



Module Specification

Major Research Project

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Part 1: Information

Module title: Major Research Project

Module code: UABB67-30-3

Level: Level 6

For implementation from: 2026-27

UWE credit rating: 30

ECTS credit rating: 15

College: College of Arts, Technology and Environment

School: CATE School of Arts

Partner institutions: None

Field: Cultural Studies

Module type: Module

Pre-requisites: None

Excluded combinations: None

Co-requisites: None

Continuing professional development: No

Professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements: None

Part 2: Description

Overview: This module gives students the opportunity to explore a subject of particular interest in depth and undertake a written or practice-based media communications major research project. It should be regarded as a culmination of the conceptual, theoretical, communicative and/or practical skills which have been developed throughout their study. The module is intended to facilitate the independent production of an 8,000-word dissertation or a platform, campaign or other media artefact that innovatively utilises communications technologies.

The module builds on and represents the consolidation of the first two years of study on the Media Communications programme, and equips students with skills required by employers such as maintaining a sustained focus on a chosen topic; the ability to work proactively; to undertake research to a high degree; and to work independently.

Features: Not applicable

Educational aims: To give students the opportunity to research a topic within Media and Communication Studies that is of special interest to them, either an extended piece of writing or a significant piece of critical practice.

To guide and supervise students to carry out a piece of research and/or practice-based making independently.

To offer support and foundational grounding in the major debates, methodologies, research tools and/or practical skills and critical approaches needed to complete their project.

Outline syllabus: The major research project is designed to offer students choice and independence in determining their own abilities and ambitions within a subject discipline. The project will be self-motivated and theoretically grounded. It will be informed by theoretical research and/or a knowledge of historical and contemporary media communications practices relevant to the project. Students will have the opportunity to identify and examine a research topic that can be further explored and, ultimately, communicated, through a sustained written argument or the production of appropriate media.

An expert supervisory team will guide and support students through a series of orientation exercises in the early stages of the module to follow their research skills and interests in order to make a choice between a sustained written project and a significant piece of critical practice.

The module enables students to become critical, creative and analytical thinkers in ideation and project development with the ability to organise and manage supervised, self-directed projects. The module allows for investigation into areas that

relate to a career in media or the creative industries and for facilitating the development of personal and transferable skills that will enhance students' readiness for graduate employment in their chosen context, and enable them to contribute to society more widely.

Those who choose to undertake a practice-based project will work in a 'community of practitioners', wherein students will engage in peer-learning and collaborative skills relevant to media industry contexts. Students will also support each other's practice-based projects, providing input in the pre-production process and assisting with production as appropriate. Students engaging in practice-based work will produce supporting material for their project that demonstrates their critical and methodological process and their ability to work in a sustained manner on the development of the project.

Part 3: Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods: Practice-based Major Research Projects:

The content and production methods of student projects will be developed in consultation with module staff. Classes will support the initiation, development and realisation of student projects of appropriate scope and substance.

Dissertation-based Major Research Projects:

Scheduled learning: Workshops are designed to develop and focus the chosen research area. The workshops also help students define their research method and complete the dissertation proposal including Research Questions.

Training in the identification and evaluation of library and online research resources and the development of literature searching skills is supported by a library session provided in the taught sessions. These Level 6 skills will build upon skills gained by the student whilst studying at Levels 4 and 5.

Independent learning: Students will receive a series of one-to-one tutorials with an allocated dissertation supervisor whose role it is to guide students through the

process of researching and writing up the dissertation.

All students are expected to conduct additional independent learning where they will engage with essential reading, case study preparation, research, data gathering and analysis and completion.

Module staff will recommend readings to individual students according to the needs of their projects. Students will also be expected to find their own further reading in support of their particular projects. All students will be encouraged to make full use of the print and electronic resources available to them.

Module Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this module students will achieve the following learning outcomes.

MO1 Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the key theories, concepts, debates and literature in the relevant socio-cultural field, and/or a high level of formal and technical control of their specialist medium

MO2 Analyse source material and/or primary data using appropriate methodological techniques and robust research design, and/or methods of production and critical practice research

MO3 Produce unique and challenging work which adds to understanding in the chosen academic field and/or area of critical practice

MO4 Engage in constructive critical evaluation, analysis, and defence of the work in verbal and/or written forms

Hours to be allocated: 300

Contact hours:

Independent study/self-guided study = 228 hours

Face-to-face learning = 72 hours

Reading list: The reading list for this module can be accessed at [readinglists.uwe.ac.uk](https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/8F44A02A-EFCE-9D5C-C787-D44BD05FA82B.html?lang=en-GB) via the following link <https://rl.talis.com/3/uwe/lists/8F44A02A-EFCE-9D5C-C787-D44BD05FA82B.html?lang=en-GB>

Part 4: Assessment

Assessment strategy: Assessments will enable students to undertake an independent theoretical and/or practical research project as a critical and analytical process. Assessments will provide key employability skills and establish professional conduct befitting the creative industries. Continuous feedback will be provided via the dissertation supervision one to one sessions, or for the practice-based project via guided-development by both peers and academic supervisors.

Students can choose EITHER:

1. Practice-based Major Research Project

Individual media production project supported by presentation (display and critique). Students will undertake their innovative practical research project in their chosen area of expertise: photography, online media, video, or via some crossover between these areas. Students are expected to produce work that is critical and analytical of existing media and/or socio-cultural concerns. Students produce unique and impactful projects that encourage people to understand the world differently, understand themselves and others differently and, as such, these projects have the capacity to be truly transformative. Students are encouraged to make work that offers different, innovative or critical perspectives on their subject, and are encouraged to develop new and different ways to use their medium and represent their subject. Students are supported to develop and deliver experimental and unique work with a distinct, informed and critical voice. Students are expected to demonstrate that they can work in an ambitious but realisable form. The rigour and robustness of these projects is assessed throughout the module via various methods such as project testing, critique and interim displays.

Students will have several opportunities for feedback on their project design and intention, including feedback at the end of Term 1 on an unassessed indicative project proposal which will include pre-production item(s) such as assets, media tests, proposal, bibliography, methods, and workbook. This assets tutorial be an informal critique to the group and will lead to confirmation of a viable project concept

by the module tutors.

OR

2. Dissertation-based Major Research Project

An 8,000-word dissertation comprising of an original research project on a relevant topic within the field. This will demonstrate a clear, critical understanding of the academic work within the field and the ability to apply appropriate methodological approaches to a high standard. This will be supported by a verbal viva/poster presentation.

Students will have several opportunities for feedback on their project design and intention, including feedback at the end of Term 1 on an unassessed 1,000 word written dissertation proposal which will include an indication of research topic, methods, Research Questions and selection of suggested literature/key theory. Once the proposal has been submitted students will be allocated a one to one supervisor who will give verbal feedback on the viability of the project, in the first supervisory meeting.

Plagiarism will be designed out by means of the continuous feedback process within the weekly project development sessions and dissertation supervisory sessions, and with online assessment submission tools where appropriate.

Assessment tasks:

Final Project (First Sit)

Description: Final project (75%) supported by a verbal viva/critique/poster presentation (25%), as appropriate for practice-based and written work.

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Final Project (Resit)

Description: Final project (75%) supported by a verbal viva/critique/poster presentation (25%), as appropriate for practice-based and written work.

Weighting: 100 %

Final assessment: Yes

Group work: No

Learning outcomes tested: MO1, MO2, MO3, MO4

Part 5: Contributes towards

This module contributes towards the following programmes of study:

Media Communications [Frenchay] BA (Hons) 2024-25