

Programme Specification (Postgraduate)

FOR ENTRY YEAR: 2027/28

Date created: 26/02/2021

Last amended: 04/03/2026

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

Full-time

b) Type of study

Campus-based

4. Registration periods

The normal period of registration for the September intake is 12 months. The maximum period of registration for the September intake is 24 months.

The normal period of registration for the January intake is 16 months. The maximum period of registration for the January intake is 28 months.

5. Typical entry requirements

Candidates should normally have at least a good second class honours degree in any relevant discipline from a recognized University, though a Social Sciences Degree would be particularly relevant. Applicants who do not have a first degree, but who can demonstrate other relevant qualifications and/or experience may also be considered. Where English is not the first language, students are required, prior to admission to the Centre, 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 Graduate Office.

6. Accreditation of Prior Learning

N/A

7. Programme aims

The programme will cover the history and development of public relations in different parts of the world and provides a theoretical framework for analysing public relations that seeks to contextualise public relations as an academic discipline; 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 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 commercial businesses use PR techniques to promote themselves and how NGOs campaign for social change.

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 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.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, guided private study; one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the PG Cert: Knowledge of the theories, methodologies and approaches used for studying the subject	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, guided private study; one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project
For the MA and PG Dip: Advanced knowledge of the theories, methodologies and approaches used for studying the subject.	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, guided private study; one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

ii) Concepts

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
For the PG Cert: identify and describe, for the PG Dip and MA, identify, describe and critique, the major	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, guided private study; one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

iii) Techniques

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Mastery of theoretical materials, information retrieval, bibliography and research skills and methods, writing, oral and analytical skills	Lectures, tutorials, guided private study, one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Practical assignments, essays and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

iv) Critical analysis

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to appraise theoretical approaches to public relations techniques; ability to critique efficacy of public relations practices and campaigns	Lectures, tutorials, workshops and guided private study	Oral presentations, essays, project work, and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

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	Lectures, tutorials, guided private study, one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays, report writing, , for the MA only, the dissertation/project

vi) Appraisal of evidence

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to critically review a range of 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.	Lectures, tutorials, guided private study, one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays, practical assignments, and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

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.	Lectures; (for the MA only): tuition in proposal writing and one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays, e-portfolio and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

ii) Communication skills

Intended Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning Methods	How Demonstrated?
Ability to deliver oral presentations to a high standard with an awareness of the audience's interests; ability to handle questions; ability to write clearly and concisely	Lectures, one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays, practical exercises, e-portfolio and, for the MA only, dissertation/project

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	Lectures, group work and independent research, one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Essays, report writing, and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

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	Tutorials, practical exercises, workshops	Reports, and, for the MA only, the dissertation/project

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.	Lectures, tutorials, group work, and independent research	Oral presentations, group projects, report writing, and for the MA only, the dissertation/project

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	Lectures, tutorials and group work	Group projects and oral presentations

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.	Lectures in research methods, independent research and group exercises, one-to-one meetings/supervisions during office hours	Oral presentations, essays, report writing, and for the MA only, the dissertation/project

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 students' reflections on their own personal and professional development in tutorials and face to face group discussions.

10. Special features

The programme will include regular talks and presentations by qualified and experienced public relations professionals. Local PR professionals will also be involved in practical exercises conducted by students in individuals and group projects. Teaching on crisis communications is delivered in liaison with a local public relations agency.

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 into the curriculum.	Research-briefed Students on this course benefit from a curriculum that is grounded in the research of the academic staff who be working with you in lectures, seminars and workshops. Students engage with the most up-to-date debates and developments in the field of public relations. This approach not only enriches their academic experience but also allows students to critically engage with the big debates on effective and socially responsible communication. Weekly themes on the core modules are based around the recent research outputs of the staff who deliver them.
Research-based Framed enquiry for exploring existing knowledge.	Research-based Students actively engage with existing knowledge through inquiry-driven learning. In modules such as Public Relations: Culture and Society and Strategic Communication Management, students will explore the big theoretical ideas and apply them to real-world scenarios. Through assignments and discussions, students gain the confidence to evaluate and critically test existing frameworks, deepening their understanding of how theory informs practice in public relations.
Research-oriented Students critique published research content and process.	Research-oriented Students enjoy opportunities to critically engage with published research, fostering their ability to assess and critique both theoretical frameworks and research methodologies. For example, by selecting a published research paper and provide an analysis of its theoretical approach, and any particular strengths or limitations in its methodology and interpretation of results.
Research-apprenticed Experiencing the research process and methods; building new knowledge.	Research-apprenticed Students undertake an independent, original research project under the guidance of an academic supervisor. Students identify a research question, conduct a comprehensive literature review, select and apply appropriate research methods, and analyse their findings to produce a substantive piece of academic work. This process allows students to experience the full research cycle, from conceptualisation to execution, mirroring the processes undertaken by professional researchers. The ability to undertake, or read and understand, research into topics such as social attitudes, media content and digital trends is an important transferable skill for a career in public relations.

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 of Arts, Media and Communications is a vibrant research hub, with seminars, guest speakers, optional training and in some cases, paid research opportunities (subject to funding). The course maximises the overlapping discourses and fields of media, society, and digitalisation more broadly by allowing students to choose optional modules from a broad range shared across the school. Dissertation and self-directed research projects may be supervised from a range of subject specialists, ensuring that the culmination of your degree is done in partnership with a relevant research specialist. The University is host to the Institute for digital cultures, enabling and encouraging students to avail themselves of the dedicated, rigorous research environment.

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 (through both PGCAPP and HEA Fellowship routes), 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 members on the programme participate in academic training from the university (e.g. dedicated workshops, group seminars) that updates their knowledge of best practice for educational purposes. Additionally, module leaders, instructors and tutors engage in School level annual teaching awaydays, as well as subject division and programme team meetings, for continual pedagogical discussion and development.

Across the programme team there is engagement with national subject-relevant educational organisations (e.g. Association of Journalism Education) and staff have also been involved in QAA Subject Benchmark statement authorship for Communication, Media, Film and Cultures.

11. Indicators of programme quality

Before its launch the programme was developed in consultation with the Chartered Institute for Public Relations. Links have also been established with the Public Relations Consultants Association (PRCA) and the programme has been officially recognized by the PRCA, this has enabled students on the MA to become automatically registered as student member of the PRCA and 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)

Admissions are in September and January.

Students admitted in September undertake their dissertation during the summer of the following year and submit their dissertation in September (12 months in total).

Students admitted in January start by following semester 2 modules and break during the summer; in the following September they follow semester 1 modules and start their dissertation in January of the following year, submitting their dissertation at the end of May. Although this implies 16 months in total, only 12 are actually spent in the course

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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 in Media and Public Relations**Updates to the programme**

Academic year affected	Module	Change
2026/27	MS7178 Public Relations: Culture and Society	Changes from 30 credits to 15 credits.
2026/27	MS7224 Digital Media, Online Persuasion and Behavioural Change	Either/or module now core.
2026/27	MS7307 Promotional Cultures	Either/or module removed.
2026/27	MS7021 Health Communication Theory and Practice	Was optional, now core.
2026/27	MS7056 The Globalisation of Sexuality	Semester 2 optional module not offered
2026/27	Introduction of optional modules in Semester 1. Students choose one optional module in Semester 1 and one optional module in Semester 2.	

Credit breakdown September intake

Status	Year long	Semester 1	Semester 2	Other delivery period
Core taught	n/a	45 credits	45 credits	n/a
Optional	n/a	15 credits	15 credits	n/a
Dissertation/project	60 credits	n/a	n/a	n/a

180 credits in total

Credit breakdown January intake

Status	Year long	Semester 2	Semester 1	Other delivery period
Core taught	n/a	45 credits	45 credits	n/a
Optional	n/a	15 credits	15 credits	n/a
Dissertation/project	60 credits	n/a	n/a	n/a

180 credits in total

Level 7/Year 1 September intake 2027/28

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 1	MS7178	Public Relations, Culture and Society	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7400	Media Research Methods	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7079	PR, Journalism and Networked Media	15 credits

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 2	MS7310	Strategic Communication Management	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7224	Digital Media, Online Persuasion and Behavioural Change	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7021	Health Communication Theory and Practice	15 credits
Term 3	MS7012	Dissertation	60 credits

Option modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 1	MS7183	Global Digital Cultures	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7086	Global Media: Structures and Representations	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7147	Advertising in Society: Historical Developments and Contemporary Issues	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7031	Advertising for a Client	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7160	The Sociology of Digital Media	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7061	The Politics of Digital Media	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7002	Media and Communication Theory	15 credits
Semester 1	MS7109	Contemporary Issues in Media and Cultural Studies	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7013	Media Audiences and Users	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7082	Global Communications and Development	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7043	Digital Media in Everyday Life	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7087	Critical Approaches to Data Analytics and the Digital Economy	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7006	Global Affairs: Actors, Communication and Culture	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7080	Analysing Meaning in Advertising	15 credits

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 2	MS7081	Advertising and Promotion in the Digital Age	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7084	Advertising Creativity	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7050	AI, Global Media and Communication	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.

Level 7/Year 1 January intake 2027/28

Core modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 2	MS7310	Strategic Communications Management	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7224	Digital Media, Online Persuasion and Behavioural Change	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7021	Health Communication Theory and Practice	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7178	Public Relations, Culture and Society	30 credits
Semester 1*	MS7400	Media Research Methods	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7079	PR, Journalism and Networked Media	15 credits
Semester 2*	MS7012	Dissertation	60 credits

Notes

(* denotes modules that take place in academic year 2027/28)

Option modules

Delivery period	Code	Title	Credits
Semester 1*	MS7183	Global Digital Cultures	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7086	Global Media: Structures and Representations	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7147	Advertising in Society: Historical Developments and Contemporary Issues	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7031	Advertising for a Client	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7160	The Sociology of Digital Media	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7061	The Politics of Digital Media	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7002	Media and Communication Theory	15 credits
Semester 1*	MS7109	Contemporary Issues in Media and Cultural Studies	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7013	Media Audiences and Users	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7082	Global Communications and Development	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7043	Digital Media in Everyday Life	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7087	Critical Approaches to Data Analytics and the Digital Economy	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7006	Global Affairs: Actors, Communication and Culture	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7080	Analysing Meaning Advertising	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7081	Advertising and Promotion in the Digital Age	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7084	Advertising Creativity	15 credits
Semester 2	MS7050	AI, Global Media and Communication	15 credits

Notes

(* denotes modules that take place in academic year 2027/28)

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](#) [Login required] (Note - modules are organized by year of delivery).