Programme Specification (Postgraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2025/26

Date created: 26/02/2021　　**Last amended:** 17/12/2024　　**Version no.** 1

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

MA in Media, Culture and Society

PG Diploma/PG certificate in Media, Culture and Society *

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	
100505	

2. Awarding body or institution

University of Leicester

3. a) Mode of study

Full-time

b) Type of study

Campus-based

4. Registration periods

The normal period of registration for the MA in Media, Culture and Society is 12 months

The maximum period of registration for the MA in Media, Culture and Society is 24 months

5. Typical entry requirements

Candidates should normally have at least an Upper Second class honours degree from a British university or its equivalent in one of the following: media/communication studies; politics; sociology; social, cultural or political theory; cultural studies; the arts and/or humanities. Candidates with degrees in related fields may also be considered at the discretion of the programme team. Where English is not the applicant's first language or the main language of prior learning, either IELTS 6.5 or an equivalent score on a test of English as an additional or foreign language is required.

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning

N/A

7. Programme aims

The programme will enable students to draw on contemporary social and cultural theory in order to study the global, national, social, political and regulatory systems in which the media are located, and to understand their creation and consumption as a set of distinct social practices. This will be achieved by helping students build a critical awareness of media and the social

processes that are associated with them as elements located within, and constitutive of, global societies and cultures.

The programme will provide training in the methods and techniques of social science and media, communication and cultural studies, presenting students with opportunities to apply the skills they acquire in the academic study and critical evaluation of the media and their role in contemporary society. By completing modules that combine training in research methods as they examine substantive issues and problems in the study of media and culture, students will broaden their knowledge of the field while simultaneously deepening their appreciation of the relationship between theory and research.

Graduates from this programme will be equipped to pursue academic study at research degree level. In terms of design the programme aims to integrate with existing programmes.

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 Learning Strategy
- University Assessment Strategy
- University of Leicester Periodic Developmental Review Report
- External Examiners' reports (annual)
- United Nations Education for Sustainable Development Goals
- Student Destinations Data
- Surveys of registered DMC taught postgraduate students

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?
Demonstrate advanced knowledge of theories of society, media and culture, their origins and contemporary application in the study of media and communication technologies and the social and cultural processes associated with them.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment.	Seminar presentations, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the PG Cert: demonstrate knowledge of the theories, methodologies and approaches used for studying these subjects	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment.	Seminar presentations, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation.
For the MA and PG Dip: demonstrate advanced knowledge of the theories, methodologies and approaches used for studying these subjects	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment.	Seminar presentations, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation.

ii)   Concepts

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the PG Cert: describe and explain, for the PG Dip and MA describe, explain, critically discuss and analyse the following concepts:	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment.	Essays, research reviews; individual and/or small group research projects; and, for the MA, the dissertation.

iii)   Techniques

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the PG Cert: describe and explain, for the PG Dip and MA, describe, explain and apply a range of media research methods. Ability to analyse and assess a variety of complex textual and audio-visual materials; discuss conceptual issues; assess relevance and quality of a wide range of primary and secondary sources and empirical research evidence; for the MA only: mount and sustain an independent academic enquiry at an advanced level.	Lectures, interview-based discussions with key researchers, seminars, tutorials, guided reading, dissertation supervision; tutor feedback on assessment; and, for the MA, supervision of dissertation work.	Individual and/or small group research projects; and, for the MA, the dissertation.

iv)   Critical analysis

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the PG Cert: describe contrasting theoretical approaches and empirical research techniques. For the PG Dip and MA describe, critically discuss and evaluate contrasting theoretical approaches and empirical research techniques and construct critical lines of enquiry.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, discussion workshops, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment.	Seminar presentations, essays; individual and/or small group research projects, and, for the MA, the dissertation

v)   Presentation

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to report on primary and secondary research evidence clearly and concisely via oral, written and electronic means.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment.	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; and, for the MA, the dissertation

vi)   Appraisal of evidence

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the PG Cert: Describe a variety of complex conceptual, theoretical and historical issues; assess the relevance and quality of a range of primary and secondary literature and sources.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment, research exercises; and, for the MA, supervision of dissertation work.	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; for the MA, the dissertation.
For the PG Dip and MA: Ability to analyse, compare, contrast, and critically assess a variety of complex conceptual, theoretical and historical issues; assess the relevance and quality of a substantial range of primary and secondary literature and sources.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment, research exercises; and, for the MA, supervision of dissertation work.	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; for the MA, the dissertation.

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the MA only: in addition, the ability to mount and sustain an independent level of inquiry at an advanced level.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, guided reading, tutor feedback on assessment, research exercises; and, for the MA, supervision of dissertation work.	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; for the MA, the dissertation.

b) Transferable skills

    i)   Research skills

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Undertake literature reviewing, demonstrate knowledge of principles of research design; and apply research methods and data analysis techniques.	Lectures in research methods, independent/group research exercises; and, for the MA, supervision of dissertation	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; and, for the MA, the dissertation

    ii)   Communication skills

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to deliver spoken presentations to a high standard with an awareness of the audience's level of knowledge; ability to answer questions before a group; ability to write clearly and concisely and communicate ideas and theoretical concepts effectively.	Lectures, seminars and tutorials; and, for the MA, dissertation supervision.	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; and, for the MA, the dissertation

    iii)   Data presentation

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to present and discuss research evidence concisely and clearly using appropriate presentation techniques. Ability to make accurate and appropriate bibliographic references.	Lectures and tutorials; and, for the MA, dissertation supervision and feedback.	Small group research projects; and, for the MA, the dissertation

iv)   Information technology

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to use appropriate information technologies for the presentation of information, analysis of data and in writing.	Lectures and seminars	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; and, for the MA, the dissertation

v)   Problem solving

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to identify, assess and solve problems encountered in the conduct of research.	Essay and dissertation writing; tutorials; tutor feedback; independent/group research exercises.	Research reports; and, for the MA, the dissertation.

vi)   Working relationships

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to identify and make use of expert sources of advice and guidance; ability to collaborate with peers.	Group research exercises; and, for the MA, dissertation supervision.	Seminar presentations; research reports; and, for the MA, the dissertation.

vii)   Managing learning

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to organise work to meet timetabled deadlines and to produce coherent spoken and written presentations of a scale appropriate to required task. Ability to respond to advice and guidance For the MA: ability to design a viable and realisable dissertation project and complete this on schedule.	Written module and coursework guides; course handbook; advice from tutor; lectures in research methods, independent/group research exercises	Seminar presentations, essays, research reports; and, for the MA, the dissertation

viii)   Career management

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Develop the ability to apply the skills and knowledge gained to potential future occupational contexts.	Tutor feedback; independent research and dissertation supervision.	Student evaluation of the programme and students' reflections on their own personal and professional development in online and face to face group discussions

10. Special features

This programme provides research-led postgraduate teaching and supervision that will attract students interested in careers in the cultural industries and in further academic research.

It offers research-led teaching delivered by academic staff who are leading the fields of media, cultural and communication research and the sociology of culture. The programme features a focus upon the intellectual underpinnings of media and cultural studies, and explores the current interface between the disciplines in relation to such developments as cultural sociology.

The first core module 'Contemporary Issues in Media, Communication and Culture' (MS7009) follows a lecture-seminar programme dealing with key topics in media and cultural studies encouraging students to critically assess relevant concepts and ideas. The module presents the central debates in the field and underscores the economic, political, cultural and technological forces that shape media and communication practices in social context.

The second core module 'Social and Cultural Theory' (SY7037) offers students an opportunity to gain an appreciation and deeper understanding of the topics that are prominent in the fields of sociological research and the social, political, cultural and economic issues that underpin them. Students are invited to be aware of the contrasts and tensions between different theoretical approaches and to critically evaluate their respective strengths and weaknesses.

The final core module—'Exploring the Social World' (SY7043)—employs an innovative interview-workshop format. This comprises a series of interviews with prominent researchers in the fields of sociology, media, communications and culture to facilitate discussion of research methods and project design. These are principally conducted with past or present members of academic staff, alumni and associates of the College of Social Science. The interviewee researchers are selected on the basis of their specialism so as to cover the key substantive areas of the module and to allow coverage of a range of approaches, techniques and philosophies in keeping with the aim of exposing students to a variety of ways of researching sociology, media, culture and communication.

The format of these interview-workshops is as follows:

• A week before the workshop, students will be given a single reading either written by, or related to the topic of, the research undertaken by the interviewee

• The session will begin with a brief introduction to the work and profile of the researcher, and then will consist of an interview by a contributor to the module based around a series of questions covering such topics as: how the researcher became interested in a particular field; how their research questions were developed; how the research was initiated, designed, executed, etc.; difficulties encountered in the field; anticipated findings and unexpected discoveries; the practicalities of analysing data; and the outcomes and impacts of their research both within the academic community and beyond.

• There will then be a period of time for students to ask their own questions, both on the basis of the interview and on the basis of having read the related reading prior to the session.

• This format will be linked to the assessment for the module for which students will be asked to evaluate the work of a particular researcher.

The key aim of this approach is to avoid abstracted discussions of methods and theory and to show in concrete terms real world examples of research which include discussions of the practical, substantive and philosophical issues encountered in the field. By showcasing people undertaking work in diverse fields, and employing a range of techniques, students will be exposed to varied research approaches that have been applied in a wide range of settings. In addition to this core module, discussions of methods, methodology and epistemology will in various ways be built into the other modules in the programme, covered always through their application in relation to concrete substantive concerns.

The programme's innovation lies in the use of a range of assessment methods so as to avoid an over-reliance on essays and exams. The programme has been designed to ensure that assessment methods are germane to the topics covered and the ILOs specific to each module. For example, in the case of Exploring the Social World, a core part of the assessment consists of recorded presentations evaluating the research of plenary discussants. The module Social and Cultural Theory' likewise, makes use of formative group-based presentations as part of the weekly seminar format, recorded video presentations, and a final essay as the key assignments. Here the assessment method is in close relation to the learning outcomes which centre on the capacity of students to evaluate the relationship between research problems, research strategies, and theoretical perspectives. A further benefit of employing a broad array of assessment types and formats is that it opens the accessibility of the programme to a range of learning styles and approaches.

11. Indicators of programme quality

The programme is taught by the newly merged School of Arts, Media and Communication, and both former departments comprising this School have an extensive track record in PGT provision.

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.

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. **Research-based** Framed enquiry for exploring existing knowledge. **Research-oriented** Students critique published research content and process. **Research-apprenticed** Experiencing the research process and methods; building new knowledge.	This programme immerses students in the research process, teaching them how to frame their enquiries, engage with foundational theories, explore and evaluate different methodological approaches. This lays a firm foundation for students to pursue further graduate study at doctoral level. • Research briefed: in lectures, students will receive research-led teaching, delivered by academic staff with expertise in the evolving landscape of media and cultural studies. They will focus on the intellectual underpinnings of media and cultural studies, and how these interact with contemporary developments within these fields, gaining insights into real-world implications of theoretical and methodological approaches. • Research-based: students will conduct interviews with prominent researchers to explore real-world examples of research design and methodology. This will allow them to identify, assess, and evaluate how conceptual frameworks interact with on-the-ground research. • Research-oriented: in seminar discussions and oral presentations, students will learn and apply critical evaluation techniques including content analysis, and data interpretation. They will apply these to published research, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies used and evaluating their implications. • Research-apprenticed: in their dissertation, students will design and execute their own substantial independent research project, with the guidance of an experienced supervisor. They will deploy the skills acquired in core and optional modules to apply theoretical knowledge, utilize research methods, and contribute original insights, to deliver high-quality written work.

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:

Students on this programme will be part of a substantial community of MA students on a suite of media programmes. As part of the School of Arts, Media and Communication, they will be encouraged to attend the School's fortnightly research seminars, in order to participate actively in the research community. In addition, the interviewees for the interview-workshops in core module Exploring the Social World, are drawn from among University of Leicester staff and alumni.

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.

Staff attend the School of Arts, Media and Communication Pedagogy Forum, which explores educational best practice, innovations, and how they can be incorporated into curricula and programme delivery across the School.

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

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/Postgraduate Diploma in Media Culture and Society

Updates to the programme

Academic year affected	Module	Change
2025/26	MS7214 Gender Politics in Contemporary Media	Option module not offered
2025/26	MS7224 Digital Media, Online Persuasion and Behavioural Change	Option module not offered
2025/26	MS7030 Critical Approaches to Consumer Culture	Option module not offered

Credit breakdown

Status	Year long	Semester 1	Semester 2	Other delivery period
Core taught	n/a	60 credits	n/a	n/a
Optional	n/a	n/a	60 credits	n/a
Dissertation/project	60 credits	n/a	n/a	n/a

180 credits in total

Level 7/Year 1   2025/26

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 1	MS7009	Contemporary Issues in Media and Cultural Studies	30 credits
Semester 1	SY7043	Exploring the Social World	15 credits
Semester 1	SY7037	Social and Cultural Theory	15 credits
Term 3	MS7012	Dissertation	60 credits

Notes
MS7012 is compulsory only for degree of MA

Option modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 2	MS7006	Global Affairs: Actors, Communication and Culture	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7013	Media Audiences and Users	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7021	Health Communication Theory and Practice	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7082	Global Communications and Development	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7087	Critical Approaches to Data Analytics and the Digital Economy	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7084	Advertising Creativity	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7056	Globalization of Sexuality	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7043	Digital Media in Everyday Life	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.

Appendix 2: Module specifications

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