Programme Specification

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

Course record information

Name and level of final award	• Master of Arts - Media and Communication The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible
Name and level of intermediate awards	• Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Media and Communication • Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - Media and Communication
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: Some option modules taught at Regent Street and Little Titchfield Street
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 and Communication FT, Full-time, September start - 1 year standard length • MA Media and Communication 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 in Media and Communication has been designed to provide you with the opportunity to study at graduate level:

- Key theoretical and methodological approaches used by scholars, policy makers and media professionals to understand media, communication and culture.

- Analytical approaches to the structure and performance of the global media industries which takes account of their broader historical, economic, political and social contexts.

- The political, technological, economic and cultural forces that influence how media systems are governed and how media policies are formulated at national and international levels.

- The role of media and communication in shaping public life, social change and human experience.

- Advanced research, analytical and communication skills enabling you to design and conduct an independent thesis project on a chosen area of media and communication.

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.

Graduates of the MA Media and Communication are able to work in a wide range of sectors and professions. The degree will benefit those seeking a competitive edge in a careers market that values high-level skills in communication, research and critical thinking. This degree will be of particular interest to those who plan to work in the creative industries, as well as those already working in this field. The MA Media and Communication will also be of interest to students working in non-profit sectors, including NGOs and advocacy groups. It also provides an excellent preparation for those planning to continue their studies to PhD level. The MA places particular emphasis on those transferable skills that have always been central to an education in the humanities or social sciences: these are core skills in research and analysis, in critical thinking, and in communication; our graduates develop these to advanced levels, along with their knowledge and understanding of networked digital media and their (geo)political, socio-economic, and cultural contexts. Graduates of this degree are informed, critical, adaptable, resourceful and creative. They are able to work both independently and collaboratively in roles that require advanced skills in finding, generating, analysing and communicating ideas and information, such as research, consultancy, administration and management.

Graduates have found jobs in middle and upper management in media industries, as well as the broader private (e.g. consulting and advertising firms) and public sector (e.g. government ministries, regulatory authorities), international organisations and NGOs. Some graduates also continue to do PhD research. Success in their Masters degree has allowed many who have been in media jobs before joining the course to move into more senior roles within their companies or organisations, and to transfer to new sectors of the media.

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 the role that media and communication play in diverse and global societies, including power structures, policy, and cultural contexts. (KU SS CS)

- 002 Critically evaluate, apply, and synthesise key theoretical frameworks and concepts within the interdisciplinary field of media, communication, and cultural studies, engaging with historical and contemporary debates. (KU KTS SS CS)

- 003 Design and undertake a substantial, independent investigation or project, creatively solving complex problems and critically evaluating appropriate methodological approaches and resources. (KU PPP KTS SS CS)

- 004 Show critical awareness of current issues, problems, and research frontiers in media and communication, including the impact of technological, economic, political, environmental and cultural change. (KU PPP SS)

- 005 Critically comprehend and evaluate qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and related ethical issues, making informed and contextually appropriate decisions about their application in complex academic and professional media and communication settings. (KU KTS SS CS)

- 006 Communicate ideas, arguments, and research findings clearly and persuasively to academic, professional, and public audiences, in both written and oral forms, using appropriate media and technologies. (PPP KTS SS)

- 007 Demonstrate advanced skills in finding, evaluating, organising, and managing information, including digital and networked media sources, to support research and practice in media and communication. (PPP SS)

- 008 Work effectively and ethically both independently and collaboratively, fulfilling leadership, group, and peer review roles, and reflecting on and improving personal and collective practice. (PPP KTS)

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

- 010 Demonstrate a critical understanding of how sustainability principles relate to media industries and practices, including the social, cultural, and environmental impacts of media production and consumption (KU PPP 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 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.

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 and Classes: 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 methods

There are no formal exams in this course. Your progress will be assessed by a variety of methods, including forms of authentic assessment, 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.

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

The MA in Media and Communication is taught in two different modes: full-time and part-time. This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study seven modules (totalling 180 credits) per 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) Advanced Independent Study (Dissertation or Professional Project) module based on a taught component and independent research leading to a Dissertation or Professional Project 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).

The dissertation should include primary research on a subject chosen by the student but which is relevant to the MA in Media Communication and is agreed with the supervisor, for instance related to the political, economic, cultural and/or sociological factors which shape the practices and outcomes of media, including media texts and audience reception of them

In semester one, **full time students** take three taught modules (of 20 credits each): *Understanding Media: Questions, Theory, Practice*; *Technology, Power and Media Policy* and *Doing Media Research: Methods, Evidence, Ethics.* In the second semester students take three 20-credit taught modules. Of these one is *compulsory (Global Media Cultures)*. In addition, students take the compulsory Advanced Independent Study (Dissertation or Professional Project) module *over the whole year*. The final Dissertation or Professional Project, to be delivered by the end of August, will be worth 60 credits.

Part-time students will take the compulsory taught modules *Understanding Media: Questions, Theory, Practice* plus *Technology, Power and Media Policy* in semester one of the 1st year. In semester two of the 1st year, they will take one compulsory module (*Global Media Cultures*) and one optional module. In their second year of study, part timers will take *Doing Media Research: Methods, Evidence, Ethics* in semester one and an optional module in semester two. In addition, they have to take the Advanced Independent Study (Dissertation or Professional Project) module *over the whole year*. The final Dissertation or Professional Project, to be delivered by the end of August of their second year, will be worth 60 credits.

For the award of the PG Diploma (120 credits) students must pass the *Understanding Media: Questions, Theory, Practice* and *Technology, Power and Media Policy* modules.

For the award of the PG Certificate (60 credits) students must complete the ***Understanding Media: Questions, Theory, Practice*** module.

Module Code	Module Title	Status	PT Year (where applicable)	UK credit	ECTS
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	Various	20	10
7MEDS023W	Global Media Cultures	Core	Various	20	10
7MEDS026W	Technology, Power, and Media Policy	Core	Various	20	10
7BUIS031W	Artificial Intelligence and Society	Option		20	10
7JRNL029W	Digital Audiences and Influencer Strategy	Option		20	10
7COMM007W	Digital Media Business: Strategy and Entrepreneurship	Option		20	10
7COMM006W	Media Audiences in the Digital Age	Option		20	10
7MECM007W	Media Futures	Option		20	10
7MEDS015W	Media, Activism and Politics	Option		20	10
7INME008W	Podcast Production	Option		20	10
7MEDS005W	Political Economy of Communication	Option		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 and Communication 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).