Programme Specification

Media Communications [Frenchay]

Version: 2024-25, v1.0, 19 Oct 2023

Contents

Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Media Communications [Frenchay]

Highest award: BA (Hons) Media Communications

Interim award: BA Media Communications

Interim award: DipHE Media Communications

Interim award: CertHE Media Communications

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: Yes

Credit recognition: No

School responsible for the programme: CATE School of Arts, College of Arts, Technology and Environment

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies: Not applicable

Modes of delivery: Full-time, Part-time, Sandwich

Entry requirements:

For implementation from: 01 September 2021

Programme code: P30H00

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: Communication skills and thinking are underpinned by an understanding of the impact of media in its cultural and historical context and the way viewers respond to media forms and practices. Students also learn about the ways media are used to reach viewers and communicate ideas in a range of other industry sectors, and are equipped to research the ways interactive and participatory media forms require new competencies, and engender different forms of engagement to traditional cultural forms. Students are provided with a rigorous academic training in research methods and skills in analysis, academic writing and presentational skills.

Media Communications embeds cultural research and digital media production skills within a broader understanding and engagement of the dynamics of mediated societies and the role of media in society and the economy at a global level, to prepare students for careers in contemporary digital media and media-utilising enterprises.

Students will develop flexible research and writing skills in a variety of contexts from project analysis and design treatment, project management, inter-team and inter-enterprise communications and online media community fostering. They will be trained in digital media content generation, methods in audience research and address, and creative campaign design. These are supplemented by a training in the use of software used within the industry, and an ability to respond to new developments as the industry innovates. All this takes place alongside the building of skills in analysis, reviewing and formal academic essay writing.

Through the degree students are exposed to practitioners to practice the application of their learning. Students are introduced to Bristol's vibrant creative media culture throughout their studies and develop field research attuned to contemporary industry needs. Students also acquire an in-depth understanding of the way that media practitioners work in a fast-changing industry landscape through research exercises and projects conducted in Bristol's vibrant cultural and media sector, culminating in their final year where work placement, live briefs and student-led research projects form major pathways to graduation.

We offer research-led teaching, which means students work alongside tutors on specified research exercises as well as designing their own projects around their chosen focus and interests. This helps them acquire the project design and research skills that are necessary to become professionals able to work independently and as part of a team, in the cultural and media industries, and as independent research project design becomes more pronounced as they proceed through the three years of their study, they are able to prepare a portfolio of written and production work relevant to their chosen vocational pathway.

As well as the main award offering a broad-based range of skills and knowledge in the field of media communications, students have the option to specialise in a particular vocational pathway in the areas of Advertising, Campaigns and Public Relations. Upon choosing one of these pathways, students will be able to experience specialised teaching within their preferred area and benefit from real-world application of theory, research and technical expertise.

Features of the programme:

Educational Aims: To foster intellectual enquiry into digital media, communications and culture; meeting the (2016) QAA benchmark statements in the development of knowledge, understanding and discipline-specific skills in media;

To introduce students to key concepts, debates, theories and approaches to the study of media, culture and society;

To develop knowledge and understanding of a range of media forms, industries and practices, their historical development and their role within contemporary culture, society and communities of interest on a local and global scale;

To develop flexible skills in close reading and listening, analytical and intercultural insight, persuasive writing and presentation, research and digital media production appropriate to working and innovating within a transcultural digital communications context broadly conceived;

To develop an understanding of the use of different methodologies for researching the practices of production, diverse audiences/users, policy frameworks and social engagement relevant to the culture and the media sector and the artefacts, forms and practices that play a part in forming and informing it

To develop an understanding of the mediated communications industry landscape and an understanding of the diverse employment pathways for communications professionals within a range of industry contexts.

Programme Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this programme graduates will achieve the following learning outcomes.

Programme Learning Outcomes

PO1. Develop knowledge and insight of contemporary and emerging developments in the creative economy, the media industries and the applications of multi-platform, social, interactive, participatory and pervasive media, and the diverse employment pathways for media communication professionals within a range of different industry contexts.

PO2. Evaluation and use of significant theoretical and interpretive frameworks for the study of media and culture by using flexible skills in close reading and listening, analytical and transcultural insight, persuasive writing and presentation.

PO3. To develop flexible research skills appropriate to further academic study and professional work in a variety of contexts, reflecting on different methodologies for researching the practices of production, diverse audiences/users, policy frameworks and social engagement relevant to the cultural and media sector.

PO4. To develop skills in digital photography, video, sound, interactive and/or online media production at a level which supports working as a mediated communicator in the cultural and media sector.

PO5. The ability to design, plan, realise and reflect on sustained critical, creative and/or research projects independently and within teams explore these in a systematic and rigorous way, presenting key findings and articulating analytical insights.

PO6.   To develop an in-depth understanding of the principles of audience research, content development and creative campaign design and management at a level suitable to working as a mediated communications professional.

PO7.   To develop critical, creative and analytical thinking through the execution of research exercises and projects, and/or using practice-based work to interrogate social and cultural processes and practices.

PO8.   To develop skills of communication, co-creation and reflection appropriate to working in groups/teams and individually as creative professionals and to presenting ideas within relevant industry and user contexts.

Assessment strategy: The assessment strategy has been designed to provide a broad range of transferable skills as well as those relating to specific programme and career pathways. These have been carefully designed to assess a range of skills with increasing complexity and depth as students progress through the programme. The assessment strategy has been informed by the programme team's experience and expertise, (current and past) student feedback. Assessments that are connected to existing modules have been running successfully in previous years and benefit from regular student feedback.

At level one students are introduced to a range of assessments divided between those modules focusing on academic investigation and one 60 credit module which introduces students to technical expertise in the areas of digital photography, video and online media. With the former, assessments in academic reading and writing (including library exercises and short exam) ensure that students have a solid underpinning in analysis and writing. On the latter students work initially on a group project which focuses not just on the technical skills required by also elements of project management, group working and critical practice. This is followed by an individual project which helps to foster independence in the context of practice work.

At level two students take two core modules and then choose two more modules relating to their chosen pathway. The two core modules help to develop skills from level one with an emphasis on original research which helps build students ability for independence and enquiry. The pathway modules that students work on alongside the core specialise in particular areas like Advertising, Campaigns and Public

Relations. Students will carry out written and presentational assessments based around their chosen specialism, again with an emphasis on developing methods and techniques around research in the form of project portfolios.

At level three students have the opportunity to work as independent, critical thinkers; both in terms of developing their own projects but also in partnership with relevant media partners and potential employers. The core modules focus around student-centred projects with an option to either produce a written dissertation or digital media project. Both of these are assessed through formative and summative elements and reflect on the student's ability to independently design, research, produce and (where appropriate) disseminate their work. For the dissertation writing is the primary mode of assessment and for the project, elements of pitching and production diaries are built in to reflect professional practice in the media industries. Students also have a core module built around either a work placement or live brief which are assessed through formative and summative writing and reflection, with elements of practice for the live brief. This work is informed by interaction with real-world media practitioners and potential employers, reflecting the progression for students from degree to employment.

Student support: The Media Communications programme is well located with local media partners within the city of Bristol and has close relationships with organisations such the Digital Cultures Research Centre
 (DCRC) and Bristol Museums and Art Galleries.

The DCRC, based at the Pervasive Media Studio (PMS), a world leading innovation lab that sits within Bristol's Watershed Media Centre. Its curriculum and the students learning experience are enriched by the involvement in DCRC of core teaching staff who conduct research in collaboration with cultural organisations and industry partners, as well as by DCRC researchers based at the PMS who contribute their expertise throughout the three years by providing specialist sessions and workshops.

Bristol Museums and Art Galleries offer a number of opportunities for Media Communications students including visits, live briefs and work placements. Recently

(in 2017), media students took part in producing video content for the Bristol Music: Seven Decade of Sound exhibition. Students from Level 2 & 3 conducted filmed interviews which they edited and were part of the final exhibition.

The above example reflects ongoing opportunites for collaboration and extra-curricular live briefs with cultural partners around the city. Most recently students participated in producing content for
Domestic Violence and Health Research Group which provides training on an international basis for medical practitioners.

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1
Full-time and Sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 1.
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 1.

Year 1 Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich)
Full-time and Sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNHP-30-1	Communications Contexts 2024-25	30
UPCNHQ-60-1	Contemporary Digital Practice 2024-25	60
UPCNHR-30-1	Network Culture 2024-25	30

Year 1 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNHP-30-1	Communications Contexts 2024-25	30
UPCNHR-30-1	Network Culture 2024-25	30

Year 2

Full-time and Sandwich students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 2.
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 2.

Year 2 Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich)

Full-time and Sandwich students must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Full-time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNHU-30-2	Communication Practice 2025-26	30
UPCNHY-30-2	Researching Media Cultures 2025-26	30

Year 2 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNHQ-60-1	Contemporary Digital Practice (WITHDRAWN) 2025-26	60

Year 2 Optional Modules (Full-time and Sandwich)

Full-time and Sandwich students must take 60 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Full-time and Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNHW-30-2	Creative Cultural Research 2025-26	30
UPCNHX-30-2	Engaging Audiences 2025-26	30
UPCNJ3-30-2	Screen Media 2025-26	30

Year 3

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 3.
Full-time students must take 120 credits from the modules in Year 3.
Sandwich students must take 30 credits from the modules in Year 3.

Year 3 Compulsory Module Choice 1 (Full time)

Full time students must select 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Module Choice 1 (Full time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNJ7-30-3	Live Brief 2026-27	30
UPCNJW-30-3	Work Experience 2026-27	30

Year 3 Compulsory Module Choice 2 (Full-time)

Full-time students must take 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Module Choice 2 (Full-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UABB4F-30-3	Dissertation 2026-27	30
UPCNJS-30-3	Media Project 2026-27	30

Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Part-time)

Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Compulsory Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNHU-30-2	Communication Practice 2026-27	30
UPCNHY-30-2	Researching Media Cultures 2026-27	30

Year 3 Compulsory Modules (Sandwich)

Sandwich students must take 30 credits from the modules in Year 3 (Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPGNA5-30-3	Professional Development on Placement 2026-27	30

Year 3 Optional Modules (Full-time)

Full-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Full-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNJ6-30-3	Automatic Society 2026-27	30
UPCNK3-30-3	Image Cultures 2026-27	30
UPCNJT-30-3	Music Cultures 2026-27	30

Year 4
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 4.
Sandwich students must take 90 credits from the modules in Year 4.

Year 4 Compulsory Module Choice (Sandwich)
Sandwich students must select 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Module Choice (Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UABB4F-30-3	Dissertation 2027-28	30
UPCNJS-30-3	Media Project 2027-28	30

Year 4 Optional Modules (Part-time)
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNHW-30-2	Creative Cultural Research (WITHDRAWN) 2027-28	30
UPCNHX-30-2	Engaging Audiences 2027-28	30
UPCNJ3-30-2	Screen Media 2027-28	30

Year 4 Optional Modules (Sandwich)
Sandwich students must take 60 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Sandwich).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNJ6-30-3	Automatic Society (WITHDRAWN) 2027-28	30

UPCNK3-30-3	Image Cultures 2027-28	30
UPCNJT-30-3	Music Cultures 2027-28	30

Year 5
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 5.

Year 5 Compulsory Module Choice 1 (Part time)
Part time students must select 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Module Choice 1 (Part time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNJ7-30-3	Live Brief 2028-29	30
UPCNJW-30-3	Work Experience 2028-29	30

Year 5 Compulsory Module Choice 2 (Part-time)
Part-time students must select 30 credits from the modules in Compulsory Module Choice 2 (Part time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UABB4F-30-3	Dissertation 2028-29	30
UPCNJS-30-3	Media Project 2028-29	30

Year 6
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Year 6.

Year 6 Optional Modules (Part-time)
Part-time students must take 60 credits from the modules in Optional Modules (Part-time).

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
UPCNJ6-30-3	Automatic Society 2029-30	30
UPCNK3-30-3	Image Cultures 2029-30	30
UPCNJT-30-3	Music Cultures 2029-30	30

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

This programme is for students looking to build their creative media skills, by understanding and researching audiences, and communicating ideas effectively to them. Students will study a mix of theory, production and research-based modules, and carry out coursework, developing expertise through writing, research, production, project design and coordination.

Students will develop a number of transferable skills, developing enterprise skills and strong self-reliance, in order to gain the confidence and flexibility to adopt to the rapidly changing field of media communications.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

The programme has been developed in line with the UK (2016) QAA benchmark statements in the development of knowledge, understanding and discipline-specific skills in media.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.