

Programme Specification: BA (Hons) Media and Communication

Every course offered by Birmingham City University has a **programme specification**. A programme specification sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student who finishes the course will have gained. The programme specification also gives details of the teaching methods which will be used on the course together with information about how students will be assessed (for example by written examination or coursework assignment).

The programme specification for your course can be found at:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/courses/programme-specs>

Programme Aims

- This programme is designed to provide students with an equal balance of academic and theoretical study of the media and the specialist and transferable skills needed to perform as professionals within the industry. The aim is help our students to develop into critically aware, thinking media workers the practical skills to perform well in your first job and the intellectual capacity to with progress and achieve your chosen aims.
- Work placement is compulsory for students and there is a high level of employer engagement with the course to encourage students to develop professional attitudes and practices.
- To reflect industry practice much of the learning and assessment on the course is based upon group work. If you contribute actively to these group exercises you will improve your own skills and assist the learning of others.

Programme title

Bachelor of Arts in Media and Communication.

Awards

The programme will offer staged awards corresponding to three levels of the course.

Certificate of Higher Education will be awarded for successful completion of the NINE first year (level four) modules (a total of 120 stage one credits).

Diploma of Higher Education will be awarded for successful completion of the 120 second year (level five) credits the equivalent of ten stage two modules (a total of 120 level two credits).

Bachelor of Arts will be awarded for the successful completion of the equivalent of twenty stage two modules including the compulsory modules of the programme (a total of 240 stage two credits).

Bachelor of Arts will be awarded with honours.

Students have the option to complete honours awards in one of a number of named degrees within the programme. They are:

- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Event and Exhibition Industries)
- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Journalism)
- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Media Photography)
- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Music Industries)
- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Public Relations)
- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Radio)
- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Television)
- BA (Hons) Media and Communication (Web and New Media)

Students will normally study on a full-time basis although the regulations allow for students to complete their award as part-time students under certain specified circumstances.

The BA course will normally last three years.

Course aims:

The programme aims to provide learners with:

- skills of independent learning, teamwork, problem-solving, critical reflection and communication relevant to academic study and media production, and transferable to future vocational, academic and personal needs realised through a personal development portfolio;
- organisational, research, technical and creative skills in, and an understanding of the professional context, languages and expressive potential of, production in the major communication media in contemporary culture, ultimately realised in a production project in a chosen medium;
- critical, research and analytical skills, combined with knowledge of, and a critical engagement with, the scope, methods and limitations of the major theoretical approaches to media histories, institutions, texts and consumption in their cultural, economic and political context, ultimately realised in a dissertation on a chosen topic;

For students choosing to work towards one of the named degrees within the programme there is the additional aim of providing learners with:

- The specialist application of these skills to a depth study in journalism, media photography, music industries, public relations, radio, television, or web and new media.

How the programme is organised

The programme is delivered through a series of modules. Modules are self-contained packages of learning and assessment. In other words over a few months you will study in a small number of media areas and then be assessed. You are awarded credit if you are successful, before moving on to another set of modules, covering new areas of study and assessment.

Programme structure

The modular structure of the course is based upon a set of University standard regulations. Fifteen credits are awarded for each single module. Some modules are double modules with thirty credits.

Credits are awarded at two stages: Stage One covering compulsory foundation work and Stage Two based upon more advanced consolidation work and specialist staff-student negotiated work. The course is normally delivered over three years, with the academic year divided into two semesters, one from September to January, and one from February to July.

Stage One (Level 4) – All students should obtain a total of 120 credits.

NB: You must pass all modules at this level

Core modules – compulsory for all students

- Studying the Media and Communication
- Professional Studies
- Production Event

Theory Option Modules (Students select one – 15 credits each)

- Television, Film and Video Media
- Journalism, PR and the Media
- Radio and Popular Music
- New Media and Photography

Production Option Modules (Students select four)

- Event and Exhibition Planning (Core for Event and Exhibition Industries specialists)
- Web Production Skills (Core for Web and New Media Specialists)
- Visual Design for Media (Prerequisite for Magazine Production)
- Journalism in Practice (Core for Journalism and PR Specialists)
- Media Photography Skills (Core for Photography Specialists)
- Radio Production (Core for Radio Specialists)
- Television Production (Core for TV Specialists)
- Media Relations (Core for PR Specialists)
- Music Industries Skills (Core for Music Industries Specialists)

Stage Two (Level 5) (120 credits) and (Level 6) (120 credits).

The *structure* for Stage Two (second and third years) of the programme is identical for all degrees within the programme. Students are awarded a specialist degree title if they successfully complete appropriate specialist core and option modules.

The outlines below give an indication of the options available at each stage of the programme. Students following specialist pathways will have their options limited. Details of these choices are made clear in the Student Options Handbook.

Stage 1 (Level 4)

BA (Hons) Media and Communication

Semester 1	Semester 2
Studying Media Text and Context 15 Credits	Core Theory Option MC 411/2/4/5 15 Credits
Production Module e.g. Journalism 15 Credits	Production Module e.g. TV Production 15 Credits
Production Module e.g. Photography 15 Credits	Production Option or Popular Culture e.g. Web Production OR Popular Culture Theory Option 15 Credits
Professional Studies (including two week placement) 15 Credits	Production Event (Students organise and stage their own media event) 15 Credits

Students choose **FOUR** production options (or **THREE** production options and **Popular Culture**) from:

Event and Exhibition Planning (Core for Event and Exhibition Industries specialists)

Web Production Skills (Core for Web and New Media Specialists)

Visual Design for Media (Prerequisite for Magazine Production)

Journalism in Practice (Core for Journalism and PR Specialists)

Media Photography Skills (Core for Photography Specialists)

Radio Production (Core for Radio Specialists)

Television Production (Core for TV Specialists)

Media Relations (Core for PR Specialists)

Music Industries Skills (Core for Music Industries Specialists)

Students are given guidance on the selection of options to ensure they have the prerequisites for study at Stage 2

Production modules are prerequisites for modules taken at Stage 2. Module descriptors indicate which modules constitute prerequisites. Students are not allowed to take Stage Two modules unless they have the necessary prerequisite.

Stage 2. Level 5
BA (Hons) Media and Communication

Semester 1	Semester 2
Core Theory Option 15 Credits	Managing Media Projects and Dissertations Core Theory 15 Credits
Production Module e.g. Broadcast Journalism 15 Credits	Production Module e.g. Online Journalism 15 Credits
Production Module e.g. Magazine Production 15 Credits	Minor Route Production or Theory Option e.g. Editorial and Commercial Photography 15 Credits
Professional Studies (including three week placement) 15 Credits	Theory Option 15 Credits

Students choose THREE or FOUR production options from the following list
Specialists must take three from their specialist area (some modules are in more than one specialist area). The fourth option must be from a different area of production:

Event and Exhibition Industries

Event and Exhibition Production Core for Event and Exhibition specialists)
 PR Techniques
 Online Promotion
 Music, Promotion and PR

Journalism

News and Feature Writing (Core for Journalism Specialists)
 Broadcast Journalism
 Magazine Production
 Online Journalism

Music Industries

Music Online (Core for Music Industry Specialists)
 Music TV
 Music Promotion and PR
 Music Programming

Photography

Image Makers
 Photography in Design
 Editorial and Commercial Photography

PR

PR Techniques
 Music Promotion and PR
 Online Promotion

Radio

Live Radio
Commercial Production for Radio
Radio Documentaries
Music Programming

TV

TV Documentary and Features
TV Magazines and Talkshows
Music TV and Promo Production
TV Drama Production

Web and New Media

Music Online
Online Promotion
Web and Alternative Media Production

Students also choose ONE core theory option in Sem 1 and ONE or TWO theory options in Sem 2 from the following list:

Events and Exhibitions in Context (core for Event and Exhibition specialists)
Journalism in Context (core for Journalism specialists)
Radio Studies (core for Radio specialists)
TV Studies (core for TV specialists)
Interactive Cultures (core for Web and New Media specialists)
Photography and Visual Culture (core for Photography specialists)
The Music Business (core for Music Industries specialists)
PR in Context (core for PR specialists)
Issues and Representations
Reality Media
Media Culture
Film Cultures

Stage 2. Level 6
BA (Hons) Media and Communication

Semester 1	Semester 2
Dissertation – 30 credits	
Production Project – 30 credits	
Production Module e.g. Professional Journalism 15 Credits	Professional Studies 15 Credits
Theory Option e.g. Media Law and Regulation 15 Credits	
Minor Route Production/Theory Option e.g. Creative Camera in Practice 15 Credits	

Students choose three options (TWO production and ONE theory or vice versa) from the following lists:

Production

Web and New Media Design Studio (Core for Web and New Media specialists)
Professional Journalism (Core for Journalism specialists)
Creative Camera in Practice (Core for Photography specialists)
Radio Station (Core for Radio specialists)
Independent Location Television Company (TV specialists must take one of two TV modules – but cannot take both)
Live Television Studio Channel (TV specialists must take one of two TV modules – but cannot take both)
Communications Management (Core for PR specialists)
Music Industry Enterprise ((Core for Music Industry specialists)
Visual Design Studio

Theory

Creativity in the Media
Media Law and Regulation (Core for Journalism specialists)
Film and TV Rhetoric (Core for TV specialists)
Popular Music Culture (Core for Music Industries specialists)
Promotional Culture (Core for PR specialists)

Procedures for selecting options.

Each year there will be a series of meetings to explain the procedure for selecting options and help you make informed choices. At this point we will also supply you with an options handbook which will provide you with more details about the modules and give the deadlines for the selection process.

Professional studies and placements

Finding and securing a placement is your responsibility but Professional Studies is a key aspect of your course and aims to provide you with support and guidance to help you with the search and also to make the most of your placement once you are there.

You will be expected to complete at least two weeks (70 hours) on placement in Year 1 and three weeks (105 hours) in Year 2. All placements should be registered with the School Office.

Be aware that Professional Studies assessments in Years 2 and 3 will ask you to provide information and reflection on your experience, as well as evidence of your attendance, so it is worth preparing yourself by checking out the assignment briefs in advance.

There will also be a series of talks and workshops involving professionals from a range of media industries laid on for you as part of your Professional Studies. Opportunities for media placements, internships and paid work will also be posted on the School's online information site called JobBook. You should make sure that you are signed up to this site so that you are aware of opportunities as they arise.