

Programme Specification (Postgraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2027/28

Date created: 27/05/2026
by EQED: 27/05/2026

Last amended: Click or tap to enter a date. Version no. 1 Date approved

1. Programme title(s) and code(s): MA Journalism

MA Journalism

Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism*

Postgraduate Certificate in Journalism*

Notes

* An award marked with an asterisk is only available as an exit award and is not available for students to register onto.

[HECOS Code](#)

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2. Awarding body or institution: University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study Full-time

b) Type of study Campus-based

4. Registration periods: 2026/27

MA Journalism (Full Time)

The normal period of registration is one year

The maximum period of registration is two years

5. Typical entry requirements

Normally a second-class honours degree in any subject from a recognised university. We also accept prospective candidates who can demonstrate equivalent skills and aptitudes through the possession of a professional or vocational qualification and/or the accrual of relevant work experiences. For example, working as a journalist, in PR, media relations or producing newsletters for charities or businesses. Relevant experience can come from a wide spectrum of work or voluntary environments but clear evidence of this experience may need to be provided. Such candidates may be required to satisfy the Admissions Tutor through interview

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning

N/A

7. Programme aims

- **Analysis and understanding of Journalism.** Students will be comfortable using current theoretical approaches to critically evaluate different forms of journalism and technology as it relates to journalism.
- **Competency in using Social Media and AI Tools in Content Creation.** Students will have a practical appreciation of the ways social media and AI can be used in content production and storytelling and be able capable of demonstrating this.
- **Ethical understanding of the Role of Journalists.** Students will have a critical appreciation of the ethical concerns around journalism in an age of contested facts and post-truth. Appreciating the global nature of the profession and importance that cultural, social, economic and technological influences may have.
- **Practical and Research Skills.** Students will learn how to synthesise ideas and concepts and apply them as part of a methodological approach to research situations.
- **Critical Analysis.** Students will demonstrate familiarity with key theories around journalism, media and communications in an era of technological change.
- **Critical Thinking.** Students will develop the necessary intellectual confidence to critically assess and question the role of journalism and communication industries, especially with relation to AI systems and their effects both in terms of impacts on journalism and society.
- **Data Processing.** Students will be able to confidently handle data from different sources using the appropriate methods and empirical analysis and translate this into content within a journalistic context.
- **Communication.** Students will be able to clearly communicate their ideas through a variety of means and in a variety of contexts. They will appreciate the importance of feedback and feedforward.

8. Reference points used to inform the programme specification

- QAA Benchmarking Statement
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- [Education Strategy](#)
- [University Assessment Strategy](#) [login required]
- University of Leicester Periodic Developmental Review Report
- External Examiners' reports (annual)
- United Nations Education for Sustainable Development Goals
- Student Destinations Data

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9. Programme Outcomes

Unless otherwise stated, programme outcomes apply to all awards specified in 1. Programme title(s).

a) Discipline specific knowledge and competencies

i) Knowledge

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Critically evaluate how artificial intelligence affects society, including its ethical and environmental impacts and implications	Workshops, group discussions, self-learning	Practical workshop exercises and reflection	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection
Students should be able to: Recognise, describe and operate multi-media digital and social media platforms for the dissemination of journalism to a professional standard	Workshops, lectures	Practical work and individual study of both academic texts and social media platforms and content	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection
Students should be able to: Appreciate and apply the skills required to deliver professional journalistic content	Workshops, lectures	Practical work	Portfolio of work
Students should be able to:	Workshops, lectures	Practical work	Portfolio of work

Understand and apply the journalistic norms of professional practice. This includes ensuring information they deliver is fair and accurate. That it has been gathered in a professional manner, that they abide by relevant laws and obligations such as privacy, intrusion, protect their sources and avoid producing content which discriminates.			
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ii) Concepts

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Demonstrate the use of appropriate theory, method and empirical analysis	Workshop, seminars, self-learning	Preparing their dissertation proposals, working on Critical Reflections	Dissertations, Critical Reflections
Students should be able to: Use theoretical approaches and concepts to be able to explain different social media platforms and their approaches to engaging with their chosen audiences	Workshop, seminars, self-learning	Through group discussion and exercises, self-study.	Critical Reflection

iii) Techniques

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to:	Workshops	Practical application though individual and group work	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection

Understand the design and working processes of AI LLM			
Students should be able to: Develop, apply, critique and refine prompts for AI LLMs	Workshops and self-study	Practical application though individual and group work	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection
Students should be able to: Create original journalistic content for a range of media platforms using a range of techniques	Workshops and self-study	Practical exercises	Portfolio of work
Students should be able to: Research, gather information and create content within the framework of ethical and professional journalism ensuring they do not use unlawful, intrusive, dishonest or harmful methods to produce it	Workshops and self-study	Practical application though individual	Portfolio of work

iv) Critical Analysis

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Apply a systematic understanding of specialist theoretical and methodological approaches to their own understanding of artificial intelligence and its relationships with other relevant disciplines	Workshops, lectures, self-learning	Studying relevant academic texts in preparation for dissertation proposal and project. Group discussion and private tutorials.	Critical Reflection

Students should be able to: Critically evaluate how artificial intelligence affects society, including its ethical and environmental impacts and implications	Workshops, lectures, self-learning	Studying relevant academic texts in preparation for dissertation proposal and project. Group discussion and private tutorials.	Critical Reflection
Students should be able to: Demonstrate familiarity with key theories around journalism and wider media and communication practice	Workshops, lectures, self-learning	Studying relevant academic texts	Critical Reflection

v) Presentation

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Produce professional journalistic content across different media	Workshops and self-study	Practical exercises	Portfolio of work
Students should be able to: Deliver their ideas and reflections on concepts and theory through different means, including presentations, reports and discussions	Workshops and self-study	Self-study, group discussions and presentation preparation	Portfolio of work - Group discussion – Critical reflection
Students should be able to: Show they have an understanding and appreciation of the	Workshops and self-study	Practical exercises	Portfolio of work - Group discussion - Critical reflection

sender/receiver – producer/audience relationship			
Students should be able to: Show they have researched, gathered, produced their content within the ethical, legal and professional guidelines of the Journalistic profession	Practical exercises and self self-study	Portfolio of work	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection

vi) Appraisal of evidence

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Understand, through practical workshops, how social media and AI operate and how they can be used for the creation of content	Practical workshops and lectures	Practical use of AI models	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection
Students should be able to: Identify the links between artificial intelligence and journalism as a practical method for content creation and its impacts on journalism as an industry	Lectures and self-learning	Self-learning	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection
Students should be able to: Identify and compare different sets of results and apply critical thinking to test the validity of what is produced	Practical workshops and lectures	Practical workshops	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection
Students should be able to:	Practical workshops and lectures	Practical workshops	Portfolio of work

Apply professional journalistic standards to ensure that information they gather or use is accurate, balanced not deliberately misleading			
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b) Transferable Skills

i) Research Skills

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Plan and organise independent research projects	Dissertation seminars	Self-investigation	Dissertation
Students should be able to: Analyse and synthesise a range of varied sources to produce a focused and well-structured piece of academic writing/report	Dissertation seminars	Self-investigation	Dissertation
Students should be able to: Recognise potential story ideas and translate that into journalistic content	Practical workshops and lectures	Journalistic classroom activities, both individual and group	Portfolio of work

ii) Communication skills

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to:	Workshops and practical exercises	Journalistic classroom activities, both individual and group	Portfolio of work

Express their ideas both through written exercises and group discussions and illustrated presentations			
Students should be able to: Discuss and develop engagement strategies for journalistic content delivery to different audiences across different platforms.	Workshops and practical exercises	Journalistic classroom activities, both individual and group	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection
Students should be able to: Synthesise ideas and translate them into easily understood forms which can be shared	Workshops and practical exercises	Journalistic classroom activities, both individual and group	Portfolio of work
Students should be able to: Communicate in a professionally acceptable manner, ensuring they abide by journalistic norms, including, fairness, honesty, protecting sources, defending freedom of expression and the right of the public to know certain types of information	Workshops and practical exercises	Journalistic classroom activities, both individual and group	Portfolio of work

iii) Data Presentation

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Demonstrate skills in critically evaluating issues arising from the	Workshops and practical exercises	Research exercises	Portfolio of work

growing usage of data analysis and visualisation tools in journalism practice.			
Students should be able to: Identify different ways of utilising data through creative storytelling techniques	Workshops and practical exercises	Practical exercises	Portfolio of work
Students should be able to: Ensure they are fair and accurate in line with journalistic norms when presenting evidence within their story content, that they attribute data sources, obtain information straightforwardly and honestly and correct inaccuracies if required	Workshops and practical exercises	Practical exercises	Portfolio of work

iv) Information Technology

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Use various technological approaches to research, create, interrogate, demonstrate and explain ideas and concepts around social media and AI journalism	Practical workshops	Practical exercises	Portfolio
Students should be able to: Critically reflect on the place of digital and social media in the 21st century media ecosystem having learned	Lectures and self-study	Lectures and self-study	Portfolio

through both practical application and academic analysis			
Students should be able to: Analyse the relationship between technological systems and their consumption using appropriate theory	Lectures and self-study	Lectures and self-study	Portfolio of work and Critical Reflection

v) Problem Solving

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Design research question and develop necessary skills to collect and interrogate data from open sources and demonstrate how that can be used for journalistic content creation	Practical workshops	Research exercises	Portfolio
Students should be able to: Conceptualise research problems and evaluate different methods of analysis and apply them appropriately	Lectures and self-study	Lectures and self-study	Portfolios of work/dissertation/reports

vi) Working relationships

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Work productively in group settings allowing for differences of opinion	Practical workshops and own study time	Group exercises and discussions	N/A

and approach to issues and problem solving			
Students should be able to: Work collaboratively with supervision, identify when and how to seek guidance and use advice	Practical workshops and own study time – tutorials	Tutorials and workshop/seminar discussions	N/A
Students should be able to: Behave in a professional manner expected of journalists, ensuring they are polite, considerate of interviewee's feelings, avoid intrusion, behave honestly, without discrimination and are fair and balanced when representing the opinions of others	Practical workshops	Story gathering exercises	

vii) Managing learning

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Organise, prioritise tasks. Set themselves achievable goals and measure the success, reflect on outcomes and alter behaviours accordingly	Self-study	Self-study	Reflect on assessments and act on feedback and feedforward
Students should be able to: Work independently and within groups. Analyse key theoretical approaches and research methods to	Practical workshops and own study time	Self-study – assessment preparation	Reports/papers/dissertation

deliver work to correct length, within allocated time frames with properly referenced sources			
Students should be able to: Show they have a thorough understanding of the ethical and social impacts of research projects and data collection while investigating their own research projects	Seminars and discussions with tutors	Application for research approval with	Dissertation research approval

viii) Career Management

Intended learning Outcome	Teaching methods	Learning Activities	Assessment Type
Students should be able to: Identify their own skill set and recognise strengths and weaknesses	Self-study	Reflection on own development	N/A
Students should be able to: Understand and appreciate media practice within the workplace	Workshops and Self-study	Reflection on own development	N/A

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10. Progression points

This programme follows the standard Scheme of Progression set out in [Senate Regulations](#) – see the version of *Senate Regulation 6 governing postgraduate programmes* relevant to the year of entry.

In cases where a student has failed to meet a requirement to progress he or she will be required to withdraw from the course.

a) Course transfers

n/a

11. Criteria for award and classification

This programme follows the standard scheme of postgraduate award and classification set out in [Senate Regulations](#) – see the version of *Senate Regulation governing postgraduate programmes* relevant to the year of entry.

12. Special features

12a. Research-inspired Education

Students on this programme will advance through the four quadrants of the University of Leicester Research-inspired Education Framework as follows:

RiE Quadrant	Narrative
Research-briefed Bringing staff research content into the curriculum.	Teaching on the Journalism programme at Leicester successfully combines academic and practical approaches to the discipline. It is research-briefed in that it makes use of the research interests and backgrounds of those delivering it. All those who might teach on the programme are active in research and or journalism or both. Their experience stretches across all forms of media production, including newspapers, magazines, television, digital and social media, public relations and communications. It also includes an international perspective with teachers from countries other than the UK working on it. Modules on the MA course have been developed with expertise and research interests of the lecturers at the forefront. For example, international journalism, media convergence, environment, post-truth and artificial intelligence. Members of staff bring years of practical experience to their teaching within the classroom. They have a combined history of 100+ years of doing journalism in different media, regulatory environments and countries. This ensures core journalistic principles, including ethical considerations in story gathering and creation, professional conduct and legal obligations are embedded within the course and this knowledge disseminated to students.
Research-based Framed enquiry for exploring	Journalism is seen as a practical course, where concepts and skills are introduced and practised from the moment students join. This allows them to explore the existing knowledge and approaches to content production and develop their own skills. This is achieved through regular writing and researching assignments and is embedded in all core modules. For example, students will be encouraged to find

existing knowledge.	their own stories within practical modules, while in <i>AI Tools for Journalists</i>, they will be using university content as a data base from which to develop their own AI content. This will allow research-based enquiry of the field and develop their understanding of it. Once created the content can be critiqued against existing literature and vice versa. This in-class research will help explore and apply knowledge while also offering potential research opportunities. By doing their own work students will examine the journalistic norms behind creating content. This ensures they test their understanding around ethical journalism, balance and impartiality. This helps question and shape their coverage across a range of stories - testing their work against journalistic obligations to remain legal, in the public interest, respectful of privacy and balanced.
Research-oriented Students critique published research content and process.	In the Journalism programmes at Leicester practical skills are interwoven with academic approaches to understanding the subject. Students will use their academic knowledge to interrogate concepts and explain processes. For example, students from non-UK countries will be able to bring their own perspective and understanding to look at <i>Journalism Across Borders</i> and see how their experience compares to published ideas. This may mean critically assessing content created using generative artificial intelligence (GAI) while also thinking about how GAI may affect the ethical, legal and objectivity concerns of journalists. This research-oriented approach allows students to critique both academic and published journalistic content.
Research-apprenticed Experiencing the research process and methods; building new knowledge.	Most of the modules have a practical element to them and students will be using their own developing skills and understanding to create new knowledge and journalistic content. The third semester dissertation allows students to bring all their understanding to bear on their own research project. It requires an academic approach and tests their skills, from organisation, through research, to creating new knowledge and content. Journalistic norms, such as being aware of bias, consent, ethical story gathering and accuracy in information dissemination will help inform this cornerstone project and allow students to demonstrate they have complete understanding of what ethical journalism is.

As part of studying at a research-intensive university, students on this programme have the following extra or co-curricular opportunities available to them to gain exposure to research culture:

The School has created Research Clusters critically studying the use of AI and other technologies in media production processes. Students would have the opportunity to join these Research Clusters to learn about the work of experts in the field and to share their own perspectives and research.

Teaching on this programme will be research-informed (it draws consciously on systematic inquiry into the teaching and learning process itself) in the following way:

The School supports all staff involved in teaching to gain an accredited Higher Education teaching qualification, in which they demonstrate their use of teaching theory to support their own practice and reflect on their current teaching and continuing professional development. Members of the team have also published in the small field of the pedagogy of Journalism education

Regular team meetings are held amongst the teaching staff to discuss module content, student development and progression. This informs the programme structure and can allow for changes to address any issues which arise. Student feedback on the course is sought each semester and this also informs module delivery and content development.

Discussions are held each semester to confirm assessment results and highlight and address any issues which may have arisen.

This three-pronged approach brings together feedback and assessment data, pedagogical evidence and staff reflection to ensure that the teaching and learning process is kept up-to-date and outcome focused while staff continually seek ways to enhance their teaching skills.

13. Indications of programme quality

The University of Leicester has a long and distinguished history in delivering MAs in Media. 2026 marks sixty years since the Centre for Mass Communication Research was opened and Britain's first MA in Mass Communication began in 1978. This new MA in Journalism builds on that heritage and the developing undergraduate journalism programme. Students on that course have entered journalism, PR and media, working for a range of high-profile companies including the BBC and Sky.

14. External Examiner(s) reports

The details of the External Examiner(s) for this programme and the most recent External Examiners' reports for this programme can be found at [exampapers@Leicester](#) [log-in required].

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Appendix 1: Programme structure (programme regulations)

The University regularly reviews its programmes and modules to ensure that they reflect the current status of the discipline and offer the best learning experience to students. On occasion, it may be necessary to alter particular aspects of a course or module.

MA Journalism

Level 7/Year 1 Delivery Year 2027/28 Intake Month September Mode of Study Full Time Structure

Credit breakdown

Status	Year long	Semester 1	Semester 2
Core	60 credits	60 credits	30 credits
Optional	n/a	n/a	30 credits

180 credits in total

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Summer Term	MS7012	Dissertation	60 credits
Semester 1	JO7002	Journalism Across Borders	15 credits
Semester 1	JO7006	Digital and Social Media Journalism	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7079	PR, Journalism and Network Media	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7400	Research Methods	15 credits
Semester 2	JO7005	AI Tools and Technologies for Journalists	15 credits

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 2	JO7018	Post Truth Journalism	15 credits

Notes

Option modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 2	JO7007	Placement option	15 credits
Semester 2	JO7011	Data Journalism	15 credits
Semester 2	JO7014	Space Journalism	15 credits
Semester 2	JO7015	Environmental Journalism	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7050	AI, Global Media and Communication	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7082	Global Communication and Development	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7310	Strategic Communication Management	15 credits

Notes

This is an indicative list of option modules and not definitive of what will be available. Option module choice is also subject to availability, timetabling, student number restrictions and, where appropriate, students having taken appropriate pre-requisite modules.



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Appendix 2: Module specifications

See postgraduate [module specification database](#) (Note - modules are organized by year of delivery)
[login-required]