

Programme Specification (Postgraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2025/26

Date created: n/a

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Version no. 1

1. Programme title(s) and code(s)

MA in Media and Public Relations

PG Diploma/PG certificate in Media and Public Relations *

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](#)

HECOS Code	%
100444	100%

2. Awarding body or institution

University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study

Part-time

b) Type of study

Distance learning

4. Registration periods

The normal period of registration for the MA in Media and Public Relations is 24 months

The maximum period of registration for the MA in Media and Public Relations is 48 months

5. Typical entry requirements

A candidate shall hold a degree with first or second class honours or a higher degree of a University of the United Kingdom or of the Council for National Academic Awards, or an equivalent qualification.

In special cases the Graduate Dean may, on behalf of Senate, waive the requirement that a candidate shall have obtained the qualification stipulated above, but candidates without such a qualification shall be required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination or otherwise be able to satisfy Senate that they are by virtue of previous training and experience or published work, qualified to pursue an advanced course of study. Such candidates may, for example, be asked to complete an entry assignment (typically an essay) so as to demonstrate their readiness for postgraduate study. Clear guidance will be provided on assessment criteria.

Where English is not the first language, applicants are required, prior to admission to the School, to provide evidence of their proficiency in both written and spoken English. This should usually be a score of 6.5 in the British Council IELTS test. The University will also accept equivalent qualifications and further advice can be obtained from the Future Students Office.

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning

N/A

7. Programme aims

The programme aims to engage with contemporary debates around the Media and Public Relations, providing a deep and contextualised understanding of Public Relations in the modern media landscape. It will provide a grounding in the core issues in media and communication within which the history and development of public relations in different parts of the world sits, and will also provide a theoretical framework for analysing public relations; this in turn will help students to better understand the structures of public relations in practice and public relations as a social or cultural phenomenon. The programme aims to teach students about the principles and practice of public relations by examining the structure of the PR sector and the way it works. It will examine basic PR strategies and the use of research to inform PR campaigns and to measure their impact and effectiveness. Case studies will be used to illustrate both successful and ineffective PR campaigns and teach students how to analyse PR campaigns and to understand the management of crisis communications scenarios. The course will also focus on the structural relationships between PR and the media, strategic communications management and will examine how political actors and commercial businesses use PR techniques to promote themselves and how NGOs campaign for social change.

It is expected that many of the students on this programme will already be working in PR or other related communication professions. The programme aims to enhance such students' understanding of their profession, issues and debates relating to it and to the wider context of media and communication industries, and provide them with enhanced critical, analytical and research skills that could contribute to long term career development. The programme involves academic study of Media and PR; it is not a vocational course.

8. Reference points used to inform the programme specification

- QAA Benchmarking Statement
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- [University 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
- Surveys of registered School of Arts, Media and Communication taught postgraduate students
- Background research was carried out on programmes being offered at universities elsewhere in the UK and market research was carried out among overseas students in the School and with the help of Marketing and Communications. The market research indicated the key areas that students expected to learn about in this type of programme. The School has also consulted with the Chartered Institute of Public Relations about the contents of the programme.

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 Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Advanced knowledge of public relations history, contemporary developments, industry structures, principles and practices.	Prepared materials (e.g. short videos, podcasts, screencasts and wraparound commentaries), linked to a carefully structured set of required and recommended primary readings all provided through the online learning platform. Learning will be facilitated by students working through the prepared materials and readings, supplemented by e-tivities for individual students to complete, and through open and structured discussion forums, moderated by module tutors.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.
For the PG Cert: Knowledge of the theories, methodologies and approaches used for studying the subject.	Prepared materials (e.g. short videos, podcasts, screencasts and wraparound commentaries), linked to a carefully structured set of required and recommended primary readings all provided through the online learning platform. Learning will be facilitated by students working through the prepared materials and readings, supplemented by e-tivities for individual students to complete, and through open and structured discussion forums, moderated by module tutors.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.
For the MA and PG Dip: Advanced knowledge of the theories, methodologies and approaches used for studying the subject.	Prepared materials (e.g. short videos, podcasts, screencasts and wraparound commentaries), linked to a carefully structured set of required and recommended primary readings all provided through the online learning platform. Learning will be facilitated by students working through the prepared materials and readings, supplemented by e-tivities for individual students to complete, and through open and structured discussion forums, moderated by module tutors.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

ii) Concepts

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Identify, describe and critique the major theoretical frameworks used to analyse the impact of media and public relations operations.	Prepared materials (e.g. short videos, podcasts, screencasts and wraparound commentaries) linked to a carefully structured set of required and recommended readings all provided through the online learning platform. Learning will be facilitated by students working through produced materials and reading, supplemented by e-tivities for individual students to complete, and through open and structured discussion forums, moderated by module tutors.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

iii) Techniques

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Mastery of theoretical materials, information retrieval, bibliography construction and comprehension, and research skills and methods, writing, oral and analytical skills.	Use of e-reading lists, library search tools, web search tools. Study and research skills embedded into Module components and assessment (e.g. research methods covered in the Module: Media Research Design and Practice).	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

iv) Critical analysis

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to appraise theoretical approaches to: media issues; public relations and the media industries, as well as public relations techniques. Ability to critique the efficacy of public relations practices and campaigns. Ability to critique media research.	'Issues in Media and Communication' will address critical approaches to media industries; the modules on 'PR & Society' and 'Strategic Communication Management' are designed to critically engage with PR techniques, practices and campaigns. The final module (and dissertation) focus on critical approaches to media research.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

v) Presentation

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to organise research material and data in a manner appropriate to the medium to be assessed; to distinguish between relevant and non-relevant material; for the MA only: write up research findings to a professional standard.	These skills are built into student learning through formative and summative elements in all modules, building to the Research Design & Practice module and the dissertation in particular.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

vi) Appraisal of evidence

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to critically review a range of media and public relations issues and practices; ability to identify appropriate methodologies for specific lines of enquiry; ability to distinguish good and poor quality research evidence; for the MA only: assess relevance and quality of a substantial range of primary and secondary literature and empirical research evidence; mount and sustain an independent level of enquiry at an advanced level.	These skills are built into student learning through formative and summative elements in all modules.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

b) Transferable skills

i) Research skills

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Acquisition of competencies in literature reviewing, use of research methodologies, data analysis techniques and project management.	Independent research, online exercises, online supervision, formative assessment linked to research skills, including proposal writing.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

ii) Communication skills

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to deliver presentations to a high standard with an awareness of the audience's interests; ability to handle questions; ability to write clearly and concisely.	Independent research, online exercises, online supervision, and study skills provision built into module design.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum and oral/audio contributions, and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

iii) Data presentation

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to present research data concisely in a way that renders research easy to digest, using appropriate presentation techniques.	Independent research, online exercises, online supervision, and study skills provision built into module design.	Written assignments, reports, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

iv) Information technology

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Familiarity with and ability to utilise word processing, spreadsheet and presentation packages; ability to search for information effectively using online tools and resources; use of qualitative data analysis software.	As an online only course, IT familiarity will be a requirement for effective student learning. Guides to online learning and online study skills will feature throughout the course.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

v) Problem solving

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to assess and solve problems related to the design and implementation of research methods; ability to identify best approaches to investigating problems and answering research questions; ability to identify appropriate methodology and data.	The module Media Research Design & Practice is directly focused on these learning outcomes.	Written assignments (including a formal research proposal), e-tivities and discussion forum contributions on the methods module and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

vi) Working relationships

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Awareness and use of expert sources, and ability to collaborate with peers on projects and exercises.	Prepared materials are by internal subject experts. Structured required and recommended readings are taken from expert sources. E-tivities for individual students to complete will link to external expert resources, and the open, structured discussion forums, moderated by module tutors, will allow spaces for peer communication and collaboration.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

vii) Managing learning

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to identify suitable material for specific essays from reading lists, library and web-based sources; ability to organise work to meet timetabled deadlines and to construct coherent oral and written exercises of scale appropriate to required task; (for the MA only) ability to identify a credible research project, drawing up a realistic research time-table, identifying and applying suitable research methodologies, reflecting on and writing up results.	Prepared materials (e.g. short videos, podcasts, screencasts and wraparound commentaries), linked to a carefully structured set of required and recommended readings all provided through the online learning platform. Learning will be facilitated by students working through produced materials and reading, supplemented by e-tivities for individual students to complete, and through open and structured discussion forums, moderated by module tutors.	Written assignments, presentations, e-tivities and discussion forum contributions and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

viii) Career management

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to identify key industry figures, research institutions and academic institutions in the field; ability to explore networking events and career talks, and seek career advice.	Working with colleagues from a wide range of professional backgrounds, independent research and, for the MA only, dissertation supervision.	Student evaluation of the Course, and student reflection on their own personal and professional development through the personal tutor system.

10. Special features

Teaching will be facilitated through materials produced by the core teaching staff in a variety of forms (e.g. short videos, podcasts, screencasts and wraparound commentaries), linked to a carefully structured set of required and recommended readings all provided through the online learning platform. Learning will be facilitated by students working through produced materials and reading, supplemented by e-tivities for individual students to complete, and through open and structured discussion forums, moderated by module tutors.

Students on this programme will of course have access to the University's Career Development Service but more importantly as a student member of the Public Relations and Communications Association they will be able to take advantage of the networking and career enhancing opportunities this professional body provides.

10a. 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	Research-briefed: Students will be exposed to challenging learning via course content informed by the extensive research experience and expertise of staff contributing to the programme,

into the curriculum.	all of whom belong to one or more specialist research clusters within the School. All staff teaching on the programme are or have been engaged in research and bring their experiences into their teaching.
Research-based Framed enquiry for exploring existing knowledge.	Research-based: Assessment includes students conducting individual case study analysis of real-world public relations strategies and campaigns. Students will select their own case study and put into practice a guiding framework of key themes and issues for campaign analysis, evaluation and reflection.
Research-oriented Students critique published research content and process.	Research-oriented: Students are required to critically appraise published research through extended critical review of a specific piece of academic research and in the development of literature reviews for both the research proposal and the dissertation. Guidance is provided for the critical review of research as well as for the development of the literature review.
Research-apprenticed Experiencing the research process and methods; building new knowledge.	Research-apprenticed: Students will produce an initial research proposal, refine their research designs based on critical feedback, and - with guidance from a dedicated supervisor - undertake their own research for the dissertation. Students will also be guided through the process of obtaining ethics approval for their research design. Library-based training and self-study resources will be provided on dissertation writing and research, presentation skills, reading research papers, and general library skills including searching and the use of reference management software.

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 course builds upon the overlapping discourses and fields of media, society, and public relations more broadly by offering students a range of topics and research methods training which are developed by research specialists. Dissertation and self-directed research projects may be guided by supervisors with a range of subject experience and expertise, ensuring wherever possible that the culmination of your degree is done in partnership with a relevant research specialist.

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.

11. Indicators of programme quality

The degree is one of a small number in the UK which has been granted partner status by the Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA). The programme has been officially recognized by the PRCA and this will enable students on the MA to become automatically registered as student member of the PRCA and to access their vocational training courses and other career building resources.

12. Criteria for award and classification

This programme follows the standard scheme of taught postgraduate award and classification set out in [Senate Regulations](#) – see the version of *Senate Regulation 6 governing taught postgraduate programmes of study* relevant to year of entry.

13. Progression points

As defined in [Senate Regulations](#) - refer to the version of *Senate Regulation 6 governing taught postgraduate programmes of study* relevant to 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 and a recommendation will be made to the Board of Examiners for an intermediate/exit award where appropriate.

14. Rules relating to re-sits or re-submissions

As defined in [Senate Regulations](#) - refer to the version of *Senate Regulation 6 governing taught postgraduate programmes of study* relevant to year of entry.

15. External Examiners 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]

16. Additional features (e.g. timetable for admissions)

n/a

Programme Specification (Postgraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2025/26

Date created: 30/04/2021 Last amended: 21/06/2024 Version no. 1

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 in Media and Public Relations

Level 7/Year 1 2025/26

Credit breakdown

All modules are core (compulsory)

All taught modules carry 30 credits, are 20 weeks long and run continuously from either an October or April start date.

In their **first year**, students complete two modules (MS7616; MS7617) and begin a third (MS7618).

60 credits in total

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Weeks 1-20	MS7616	Issues in Media and Communication	30 credits
Weeks 21-40	MS7617	PR and Society	30 credits
Weeks 41-60	MS7618	Strategic Communications Management	30 credits

Level 7/Year 2 2025/26

Credit breakdown

In their **second year**, students complete the third (MS7618) and fourth (MS7619) modules.

Dissertation/project

The Dissertation module (MS7620) carries 60 credits, and runs for 24 weeks beginning on the end date of the final taught module (MS7619).
120 credits in total

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Weeks 41-60	MS7618	Strategic Communications Management	30 credits
Weeks 61-80	MS7619	Media Research Design and Practice	30 credits
Weeks 81-104	MS7620	Dissertation	60 credits

Notes

MS7620 is compulsory only for degree of MA

Appendix 2: Module specifications

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