

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

### Section 1: Basic Data

<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	UWE
<b>Teaching institution</b>	UWE
<b>Delivery Location(s)</b>	Bower Ashton / Pervasive Media Studio
<b>Faculty responsible for programme</b>	School of Creative Arts
<b>Modular Scheme title</b>	MA Media: Practice & Culture
<b>Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body Links (type and dates)</b>	
<b>Highest award title</b>	MA Media: Practice & Culture
<b>Default award title</b>	
<b>Interim award titles</b>	PG Dip. Media: Practice & Culture PG Cert. Media: Practice & Culture
<b>UWE progression route</b>	N/A
<b>Mode(s) of delivery</b>	FT / PT
<b>Codes</b>	
<b>UCAS code</b> N/A	<b>JACS code</b> P310
<b>ISIS code</b> P39012	<b>HESA code</b>
<b>Relevant QAA subject benchmark statements</b>	
<b>On-going/valid—until* (*delete as appropriate/insert end date)</b>	On Going
<b>Valid from (insert date if appropriate)</b>	Sept 2012
<b>Original Validation Date:</b>	
<b>Latest Committee Approval:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Version: 2.2</b>	
<p><i>For coding purposes, a numerical sequence (1, 2, 3 etc.) should be used for successive programme specifications where 2 replaces 1, and where there are no concurrent specifications. A sequential decimal numbering (1.1; 1.2, 2.1; 2.2 etc) should be used where there are different and concurrent programme specifications</i></p>	

## Section 2: Educational aims of the programme

- To provide an intellectually demanding environment within which to examine media culture and practice.
- To foreground a rigorous and critical study of issues, debates and theories that have emerged in response to developments in media technologies including digital photography and cinema, television, computer games, cyberculture, and the internet.
- To equip students to undertake independent and innovative research into media forms in relation to the processes of cultural and media production, distribution, reception and consumption.
- To enable students to implement a considered, systematic methodology with respect to their own practice and critical analysis.
- To demonstrate the usefulness and intellectual relevance of studies and histories of `older` mechanical and electronic media in analysing new media forms and processes.
- To equip students for future careers which require postgraduates with a high level of analytical and communication skills and who are able to pursue complex tasks in an independent, self disciplined and flexible manner.
- To enable students from a range of disciplines and intellectual traditions to develop critical perspectives on media practice and cultural consumption.

## Section 3: Learning outcomes of the programme

*The award route provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas: ...*

### A Knowledge and understanding

Learning outcomes

Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies

#### A Knowledge and understanding of:

1. Convergent media forms
2. Media ecologies
3. Grammars appropriate to specific media forms
4. Theoretical debates in contemporary media environments.
5. Historical contexts for creations and distribution of work.
6. The complex interrelationships between media practice and culture.
7. Cultures of production and cultures of consumption.
8. Reflexively situated interpretations of own practice.

#### Teaching/learning methods and strategies:

Acquisition of all of the relevant LOs listed here is embedded into the series of modules running throughout the programme, specifically:

1. The nature of converged media is addressed as a fundamental principle of media practice and analysis in contemporary culture.
2. Media ecologies; as a means of understanding the media landscape in which students operate, are addressed through lectures, seminars and reading groups. These continue throughout the programme, and additionally draw on resources established through the Faculty's Research Groups.
3. Each of the programme modules addresses the specificity of media forms. Through a series of workshops and seminars, students are asked to consider the relationship between grammar and form when creating or critiquing media objects. This understanding and appreciation of language is addressed in some detail when students consider the preparation of their final project in M:PC-III.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Debates underpinning the contemporary media landscape are embedded in Critical Debates in Cultural Theory – undertaken by those students who identify a critical (over practice-led) bias to their study. This becomes a feature of the interdisciplinary studio structure. Students taking Research Methodologies as their Faculty-wide option module have further opportunity to address this theme in detail.</li> <li>5. The programme is grounded in historical context. This primary focus, early in the MA programme, encourages students to consider the antecedents to contemporary media forms, and to address, through further individual research, their relevance to today's converged and inter-related landscape. This development of individual knowledge as a research interest is encouraged throughout the programme.</li> <li>6. The nature of the programme as interdisciplinary is intended to highlight the tensions and opportunities at work between practice and cultural analysis. Through collaborative seminars, symposia and specific projects, students will be required to explore those tensions and mediate their own understanding of a favoured appreciation.</li> <li>7. The nature of contemporary media as implicated in a complex production/reception relationship is highlighted in the programme modules and considered whenever students undertake project (including writing as a practice) work during the programme. Students are required to engage with issues of audience and responsibility throughout the course and to consider these when undertaking any form of output. Additionally, the mature of the course as partly public-facing (via our engagement with the Pervasive Media Centre and Watershed) embeds this LO as fundamental requirement when planning work of any sort.</li> <li>8. Through participation in an interdisciplinary series of projects, students are encouraged to both self-critique, and also assist each other's progress toward greater understanding of the nature of media practice and cultural criticism.</li> </ol> <p>The degree to which students are exposed to each of the LOs here is determined by their choice of module as 'pathway indicator' (Principles of Practice / Critical Debates in Cultural Theory operate as self-selected route-indicators for students. See section 4 of this document). Both Practice and Theoretically</p>
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	<p>inclined students will be required to participate in the taught programme – their individual outputs will reflect an engagement with the issues raised by the programme, and will be mediated by their responses to those issues. It is anticipated, for example, that student-run symposia will be accompanied by short film and media production-led responses as appropriate.</p> <p>Screening, seminars and examples of work undertaken by the staff team and visiting speakers will support this programme.</p> <p>Our presence at the Pervasive Media Studio is designed to provide additional context for this aspect of the programme. The studio's involvement and support of a variety of academic projects, alongside SME and publicly funded productions, will also allow MA students the opportunity to assess the value of transferrable academic skills (see below).</p> <p><b>Assessment:</b></p> <p>Testing of the knowledge base is mainly through assessed coursework. Projects will be assessed jointly and individually as appropriate at each point during the course. Seminar presentations will be required of all students, with a high degree of outward, peer-assessed engagement with industry and funding bodies as appropriate.</p> <p>Students are required to keep a critical journal throughout their course – this may take a variety of forms, but will be used as a means of remote engagement with the student, and a means of formative assessment between the student and their tutor team.</p>
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## B Intellectual Skills

<p><b>B Intellectual Skills:</b></p> <p>- <i>Students will be expected: ...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To develop critical responses to existing research methodologies and synthesise information at the forefront of the discipline.</li><li>2. To demonstrate a proactive and independent engagement with a range of appropriate texts, analysing complex scenarios and extending their own knowledge base.</li><li>3. Develop the ability to holistically synthesise their own learning experience.</li><li>4. Evaluate and critically reflect on their own creative process, demonstrating a high level of conceptual understanding.</li><li>5. To develop and construct an original argument through appropriate linguistic forms, utilising high level concepts and ideas.</li></ol>	<p><b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Intellectual skills are developed as an integral part of the learning and teaching strategies outlined above. Students are expected to address their learning both as part of an interdisciplinary group, whose members are able to use the interplay of a group dynamic to reach for new understandings and solutions, and also as individuals for whom the choice of their work path will determine to a large extent the nature of the skill set they develop.</li><li>2. Students receive guidance in the use of appropriate critical and analytical skills and language through their engagement in workshops, seminars and tutorials. Their choice of texts will be determined both by the modular structure they follow, and their individual pathway (practice or critical-led) they chose. The dual-tutor system (see below) is designed to further enable this engagement – offering students a second opinion at all stages of the course.</li><li>3. The dual-tutor system designed to operate throughout the programme is intended to provide the student with a counterpoint to the modular tutorial system – a monthly ‘course tutorial’ will enable students to develop intellectual skills not governed by necessarily constrained modular structures.</li><li>4. Student presentations and peer feedback sessions invite critical evaluation of a range of working methods and responses to project aims. The group will be encouraged to support each other’s development of knowledge and intellectual skills throughout the programme. Alternative approaches will be encouraged and tested throughout the programme.</li><li>5. The construction of a sustained, synthesised argument is key to a student’s engagement with the rigour of a postgraduate programme, and this is appraised as a foundation of each module. Students are asked to recognise the importance of their own position with regard to theoretical and practical standpoints, and to develop a mature response to that knowledge.</li></ol>
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	<p><b>Assessment:</b></p> <p>A variety of assessment methods are employed. Student's skills are assessed through the presentation of practical work (including writing) and the student's own critical evaluation of that work (progress, application of strategy, awareness of context and synthesis of knowledge). The relationship between these critical analyses, the student's critical journal and the development of a sustained practice is central to the success of the assessment process. Presentations and symposia test the student's understanding of key concepts, as well as encouraging students to engage in debate as to meaning, relevance and audience.</p>
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## C Subject, Professional and Practical Skills

<b>C Subject/Professional/Practical Skills</b> - <i>Students will be able to: ...</i>	<b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and solve complex problems as they arise, operating in a specialised context.</li> <li>2. Develop an understanding of professional production methodologies, extending and adapting their skills into emergent fields of work.</li> <li>3. Explore experimental approaches, adapting existing skills to meet changing contexts.</li> <li>4. Work effectively in collaborative team environments, sharing good practice to formulate novel solutions to problems.</li> <li>5. Identify strategies to develop and implement original creative work.</li> </ol>	<p>The structure of the programme is fundamental to the development of both academic and professional skills. Our engagement and interface with local and national industry allows our students a perspective on the importance of seeing their skills as transferrable into industry, and vice-versa from work to academic study.</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research methods and contemporary industry are used as twin vehicles by which students approach the conceptual space necessary to develop understanding of media forms. Broader knowledge is introduced and developed through seminars and reading groups, in addition to contact with the Faculty's Research Groups and Centres. A student's richest source of knowledge is usually their peer group, and this inter-resourcing is designed as a key feature of the MA programme.</li> <li>2. The interface with Bristol Media and Watershed will afford students the opportunity to engage with the wider media industry. Additionally, those students opting for Principles of Practice will be exposed to a series of advanced professional workshops.</li> <li>3. At every stage of the programme, students are required to consider the nature of their approach, and to continually question the grammar and forms they are employing. Guest speakers and a presence within the Pervasive Media Studio (and attendance at events promoted and suggested by the programme staff) are designed to encourage students to develop the necessary confidence to make innovative and imaginative use of their medium of choice.</li> <li>4. The interdisciplinary nature of the programme is designed to encourage students to see their work as collaborative, and to exploit the potential of those collaborations with their peer group. Regular contact with SMEs and funded organisations will provoke deeper understanding of the nature of collaborations outside of the postgraduate environment.</li> <li>5. Paramount to a successful engagement with</li> </ol>

	<p>the requirements of this postgraduate programme is for students to recognise the importance of their practice being central to their interests as a professional participant in a contemporary media ecology. Tutorial support, guest speakers and an outward facing student experience are key elements of ensuring those practices are developed in an original manner. The converged, multivocal nature of the MA programme is intended to offset any tendency for students to operate within easy parameters, and instead to be continually tested and asked to think outside of their familiar environments.</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>All modules test a student's ability to operate in a professional and practical manner. Specifically, the submission and consideration of all elements of the course as 'practice' is intended to demonstrate the extent to which students can explore ideas and test them prior to 'production'. The critical path of each project will be considered in light of the student's journey throughout the MA programme.</p>
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## D Transferable Skills and other attributes

<b>D Transferable skills and other attributes</b> <i>- Students will be able to: ...</i>	<b>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate autonomy and self-motivation with regard to professional study, research and working practices.</li> <li>2. Develop an intellectual curiosity in order to sustain working at this level.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate an organised and committed approach to working methods and independent research.</li> <li>4. Develop flexible and adaptable approaches that can be applied to both academic and professional practices.</li> <li>5. Communicate confidently in a range of situations and registers.</li> <li>6. Work effectively with a group as a leader or participant, exercising personal responsibility in decision-making and/or accessing support and direction from appropriate sources.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are expected to manage their time and work independently in the development of their work. Whether individually, or in larger groups, it is a requirement of the course that student groups are self-reliant and generate their own research and peer exchanges. Taught sessions explore the development of work undertaken in these independent stages, and as the programme develops, tutorial support increasingly addresses this aspect of a student's learning.</li> <li>2. The diversity of the student group and their practices requires individuals to consider a wide range of potential pathways to production. In this way, a student's intellectual curiosity is continually tested against the range of media forms the course engages with.</li> <li>3. Students will be required to demonstrate these skills prior to entering the course. Additionally, modules are designed to introduce new working methods, and to allow students to test and appraise their existing practices. Option Modules further develop these skills.</li> <li>4. This is developed through sustained engagement with the programme of study. The core series of modules introduces the skills base required in the whole programme. This is then tested and developed through engagement with a series of projects throughout the course.</li> <li>5. Through the presentation of proposals, working models, prototypes, drafts and produced pieces, including peer viewed symposia and exhibition, it is intended that students become conversant in a range of scenarios by which ideas might be articulated. These skills will be continually appraised and developed throughout the course, and all students will have opportunity to operate at a professional level in this regard.</li> <li>6. The core modules on this programme require students to participate in both small and medium sized group activity. Coherent production methodology, self-organisation</li> </ol>

	<p>and negotiation with group members and tutor teams are foregrounded within these activities.</p> <p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p>All skills are assessed through the evidence of research, development, realisation and evaluation demonstrated in the work presented for assessment. Additionally, specific problems are set through projects (both set and negotiated) which students are required to solve through a combination of taught and independent study. The final project, typically sustained over a longer period of time, makes demands on a student's ability to employ the skills above, and will be assessed accordingly.</p>
<p><b>Section 4: Programme structure</b></p> <p>Successful applicants to this programme are expected to be capable of, and eager for, undertaking a sustained process of independent study and self-reflection alongside a taught, directed series of modules. The programme structure therefore presents challenges to students' existing knowledge, experience and critical positions in order to enable them to operate in an environment of both traditional and emergent media practice and discourse. Both the taught elements of the modules, and the numerous opportunities for peer-to-peer reflection, emphasises the multi-vocal ethos of the programme and equips students with the ability to consider new concepts and approaches to media practice and culture.</p> <p>Following the accreditation of MA/MSc Creative Media Technologies; <i>Experience Design &amp; Evaluation</i> and <i>Participatory Media</i> are offered as optional modules to PT students only, in order to complete course credits prior to undertaking their final production module.</p> <p>Throughout the programme students will have opportunities for self-reflection and personal evaluation of their progress and development as media practitioners/commentators through both formative and summative assessment tutorials. The personal tutor system will provide formal and informal guidance and support sessions, in which the student is expected to play an active role by providing evidence of the developmental stages of their work in their critical journals. Formal summative assessments at the end of each module will provide students with feedback on how successfully they are performing in meeting the assessment criteria applied to the learning outcomes of each stage of the programme.</p>	

## MA Media Practice & Culture

### Fulltime route

#### Teaching Block 1

Critical Debates in Cultural Theory UACAFQ-30-M	(core) 30 Credits
OR	
Principles of Practice UACAFX-30-M	(core) 30 Credits
OR	
Media: Practice and Culture I UACAFY-30-M	(core) 30 Credits
OR	
Experience Design & Evaluation UACAKY-30-M	30 Credits
PG CERTIFICATE <b>60 credits</b>	

#### Teaching Block 2

Media: Practice and Culture II UACAG3-30-M	(core) 30 Credits
OR	
Participatory Media (I & II) UACAL3-15-M & UACAL4-15-M	2 x 15 Credits
OR	
Research Practice UA1AFR-30-M	30 Credits
PG DIPLOMA <b>120 credits</b>	

#### Teaching Block 3

Media: Practice and Culture III UACAG4-60-M	(core) 60 Credits
MASTER <b>180 credits</b>	

## MA Media Practice & Culture

### Part-time route

#### Teaching Block 1

Critical Debates in Cultural Theory UACAFQ-30-M	(core) 30 Credits
OR	
Principles of Practice UACAFX-30-M	(core) 30 Credits

#### Teaching Block 2

Research Practice UA1AFR-30-M	30 Credits
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PG CERTIFICATE **60 credits**

#### Teaching Block 3

Media: Practice and Culture I UACAFY-30-M	(core) 30 Credits
OR	
Experience Design & Evaluation UACAKY-30-M	30 Credits

#### Teaching Block 4

Media: Practice and Culture II UACAG3-30-M	(core) 30 Credits
OR	
Participatory Media (I & II) UACAL3-15-M & UACAL4-15-M	2 x 15 Credits

PG DIPLOMA **120 credits**

#### Teaching Block 5

Media: Practice and Culture III UACAG4-60-M	(core) 60 Credits
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MASTER **180 credits**

## **Section 5: Entry requirements**

Applicants normally have a first or upper second class honours degree in Media, Media Practice, Film, Television, Communication Studies, Arts, Humanities or Social Sciences (applicants from other academic backgrounds will be considered for this MA providing they can demonstrate a required level of critical writing and practical skills). However, if prospective applicants have a good lower second degree, they are advised to consult the Programme Leader before making a formal application. Applicants considered for a place, will be required to attend an interview.

## **Section 6: Assessment Regulations**

### **Approved to University Academic Regulations and Procedures 2008 variant (insert title of variant)**

a) Regulations are wholly in accordance with the University's modular framework.

## **Section 7: Student learning: distinctive features and support**

Students will work collaboratively within a flexible studio space based around common projects run in interdisciplinary teams (comprising students with backgrounds in interactive arts, video production, 'writing', marketing, direction, editing, theoretical research etc). At specific points during the programme, projects will be led by staff, or as live briefs for partner cultural industry organisations, or by external artists-practitioners. In order to facilitate a Blended Learning approach to some modular elements, the studio may for parts of the year exist as a virtual environment grounded by short courses based on intensive face to face engagements.

This interdisciplinary approach is intended to supplement existing interfaces available to students through the programme's presence on an Art & Design campus. Established pedagogic frameworks also exist within the School of Creative Arts to provide significant links with the established School of Animation, Media Practice (BA), and Bristol Institute of Technology.

The programme will act as an apparatus for multiple research strands, teaching interests and student practices to interact. This synthesis – a multivocal pedagogy that insists on an exploratory approach within each stage of the MA – deliberately nurtures emergent practice and theoretical positions.

Students will be required to set up and convene public seminars as part of programme. By addressing writing as a practice in and of itself, we expect to engage with a practical output from all areas of the course – from traditional filmmaking and editing through to experimental media work, critique and research practice.

The programme is designed to support students' individual development by means of allocation of additional tutor resources to guide development throughout the whole course. As supplementary to module tutors, professional development tutelage will provide a consistent framework to support development, and guide student progress through varied modular content and project outputs.

Drawing upon UWE's relationships with the professional environment, the course will interface with, initially, the Watershed Media Centre, Pervasive Media Studio, Bristol Media network and our existing body of contacts at Undergraduate level Media Practice.

By means of its position as a key element of this industry-facing network, the programme will provide a bridge between critical theory, media practice, arts practice and subject specialisms.

The course will also provide students with a conduit to existing research centres and groups within UWE – including the Digital Cultures Research Centre, PLaCE, Play Research Group

and Creative Media Research Group. Access to these through staff teams, individual tutors and the studio environment itself is designed to encourage collaboration at a range of levels of experience and ambition.

## **Section 8 Reference points/benchmarks**

### **1. QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.**

There is no current subject benchmark statement for media at Masters level, however the statements in the generic QAA framework have informed the curriculum and are reflected in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the modules:

Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7: Master's degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the framework is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor can also be used as a reference point for other level 7 qualifications, including postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.

Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
  - the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

## **2. Other reference points and benchmarks**

2.1 The proposal has taken into account the Faculty strategy paper on employability.

2.2 The rationale for the programme in relation to knowledge exchange, industry partnerships and core demographics of perceived market (see statements in rationale in contextual documentation) has been informed by the faculty's internal business advisor, and takes account of Skillset predictions of workforce needs in the media industry sector.

2.3 The programme has a stated core 'ethic' of the idea of media ecologies being understood as systems within other complex systems and making sustainability a core value. This value is represented by reference to the UWE ESD briefing paper.

2.4 The programme has taken into account the proposed SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Level 7 study.

2.5 In recognising that the market for cultural products is radically changing the structure of the media industry and its academic study, the programme is further informed by the DCMS report 'Creative Britain' (Feb 2008)

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in module specifications. These are available on the University Intranet.

Programme monitoring and review may lead to changes to approved programmes. There may be a time lag between approval of such changes/modifications and their incorporation into an authorised programme specification. Enquiries about any recent changes to the programme made since this specification was authorised should be made to the relevant Faculty Academic Registrar.