

# MA Media & Communications

## Programme specification

### 1. Programme details

Item	Information
a) Programme name (incl. pathways):	MA Media & Communications
b) Programme code(s)	730040A
c) Programme credit value(s)	180 CATS 90 ECTS
d) Programme author(s)	Lisa Blackman & Gholam Khiabany
e) Entry requirements	You should have (or expect to be awarded) an undergraduate degree of at least 2:2 standard in a relevant/related subject. You might also be considered if you aren't a graduate or your degree is in an unrelated field, but have your relevant experience and can show you can work at postgraduate level
f) Academic year effective from	2026-27

### 2. Programme Aims & Overview

#### Aims

The programme aims to offer you a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to the field of Media and Communications. It aims to bring together a range of interdisciplinary perspectives to help you understand, act and intervene within our contemporary globally connected mediated environments, increasingly underpinned by generative AI and the politics of algorithms. We consider issues such as the sociological or political-economy of media institutions, including ownership, control and censorship, with an emphasis on the social power of media organisations and digital platforms and infrastructures; and on the other, the domains of subjective identities in mediated societies, which draws from the intellectual traditions of cultural studies. In so doing, we borrow from a range of different academic disciplines: sociology, anthropology, geography, psychology, affect studies, literature, history, body studies, and philosophy.

#### Overview

Our world-leading MA programme in Media and Communication aims to provide you with ways to think about what is happening now and why. There has never been a more exciting time to study media and communications. The digital age has transformed our communicative experiences from how we make sense of issues, our experience of a viral pandemic, how we consume and interact across social media platforms, how we protest, lobby, and respond to humanitarian disasters, develop particular tastes and attachments to

ideas and beliefs, and even what counts as truth. Our mediated worlds impact on the rhythms and rituals of our daily lives changing the way we think about and create things, even the way we conceive of ourselves. The news is available instantaneously, 24 hours a day. Social media has expanded exponentially in reach, transforming personal relationships, politics and business. At the click of a button we can share our experiences and build solidarities across the world. The media are no longer just delivered to us but also things that we make and distribute ourselves. Mobile technology ensures we are tuned in and connected at all times.

At the same time all of our digital comings and goings are tracked and our data collected to sell on to those who profit from it. Digital surveillance is commonplace and privacy an ever more important concern. Generative AI is changing our lives, whilst at the time reproducing social inequalities and perpetuating systems of exclusion. Multi-media conglomerates continue to replicate patterns of dominance of legacy media. Media and communications are so much a part of our daily lives that we rarely stop to think what they might mean for our own identities, our relationships, our working lives, our institutions, our economies, our environment, our creativity, or our citizenship. Yet, there has never been a more important time to do so. One of the principle aims of the MA is to provide you with the ideas you need to think about these social, cultural, economic, psychological, aesthetic, and political transformations, to provide a critical appraisal of our mediated existences, and to provide tools to understand, survive and lead in the changing media landscape to come. There are no ready answers awaiting us around the corner. To work on these ideas is necessarily a collaborative venture, bringing in many different intellectual dispositions. It is also, necessarily, an interdisciplinary venture, calling upon a whole range of ways of thinking which have traditionally been compartmentalized.

The programme provides the tools to understand, survive and lead in the changing media landscape, now and in the future. It invites you to think critically about the larger, global media worlds of the present age, and about your own location in the mediated society in which you live. The MA is principally interdisciplinary and calls upon a wide range of ways of thinking, building on the different approaches of people working in the School of MCCA, to encourage a broad and critical understanding of media and communications. Coursework is primarily theoretically based, so you will need some foundation in the (broadly conceived) intellectual arenas of the social sciences or the humanities in order to grasp the dominating aims and objectives of the programme. The programme is theory-driven but grounded in practice. Students can also choose a 30-credit option module from our practice areas such as film or journalism. Students are also given opportunities to apply theory to actual empirical problems through their group work projects on the core module, 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



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:**

	<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Graduate Attribute</b>
D1	Acquire in depth knowledge of the defining intellectual traditions of the field of media and communication studies, in such a way that you can produce your own 'map' of the field	7	Diversity of perspective
D2	Synthesize and compare and contrast knowledge of how key debates in the field of media and communications are informed by a range of other academic disciplines	7	Diversity of perspective
D3	Consolidate and deepen their understanding of related subject areas in which they have an interest through the choice of options offered on the programme.	7	Diversity of perspective
F1	Utilise conceptual knowledge and critical reasoning skills in complex problem solving	7	Diversity of perspective
F2	Display advanced level of conceptual, methodological and empirical knowledge appropriate for a sustained piece of original research in the field	7	Collaboration
F3	Systematically and critically engage with key thinkers, debates and intellectual paradigms within the field of media and communications.	7	Political in the personal
P1	Demonstrate the capacity to work resourcefully and independently.	7	Diversity of perspective
P2	Apply humanities and social research methods to the analysis of media and wider social issues.	7	Diversity of perspective
P3	Use a range of methods and sources to construct original and convincing arguments.	7	Diversity of perspective

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## 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.

### Phase 1 (FT)

Module Name	Code	Credit	Level	Type	Term	Year PT	Pathway
Introduction to Media & Communications Theory	MC71045 B	30	7	Compulsory	1	Y1	MA Media & Communications
MCCS Dissertation	MC71044 B	60	7	Compulsory	3	Y2	MA Media & Communications
Political Comms in the Digital Age	MC71083 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Y1	MA Media & Communications
Film Craft Fundamentals	MC71169 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Y1	MA Media & Communications
Journalism in Context	MC71121 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Y1	MA Media & Communications
Social Media in Everyday Life	MC71190 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Y1	MA Media & Communications
Beyond Capitalism	MC71222 A	30	7	Option - Shared	1		MA Media & Communications
Queer Crip Decolonial Feminisms	MC71232 B	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Y1	MA Media & Communications
Immersive & Generative Arts	MC71241 B	30	7	Option - Shared	1	Y1	MA Media & Communications
Music as Communication & Creative Practice	MC71050 A	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Media & Communications

Module Name	Code	Credit	Level	Type	Term	Year PT	Pathway
Embodiment & Experience	MC71051 C	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Media & Communications
Media Power & Politics	MC71084 A	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Media & Communications
Experimental Media	MC71153 B	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Media & Communications
Contemporary Feminist Media Cultures	MC71235 A	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Media & Communications
Race & Technology	MC71242 B	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Media & Communications
Software Studies	MC71214 B	30	7	Option - Shared	2		MA Media & 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:**

The programme is delivered on-campus. We combine face to face lectures, small group seminar discussion/project-based workshops and one to one tutorials, combined with meetings using TEAMS (our online platform), and a variety of supplementary materials to support the lectures and seminars. By and large the optional modules are taught by a mix of lectures, seminars and tutorials, although there are some variations. Some options offer a greater input of workshop organisation, practice-based and mixed modes of assessment. In preparing for the dissertation, all students will receive intensive one-to-one tutoring (6 half hour supervisions) during the spring and summer term, which allow you to develop your own independent project. Most, if not all of the learning outcomes — from developing the capacity to map the field, to retrieve and evaluate information, to work to deadline — are condensed and applied in the process of preparing and delivering the dissertation with the guidance of a designated dissertation supervisor.

### 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
Intro to Media & Comms Theory	Reflective Report	A reflective report of 2000 words based on two group work projects, which counts for 40% of your overall mark.	all	30
Intro to Media and Comms Theory	Essay	An essay of 3000 words, which counts for 60% of your overall mark.	all	3 x 30
Optional modules	Essay/project	Various theory & practice depending on module chosen	All	3 x 30

**Assessment diet (number of assessments for compulsory modules)**

Mode	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Total
Coursework	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1
Exam	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Live	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Portfolio (multi-modal)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
Practical / multimedia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0
Written	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Of which...</b>	<b>Individual:</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Group:</b>	<b>0</b>		

## 9. Other information

Item	Information
a) Assessment regulations	<a href="https://www.gold.ac.uk/gam/taught-programmes/assessment/">https://www.gold.ac.uk/gam/taught-programmes/assessment/</a>

Item	Information
b) Placement opportunities	N/A
c) Programme-specific requirements	N/A
d) Programme specific costs and resources	N/A
e) Employability and potential career opportunities	N/A

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## 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
Introduction to Media & Communications Theory	MC71045 B		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MCCS Dissertation	MC71044 B		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>
Queer Crip Decolonial Feminisms	MC71232 B		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Political Comms in the Digital Age	MC71083 A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Film Craft Fundamentals	MC71169 A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Journalism in Context	MC71121 A		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Software Studies	MC71214 B		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Social Media in Everyday Life	MC71190 A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Immersive & Generative Arts	MC71241 B		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Embodiment & Experience	MC71051 C		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Media Power & Politics	MC71084 A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Experimental Media	MC71153 B		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Music as Communication & Creative Practice	MC71050 A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Module name	Code	Type	D1	D2	D3	F1	F2	F3	P1	P2	P3
Contemporary Feminist Media Cultures	MC71235 A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Beyond Capitalism	MC71222 A		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Race & Technology	MC71242 B		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>