



Programme Specification

Science Communication [Sep][PT][Frenchay][2.5yrs]

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Section 1: Key Programme Details

Part A: Programme Information

Programme title: Science Communication [Sep][PT][Frenchay][2.5yrs]

Highest award: MSc Science Communication

Interim award: PGCert Science Communication

Interim award: PGDip Science Communication

Awarding institution: UWE Bristol

Affiliated institutions: Not applicable

Teaching institutions: UWE Bristol

Study abroad: No

Year abroad: No

Sandwich year: No

Credit recognition: No

Department responsible for the programme: HAS Dept of Applied Sciences,
Faculty of Health & Applied Sciences

Contributing departments: Not applicable

Professional, statutory or regulatory bodies: Not applicable

Apprenticeship: Not applicable

Mode of delivery: Part-time

Entry requirements: For the current entry requirements see the UWE public website

For implementation from: 01 September 2020

Programme code: P90012-SEP-PT-FR-P90012

Section 2: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Part A: Programme Overview, Aims and Learning Outcomes

Overview: The MSc Science Communication provides an opportunity for students from both scientific and non-scientific backgrounds to explore the theory and practice related to the communication of science at postgraduate level.

Educational Aims: Following a common grounding, students are able to choose two optional modules from the following list: Science on Air and on Screen, Science in Public Spaces, and Writing Science. These practical modules provide students with the opportunity to build a portfolio of skills and expertise required by science communication practitioners.

The programme is designed for part-time and seeks to draw and build on the experience of students, regardless of whether their current role includes science communication.

The specific aims of the programme are to:

Examine the concepts and principles upon which the effective communication of science is based

Analyse the scope and purpose of science communication and encourage a critical evaluation of the approaches studied

Provide an opportunity for postgraduate students from a range of backgrounds to develop the skills required to communicate science in their chosen context

Provide an innovative mode of attendance designed to maximise the programme's accessibility

Build on the previous experience of students and encourage learning at work

Encourage students to develop the ability to conduct independent enquiry

Structure and underpin the curriculum using a balance from current consultancy and research

Programme Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge and Understanding

- A1. The role of science in society
- A2. The concept of 'publics' and its importance to science communication
- A3. The role of the media in contributing to the public awareness of science and scientific issues
- A4. Different models and approaches for taking science to public spaces
- A5. The creative use of digital technologies to enhance science communication
- A6. Evaluation methodologies for science communication initiatives
- A7. Different social, technological and cultural contexts in which science and research is communicated
- A8. The impact of scientific uncertainty on the communication of science
- A9. The potential of science communication to interconnect with other disciplines and areas of expertise

Intellectual Skills

- B1. Develop conceptual, cognitive and analytical skills to M level
- B2. Demonstrate independent and self-directed learning
- B3. Utilise knowledge and an understanding of past actions to envision how future societies may be shaped
- B4. Apply knowledge to the creation of novel means of communicating science
- B5. Awareness and ability to use creative techniques and spaces

- B6. Develop a reflexive and critical approach to evaluating their own and others work

Subject/Professional Practice Skills

- C1. Justify their choice of method/medium to address a specific science communication need
- C2. Evaluate the effectiveness of various methods of reaching a specific public
- C3. Synthesise information from a variety of sources into a coherent piece of science communication
- C4. Interpret scientific information intended for a specialist audience and present this information at a level and in a style suitable for a variety of audiences
- C5. Critically analyse issues relating to the presentation of science to the public
- C6. Explain the relationship between formal and informal science education in the context of science communication
- C7. Advance their capacity for independent, evidence-based integrated thinking as the foundation for developing their personal ethical code

Transferable Skills and other attributes

- D1. Communicate effectively using a variety of methods
- D2. Plan and manage projects effectively
- D3. Use digital technology effectively for both communication and information retrieval
- D4. Demonstrate how to be an effective team worker
- D5. Manage own time appropriately
- D6. Ability and knowledge to risk assess and consider ethical best practice
- D7. Develop a commitment to lifelong learning in their education and practice

Part B: Programme Structure

Year 1

Year 1 Compulsory Modules

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
USSJM4-30-M	Science and Society 2020-21	30
USSJM3-30-M	Science, The Public and Media 2020-21	30

Year 2

Year 2 Optional Modules

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
USSJYU-30-M	Science in Public Spaces 2021-22	30
USSJC4-30-M	Science on Air and on Screen 2021-22	30
USSJC8-30-M	Writing Science 2021-22	30

Year 3

Year 3 Compulsory Modules

Module Code	Module Title	Credit
USSJPR-60-M	Science Communication Project 2022-23	60

Part C: Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) Synopsis

Based in the world-class Science Communication Unit and led by expert staff currently working in this constantly evolving field, this flexible programme is directly informed by current practice to combine theory and practice, and gives students excellent access to strong industry links.

Students leaving this programme are equipped to consider the role of communication in a variety of settings, including via the media, through museums and science centres, community events and festivals, as well as in policy settings and will be equipped with the communication, project management and evaluation skills required of contemporary communicators.

Part D: External Reference Points and Benchmarks

QAA UK Quality Code for HE

National qualification framework

Subject benchmark statements

Qualification characteristics for Foundation degrees and Master's degrees (if applicable)

University strategies and policies

Staff research projects

Any relevant PSRB requirements

Any occupational standards

Reference should be made to the graduate outcomes identified in the QAA-HEA Guidance

External Benchmarks:

Students taking the MSc Science Communication will be expected to study at the cutting edge of this rapidly developing multi-disciplinary subject area. Successful completion of the degree will require students to deal with complex scientific issues and how these should or could be communicated to wider audiences; this requires an element of creativity as well as rationally and sensitively tackling and solving specific communication problems. The learning outcomes have been designed with the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in mind.

As there is not a specific QA benchmark statement for science communication, the award team has made reference to the QA benchmark statement for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies, Biosciences and for Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Environmental Studies. These offer guidance on the level of communication skills that can be expected of graduates in these disciplines. These have been used as a starting point from which to build more in depth and specialised skills.

University Strategies and Policies:

In line with the University's teaching and learning policies, the course has been devised using an innovative mode of attendance that will facilitate participation of students undertaking the course while in full or part-time employment.

The research and practice of the Science Communication Unit plays an integral role in teaching over the programme. An overview of current SCU research and practice can be found here: <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/research/sciencecommunicationunit>. Current work includes two major European communication projects, schools-based workshops and festival activities, with collaborators including Bristol Zoo Gardens, the Royal Society and Bristol Natural History Consortium. The Science Communication Unit also has an Advisory Group, comprising UWE PVC (Research and Business Engagement), Associate Deans (Research and Innovation), as well as representatives from science centres, practice and professional associations. Teaching programmes are a standing agenda item on the advisory group's annual meeting allowing us to continually inform the programmes on the basis of their recommendations. Members of the programme team have an international reputation for creative approaches to science communication and have regularly contributed to the REF.

Staff attend UWE learning and teaching conferences and events. All new teaching staff within the Unit undertake the UWE ADP and are provided with a mentor. As part of this peer observation.

Students are pointed to various UWE services for support, including careers, counselling, volunteering, placements, student advice, disability, and the library, amongst others. Care is taken to monitor any UWE schemes of potential relevance to students such as PAL, UWE Futures Award, English Language Support or schemes like Espresso Maths, and these are utilized when they are of relevance to postgraduate students.

Modules keep up-to-date with current UWE policies and procedures. For example, the Science and Science Communication Project module revisits its research ethics

advice to students on an annual basis to reflect any changes or updates in UWE or external procedures.

Part E: Regulations

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures.