

BA (Hons) Media and Communications

Programme Specification

Awarding Institution:

University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)

Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London

Name of Final Award and Programme Title: BA (Hons) Media and Communications

Name of Interim Exit Award(s): Not applicable

Duration of Programme: 3 years full-time

UCAS Code(s): P300

HECoS Code(s): (100444) Media and Communications

QAA Benchmark Group: Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies

FHEQ Level of Award: Level 6

Programme accredited by: Not applicable

Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: October 2021

Home Department: Media, Communications and Cultural Studies

Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Not applicable

Programme overview

By bringing together media practice and communications theory, this degree covers a broad spectrum of critical perspectives on the media, and introduces a range of contemporary media practices.

Why study BA Media and Communications at Goldsmiths?

- You will study in one of the UK's and the world's top media, communications and cultural studies departments. You'll be taught by leading names in media, communications and cultural studies.
- We concentrate on high quality lectures and small group work, and all our teaching takes place on one purpose-built site.
- On practice courses you'll be taught by industry professionals engaged in TV, film, journalism, radio, photography, scriptwriting, short fiction, illustration, interactive media and animation.

- You'll have access to industry-standard practice facilities, including TV/film, radio and photography studios, digital video and audio editing suites, and animation software and hardware.
- Our close links to the media industry bring you into regular contact with media professionals. You will have the opportunity to apply for an internship in the media as part of the course.
- We regularly host debates and talks by international figures in media and cultural research and the media industry; recent guests have included Danny Boyle, Gurinder Chadha and Noel Clark.
- You'll be taught alongside students from all over the world and with diverse cultural experiences that enrich the department and the learning experience.
- You'll develop skills that you can use throughout your career whether in the media industries or elsewhere. Our recent graduates are now working as television producers, news readers, editors, journalists etc. Others have gone into a whole range of careers such as research, teaching and law.

Programme entry requirements

A-level: BBB

BTEC: DDM

IB: 33 Points, HL655

Access: Pass with 45 Level 3 credits including 30 Distinctions and a number of merits/passes in subject-specific modules

Aims of the programme

By bringing together media practice and communications theory, this programme explores a broad spectrum of critical perspectives on the media and introduces a range of contemporary media practices. It offers a solid basis of practical experience in media production, and an understanding of how the media function, drawing on a wide range of theoretical disciplines. We aim to provide an experience in which theory and practice elements can influence and enrich each other in the production of original work.

For us, an understanding of the mass media and the relationship of the individual to the media is crucial in developing an engaged and questioning member of society. Our teaching encourages you to develop a critical understanding of your own motivation and identity within a broader cultural and institutional framework. We aim to help you to express yourself creatively and self-critically in theoretical and practice work; to understand – from a variety of disciplinary positions – how the media work; and to help you to develop subject specific knowledge and skills and a range of transferable intellectual, organisational and

communication skills which can be applied in a wide range of professional occupations, including, though not exclusively, the media.

What you will be expected to achieve

The programme's subject-specific learning outcomes are devised by academic staff who are at the forefront of their field of study. However, you will also develop a wide range of transferable qualities and skills necessary for employment in a variety of contexts, not just in journalism. The Quality Assurance Agency describes these qualities and skills as effective communications skills, the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations, and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	A critical understanding of theories of society, culture and communication, drawing from different disciplinary traditions	Theory modules
A2	A knowledge of the historical development of media forms and their role in organising contemporary culture	Theory modules
A3	An appreciation of the distinctiveness of specific media genres, with the requisite skills of textual reading. An appreciation of the distinctiveness of specific media genres, with the requisite skills of textual reading	Theory modules
A4	A knowledge of the global dimensions of the modern media industries	Theory modules
A5	An understanding of the contemporary forms of media organisations, and their relations to other social institutions, both public and private	Theory modules
A6	An appreciation of the subjective dimensions of social identities in a mediated culture	Theory modules
A7	An understanding of differing conceptual approaches to the study of verbal and visual cultures	Theory modules

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A8	A critical appreciation of current theoretical debate about media consumption and subjectivity	Theory modules

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	A competent to high level of conceptual and technical knowledge in the planning, structuring and production of media projects	Practice modules
B2	Knowledge of the key conventions and aesthetic and critical issues relevant to media production in your area of specialisation that will both enable you to be constructively critical of media products and inform your own practice	Practice modules
B3	Your understanding of the connotative potential of images, and/or sounds or the written word and how meaning is constructed in media artefacts	Practice modules
B4	An on-going self-reflexive approach to the constructive evaluation of your academic and practical work	All modules
B5	A critical understanding of your own identity within a broader cultural and institutional framework	All modules
B6	Skills in the analysis and lucid evaluation of alternative views in your engagement with major thinkers, debates and intellectual paradigms within the field	All modules

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	A competent to high level of conceptual and technical skills in the initiation, research, development and realisation of distinctive media projects that seek to be original and to maximise the potential of a medium to engage an audience	Practice modules
C2	An enhanced level of skills in the effective creative manipulation of sound and/or image and/or the written word	Practice modules
C3	A competent to proficient use of appropriate production technologies	Practice modules
C4	An enhanced level of textual analysis	All modules

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Appropriate methodological skills in your research of issues and debates from a range of sources	All modules
D2	Effective written communication skills in the formulation, structuring and presentation of coherent and persuasive arguments	All modules
D3	Problem solving and editorial skills in often complex and sometimes unpredictable production contexts	Practice modules
D4	Further developed interpersonal skills in the giving and receiving of criticism	All modules
D5	An ability, to work productively with others in critical thinking and in the creative process	All modules
D6	The confidence, knowledge and skills to work independently, flexibly, responsibly and to deadline in the preparation, management and production of media materials, and the research and writing of academic work	All modules

How you will learn

Knowledge and Understanding:

The acquisition of outcomes A1-8 is through weekly lectures and seminars so that core knowledge gained through reading and lectures may be reinforced through seminar discussion and debate. Guidance is given on appropriate preparatory and follow up reading and staff are available to provide tutorial support on a weekly basis. All modules require the research and writing of coursework so that your understanding can be progressed and feedback given prior to the completion of seen or unseen examinations or examined essays. The interdisciplinary concerns of the modules in all years of the degree mean that your understanding of the outcomes will be constantly advanced by your studies achieving greater depth in years 2 and 3.

Transferable Skills:

The acquisition of outcomes D1-6 is through small-group practice-based lectures, seminars and workshops and reinforced through the preparation and production of media projects. You have extensive contact with academic and support staff and feedback is provided throughout the practice learning process.

The acquisition of skills and attributes are achieved by your full participation in the structured learning activities and the completion of module and examined work that will involve considerable further independent study. You will receive feedback from tutors throughout the programme in seminars and written feedback will be given on submitted coursework. The acquisition of skills D9-12 are achieved through your participation in practice lectures, seminars and workshops and the completion of a series of media projects or portfolios. Tutorial support is constantly available to advise you on your progress in skill acquisition in both theoretical and practice-based studies.

How you will be assessed

Knowledge and Understanding:

Assessment of outcomes A1-8 is by a mixture of unseen examinations and examined essays in the first and second years of the degree. In year three, your knowledge and understanding is tested by examined essays and, where appropriate, a dissertation.

Transferable Skills:

The assessment of outcomes D1-3 is by the completion, within each practice module, of media projects or portfolios. Evidence of the extent of the achievement of outcomes D1-3 will also be sought in the Production Logs, completed by all students in group-based areas, and in the Production Essay, written by all students in their third year.

Outcomes D4-8 are primarily tested through written module and examined work and D9-12 through tutorial supervision and marking of media projects/portfolios. Progress towards the achievement of skill outcomes D13, and D16 will be demonstrated in both written theoretical and practice submissions. Outcomes D14 and D15 are not formally assessed except in the examination of certain areas of practice work. However, the development of effective interpersonal and other oral communications skills are encouraged by staff in all practice and theory seminars and feedback is given in oral and written form.

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	1st: First (Exceptional)	Awarded when a candidate satisfies the requirements for a distinction, but to an outstanding degree.
70-79%	1st: First (Excellent)	It will demonstrate overall the very effective application of appropriate knowledge, understandings and skills specified in the module learning outcomes. It will show a broad understanding of the subject and answers the question fully by taking in a number of appropriate aspects. Well-structured and clearly argued. Appropriate evidence used to make an argument and work demonstrates that concepts/theories have been assimilated and can be used in dealing with own material and experience.
60-69%	2.1: Upper Second (Very good)	The essay will demonstrate overall the effective application of appropriate knowledge, understandings and skills specified in the module learning outcomes. It will show good evidence of extensive reading and awareness of different perspectives. Clearly structured with reading and evidential material directed towards answering the question. Using your own examples to develop your own arguments is often the difference between this category and the one below.
50-59%	2.2: Lower Second (Good)	The essay will demonstrate an overall satisfactory application of knowledge, understandings and skills specified in the module learning outcomes. It will show a good understanding of the topic and the principal reading recommended. It may be descriptive or too generalized in parts, lacking analysis or argument or may try to make an argument without providing

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
		sufficient appropriate evidence to back it up. It may not focus on the question sufficiently to demonstrate a higher level of achievement of the appropriate module outcomes.
40-49%	3rd: Third (Pass)	The essay will demonstrate that the majority of the appropriate module learning outcomes are achieved to a satisfactory level. However, the essay will either too much description, or use a limited range of material, or may assert a position without sufficient supporting evidence to demonstrate a higher level of outcome. The work is not sufficiently organised around answering the question to achieve a higher mark.
25-39%	Fail	The majority of the appropriate module learning outcomes are not achieved. A very limited knowledge of subject matter, poor organisation and planning and badly written. Fails to address the question and includes material without showing its relevance.
10-24%	Bad fail	A mark in this range represents a significant overall failure of the work to achieve the appropriate standard. It shows no evidence of attention to technical competence, structure or achieving primary goals. It is deemed a valid attempt and not necessarily required to be re-sat.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A mark in this range represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. Written work shows no evidence of an attempt to address the question. It shall not be deemed a valid attempt and not necessarily required to be re-sat.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	This is a categorical mark for work representing either the failure to submit an assessment, or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

How the programme is structured

The programme is only available for full-time study over three years, in which you take modules to the value of 360 CATS. In year one, you take five theoretical modules that introduce you to the major fields of study. These are then further explored in a range of core and optional theory modules in year two. You are then able in year three to specialise in a number of different areas from the options offered by the Department. It is also possible for you to propose a topic for a dissertation.

Following an induction to media practice module at the start of the programme, in which you experience work in six different practice areas – animation, journalism, photography, scriptwriting with prose writing, radio and television – you chose two of these areas for further study. After the first term of your second year, you will then specialise in one of these practice areas for the latter half of the degree.

Academic year of study 1

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Media Arts	MC51019A	15	4	Compulsory	2
Culture and Cultural Studies	MC51005B	15	4	Compulsory	1
Film and the Audio-Visual: Theory and Analysis	MC51018A	15	4	Compulsory	1
Media History & Politics	MC51002A	15	4	Compulsory	2
Key Debates in Media Studies	MC51006C	15	4	Compulsory	1
Induction to Media Practice	MC51003A	15	4	Compulsory	1
Media Production - Option 1 (S)	MC51004A	30	4	Compulsory	2

Academic year of study 2

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Media, Modernity and Social Thought	MC52014B	15	5	Compulsory	1
Psychology, Subjectivity and Power	MC52003C	15	5	Compulsory	2
Media Production - Option 2 (S)	MC52006A	30	5	Compulsory	1
Media Production - Specialisation	MC52007A	30	5	Compulsory	2
Modules to the value of 30 credits from an annually approved list from the Department of Media Communications, and Cultural Studies	Various	30	5	Optional	1-2

Academic year of study 3

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Modules to the value of 60 credits from an approved list available from the Media, Communications and Cultural Studies Department	Various	60	6	Optional	1-2
Media Production	MC53034A	60	6	Compulsory	1-2

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

All students are allocated a Personal Tutor (one in each department for joint programmes) who has overall responsibility for their individual progress and welfare. Personal Tutors meet with their student at least twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically. The first meeting normally takes place within the first few weeks of the autumn term. Personal Tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This provides an opportunity for progress, attendance and assessment marks to be reviewed and an informed discussion to take place about how to strengthen individual learning and success.

All students are also allocated a Senior Tutor to enable them to speak to an experienced academic member of staff about any issues which are negatively impacting their academic study and which are beyond the normal scope of issues handled by Programme Convenors and Personal Tutors.

Students are provided with information about learning resources, the [Library](#) and information available on [Learn.gold \(VLE\)](#) so that they have access to department/programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Assessments build on lectures and seminars so students are expected to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

All assessed work is accompanied by some form of feedback to ensure that students' work is on the right track. It may come in a variety of forms ranging from written comments on a marked essay to oral and written feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops.

Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is provided on the [Goldsmiths website](#) and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The [Disability](#) and [Wellbeing](#) Services maintain caseloads of students and provide on-going support.

The [Careers Service](#) provides central support for skills enhancement, running [The Gold Award](#) scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)).

The [Academic Skills Centre](#) works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision for students throughout the year.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

Approximately 60% of graduates were working in media related fields with 8% involved in further study. A large majority appear to be successful in finding work in their preferred fields with over 70% in our survey employed in media production, Public Relations, marketing and management and 15% in other fields. However, due to the use of short term contracts across the media industries it is still extremely difficult to be conclusive about long term media employment success. The programme should be realistically viewed as the starting point, of what can often be, a long and arduous journey to become established in the media industries. However, you will leave the programme with a very clear idea of your own strengths and weaknesses as a practitioner that is clearly fundamental to your decision making about your future.

Each year, the programme produces work of distinction and normally the best practice work achieves exhibition in festivals and competitions.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

Undergraduate degrees have a minimum total value of 360 credits. Some programmes may include a year abroad or placement year and this may be reflected in a higher total credit value. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. Full-time students take modules to the value of 120 credits each year and part-time students not less than 45 credits and not more than 90 credits each year. If a programme has a part-time pathway, the structure will be set out in the section “How the programme is structured” above. Each full-time year corresponds to a level of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), as follows:

Year 1 = Level 4
Year 2 = Level 5
Year 3 = Level 6

More detailed information about the structure and requirements of a Goldsmiths degree is provided in the [Goldsmiths Qualifications and Credit Framework](#).

Modules

Modules are defined as:

- “Optional” – which can be chosen from a group of modules
- “Compulsory” – which must be taken as part of the degree
- “Compulsory (Non-compensatable)” – Some compulsory modules are central to the achievement of a programme’s learning outcomes. These are designated as “Non-compensatable” for that programme and must therefore be passed with a mark of at least 40% in order to pass the module.

Progression

Full-time students are required to have passed modules to a minimum of 90 credits before proceeding to the next year. Part-time students must normally pass new modules to a minimum value of 45 credits before proceeding to the next year.

In addition, some programmes may specify particular modules which must be passed, irrespective of the minimum requirements, before proceeding to the next year.

Award of the degree

In order to graduate with a classified degree, students must successfully complete modules to the minimum value of 360 credits, as set out within the section “The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree” above. A failed module with a mark of 35-39% may be compensated (treated as if it has been passed) so long as the average mean mark for all 120 credits at that level is 45% or above and the module has not been defined as “Non-compensatable”. No more than 60 credits may be compensated this way across a programme and no more than 30 credits at any one level.

Classification

Final degree classification will usually be calculated on the basis of a student's best marks for modules equivalent to 90 credits at Level 4, 105 credits at level 5 and 105 credits at level 6, applying a relative weighting of 1:3:5 to modules at level 4, 5 and 6 respectively.

Degrees are awarded with the following classifications:

- 1st: First Class – 70%+
- 2.1: Upper Second – 60-69%
- 2.2: Lower Second – 50-59%
- 3rd: Third – 40-49%

Students who, following the application of compensation and having used all their permitted resit attempts, have passed modules to the value of 300-345 credits, at least 60 of which are at level 6 may be awarded a pass degree.

More detail on the [calculation of the final classification](#) is on our website.

Interim exit awards

Some programmes incorporate interim exit points of Certificate of Higher Education and/or Diploma of Higher Education, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the value of 120 credits at level 4 or 240 credits (120 of which at level 5) respectively. The awards are made without classification.

When these awards are incorporated within the programme, the relevant learning outcomes and module requirements will be set out within the “What you will be expected to achieve” section above.

The above information is intended as a guide, with more detailed information available in the [Goldsmiths Academic Manual](#).

Programme-specific rules and facts

General programme costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information at gold.ac.uk/programme-costs.

Specific programme costs

Not applicable.

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules are formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year, such as in departmental committees, a variety of student feedback mechanisms and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme has at least one External Examiner who reviews comments annually on the standards of awards and student achievement. External Examiner(s) attend Boards of Examiners meetings and submit an annual written report.

Modules, programmes and/or departments are also subject to annual and periodic review internally, as well as periodic external scrutiny.

Quality assurance processes aim to ensure Goldsmiths' academic provision remains current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all these procedures are published on the [Quality Office web pages](#).