

MA Digital Political Communications

Programme specification

1. Programme details

Item	Information
a) Programme name (incl. pathways):	MA Digital Political Communications
b) Programme code(s)	730221A
c) Programme credit value(s)	180 CATS 90 ECTS
d) Programme author(s)	Natalie Fenton, Gholam Khiabany & Jacob Mukherjee
e) Entry requirements	You should have (or expect to be awarded) an undergraduate degree of at least second class standard in a relevant/related subject. You might also be considered for the programme if you aren't a graduate or your degree is in an unrelated field, but you have relevant experience and can show that you have the ability to work at postgraduate level
f) Academic year effective from	2026-27

2. Programme Aims & Overview

Aims

MA Digital Political Communications aims to equip students with the conceptual tools and cognitive and practical skills to 1) assess the significance and consider the role of digital media in the context of prevailing economic, political and cultural trends; 2) explore the relationship between political economic power, the architecture and ownership of digital media, and the political cultures and strategies of electoral and nonelectoral political forces; 3) discuss the implications of the above for questions of democracy, collective agency and the capacity of humanity, the different groups within in, to address the multiple crises afflicting our world today.

Overview

This MA offers teaching that is critical, innovative and diverse. It combines theory with practical, applied elements, and draws on a range of research and contemporary examples. These come from current work in politics, political science and media studies, and also from political sociology, cultural theory and journalism. The curriculum covers political communication, from the national and international down to the local and

personal, from governments and parties to NGOs and local activist groups. It engages with cultural, alternative and digital, interactive communication as well as traditional mass media. This dynamic programme, first and foremost, offers critical engagement. It asks difficult questions about politics, economic policy, society and the media. Taking this programme will not just give you an understanding of the forms and impacts of political communications. It will also help you contextualise that knowledge in relation to the structures, institutions and actors that are at the heart of politics and media. This programme is broadly conceptual in focus, but also offers several practical, applied options as well as skills-based components. All students take a research skills module and are supervised through a dissertation with a research component. There are options, such as Media and Political Campaigning, which are entirely practice-based and taught by professionals in the field. There are also several speaker series running each year with guests from the worlds of politics, journalism, business and campaigning coming to talk.

The programme is embedded in the Department’s ethos of diversity and interdisciplinarity. This is reflected in the combination of theory and practice which allows us to challenge norms and engage with real-world issues. The programme is theory-driven, but grounded in practice. Students can choose up to 30 credits of practice option modules. Students are also given opportunities to apply theory to actual empirical problems through their dissertation project and additional assignments and presentations.

3. External reference

Item	Information
a) FHEQ Level of Award:	7
b) UCAS Code(s):	N/A
c) HECoS Code(s):	100444 Media & Communications
d) QAA Benchmark group:	N/A

4. Awards

Item	Information
a) Awarding institution:	Goldsmiths, University of London
b) Teaching institution:	Goldsmiths, University of London
c) Home School:	MCCS
d) School(s) also involved in teaching of the programme:	1. None 2. None 3. None If other, name here:
e) Entry awards:	<input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Cert <input type="checkbox"/> CertHE <input type="checkbox"/> DipHE <input type="checkbox"/> PGCert <input type="checkbox"/> PGDip
f) Interim exit awards:	<input type="checkbox"/> Foundation Cert <input type="checkbox"/> CertHE <input type="checkbox"/> DipHE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PGCert <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PGDip
g) Final awards:	MA

5. Delivery

Item	Information
a) Language of study:	English
b) Valid intake points in year:	<input type="checkbox"/> January <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sept/Oct <input type="checkbox"/> Other If other, specify:
c) Mode of study:	On Campus Indicate the overall balance of teaching modes in the rows below. Row d) shows total hours of directed learning, with e) and f) showing how this is broken down in in-person vs. online learning, in hours and percentages.
d) Total hours directed learning/year	120
e) In-person hours	120
f) Online hours	
g) Pace of study:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full time <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Part time
h) Duration of programme	Full time: 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> years <input type="checkbox"/> months Part time: 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> years <input type="checkbox"/> months
i) External accreditation:	N/A
j) Apprenticeship Standard:	N/A

6. Programme Learning Outcomes

Also, see the [curriculum map](#) at the end of document.

For UG exit awards, Learning Outcomes must be achieved in the level indicated below:

- CertHE = Level 4
- DipHE = Level 5

Learning outcomes are grouped in categories of:

- **Declarative learning** - knowledge, thinking & facts (D1-3)
- **Functional learning** - application of knowledge, thinking & facts (F1-3)
- **Professional and transferable skills and behaviours** (P1-3)

On successful completion of the programme, you will be able to:

	Learning Outcome	Level	Graduate Attribute
D1	Contribute comprehensively to current debates – both academic and professional – within the field of political communications.	7	Diversity of perspective
D2	Critically assess the practical and theoretical contexts in which political communications actors work and identify alternative paradigms of interaction between political actors, communicators and the public.	7	Responsible agency
D3	Debate salient academic, ethical and technical issues relevant to research methods, and draw on this awareness in designing an effective research project.	7	Diversity of perspective
F1	Appreciate a range of methodological issues surrounding the production of innovative research in Political Communications.	7	Diversity of perspective
F2	Act autonomously in the execution of a piece of research and take responsibility for both ethical and practical decisions, and for presenting the findings in a clear and coherent form.	7	Collaboration
F3	Present advanced and systematic knowledge of recent and relevant literature in the field of media, communications and cultural studies and demonstrate a critical awareness of current theoretical problems.	7	Political in the personal
P1	Show independence and creativity in self-learning, exercise initiative and taking personal responsibility for work.	7	Diversity of perspective
P2	Act autonomously in the execution of a piece of research and take responsibility for both ethical and practical decisions, and for presenting the findings in a clear and coherent form.	7	Diversity of perspective
P3	Demonstrate an appropriate range of transferable skills such as ‘communication skills, skills of initiative and personal responsibility’, decision-making and ‘the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development’.	7	Diversity of perspective

7. Programme Structure

For Undergraduate programmes (UG), each level must amount to at least **120 CATS** (60 ECTS).

Postgraduate (PGT) programmes must amount to at least 180 CATS (90ECTS), with exception to interim exit awards.

Programmes are staged in **Phases**, where each Phase relates to an exit award.

Compulsory modules must be taken by all students.

Option modules – you must choose one or more of the options available to this programme at this level and point. The option modules available from this list may vary from year to year, depending on student numbers and staff availability. Selection takes place during your studies, not before.

Programme structure notes (where relevant):

Phase 1 (FT)

Module Name	Code	Credit	Level	Type	Term	Year PT	Pathway
Political Comms in the Digital Age	MC71083 A	30	7	Compulsory	1	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Media Power & Politics	MC71084 A	30	7	Compulsory	2	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Dissertation	MC71140 B	60	7	Compulsory	3	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Storytelling Strategies	MC71179 B	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Journalism in Context	MC71121 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Beyond Capitalism	MC71222 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Fashion Sustainability & Global Cult	MC71256 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Social Media in Everyday Life	MC71190 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Choose an item.	MA Digital Political Communications
Media & Culture in the Middle East	MC71042 D	30	7	Option - Shared	1		MA Digital Political Communications

Module Name	Code	Credit	Level	Type	Term	Year PT	Pathway
Data, AI & Forensic Journalism	MC71260 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1		MA Digital Political Communications
Software Studies	MC71267 A	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Digital Political Communications
Mobile & Podcast Journalism	MC71264 A	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Digital Political Communications
Political Economy of the Media	MC71015 B	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Digital Political Communications
Race & the World	MC71039 D	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Digital Political Communications
Gender Sexuality & Affect	MC71156 B	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Digital Political Communications
Activist Film & Social Change	MC71168 B	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Digital Political Communications
Contemporary Feminist Media Cultures	MC71235 A	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Digital Political Communications

8. Learning, Teaching & Assessment

Learning & Teaching methods

Teaching will be via a range of formats to be as relevant as possible to the topic and learning outcomes. This may be through workshops, practical labs, lectures and seminars. It may have a mix of in-person and online activities, designed to give you the best learning experience and to make the most out of your learning experience. You are expected to attend all of your timetabled learning activities.

Specifically, this programme will be taught in the following ways:

Assessment modes and approaches

You will be assessed in a range ways throughout your course. These will be both Formative (for feedback and development), and Summative (required to pass and progress to the next level). Summative assessments are compulsory.

Feedback is a crucial part of your learning and development in this programme. You will receive feedback both on your Formative (work in progress) tasks/assessments, and your Summative (graded) assessments. This feedback will help the assessment to be a part of your learning, not just a test. It may be verbal, written or video based. Please engage with this feedback to improve your future work.

Specifically, this programme will be assessed in the following ways:

Module	Assessment Type	Submission	Learning Outcomes	Credits
Dissertation	Coursework	12-15,000 words	all	60
Pol Comms in the Digital Age	Essay	6,000 words	all	30
Media Power & Politics	Essay	6,000 words	all	30
Optional modules	Essay/ Project	Various theory & practice depending on module chosen	all	60

Assessment diet (number of assessments for compulsory modules)

Mode	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Total
Coursework					0	0
Exam					0	0
Live					0	0
Portfolio (multi-modal)					0	0
Practical / multimedia					0	0

Mode	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Total
Written					3	3
TOTAL:	0	0	0	0	3	3
Of which...	Individual:	3	Group:	0		

9. Other information

Item	Information
a) Assessment regulations	https://www.gold.ac.uk/gam/taught-programmes/assessment/
b) Placement opportunities	N/A
c) Programme-specific requirements	
d) Programme specific costs and resources	
e) Employability and potential career opportunities	

10. Academic support

There is a range of support available to you to give you the best possible chance of success in this programme.

Please see your tutors and student portal/VLE for details of what's available and how to access this support.

11. Curriculum map

Programme Learning Outcomes assessed by each module:

Module name	Code	Type	D1	D2	D3	F1	F2	F3	P1	P2	P3
Political Comms in the Digital Age	MC71083 A	Compulsory	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Media Power & Politics	MC71084 A	Compulsory	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Dissertation	MC71140 B	Compulsory	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Storytelling Strategies	MC71179 B	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Journalism in Context	MC71121 A	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Beyond Capitalism	MC71222 A	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Fashion Sustainability & Global Cult	MC71256 A	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Social Media in Everyday Life	MC71190 A	Option - Shared	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Software Studies	MC71267 A	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Mobile & Podcast Journalism	MC71264 A	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Political Economy of the Media	MC71015 B	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Media and Culture in the Middle East	MC71183 A	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Race & the World	MC71039 D	Option - Shared	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒

Module name	Code	Type	D1	D2	D3	F1	F2	F3	P1	P2	P3
Gender Sexuality & Affect	MC71156 B	Option - Shared	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Data, AI & Forensic Journalism	MC71260 A	Option - Shared	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Activist Film & Social Change	MC71168 B	Option - Shared	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contemporary Feminist Media Cultures	MC71235 A	Option - Shared	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Module name	Code	Type	D1	D2	D3	F1	F2	F3	P1	P2	P3
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>