	10
7MEDS015W	Media, Activism and Politics	Option	2	20	10
7MEDS005W	Political Economy of Communication	Option	2	20	10
7MEDS014W	Strategic Campaign Communications	Option	2	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

Professional body accreditation or other external references

N/A

Course management

The MA Media, Communication and Development is taught in the College of Design, Creative and Digital Industries. It is based in the Westminster School of Media and Communication. The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

Head of College: holds overall responsibility for the course and for the other courses run in the College.

Head of School: holds academic responsibility for the course and for other courses run within the School.

The **Course Leader** is responsible for the day to day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum, and for:

- Admissions
- Approving students' programme of study
- Organisation of tutorial and supervisory support and pastoral care
- 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.

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 regulations

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

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

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 and additional support available. You will be provided with a Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or equivalent. 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 utilises 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 https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. In addition to online resources in Blackboard, students can also attend Study Skills workshops and schedule 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 our libraries, each of which holds a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students 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.

Support Services

The University of Westminster's Student and Academic Services department provides a range of advice and guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at https://www.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 https://www.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. University Panels normally include internal peers from

the University, academic(s) from another university, a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored annually by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that any issues that might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence from various sources, including student surveys, student progression and achievement, and reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make necessary changes.

Periodic reviews are also conducted to ensure that the curriculum remains up-to-date and that the skills acquired on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Representative students meet with a panel to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess the course's performance.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University, and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is collected in various ways.

- Through student engagement activities at the course and module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course 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 course representatives.

- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire for each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be improved.

- Final-year undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey, which helps inform the national university league tables. Postgraduate students will be asked to complete the Postgraduate Taught Survey (PTES).