

# MA Journalism

## Programme Specification

**Awarding Institution:**

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

**Teaching Institution:** Goldsmiths, University of London

**Final Award:** MA

**Programme Name:** MA Journalism

**Total credit value for programme:** 180

**Name of Interim Exit Award(s):**

Postgraduate Certificate in Journalism

Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism

**Duration of Programme:** One year full-time

**UCAS Code(s):** Not applicable

**HECoS Code(s):** (100442) Journalism

**QAA Benchmark Group:** Not applicable

**FHEQ Level of Award:** Level 7

**Programme accredited by:** Professional Publishers Association

**Date Programme Specification last updated/approved:** July 2023

**Home Department:** Media, Communications and Cultural Studies (MCCS)

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

Not applicable

### Programme overview

This full time, one-year MA Journalism programme takes a critical approach to the practice of journalism. Accredited by the Professional Publishers Association (PPA), it combines practical and theoretical approaches to journalism as a multimedia skill that can be applied to newspapers, magazines and online.

During the first term you will be introduced to the major theoretical approaches to the study of journalism, to media law and ethics, and to debates about questions of journalism and power, situating them firmly in a practical context. You will be introduced to a variety of research methodologies, including fact-checking and the use of access to information laws. You will learn how to research and write news stories for both print and online, and the importance of fairness, factual accuracy, and audience. All students work on our live local online news service – [www.eastlondonlines.co.uk](http://www.eastlondonlines.co.uk) – which covers a large area of east and

south London. In this way, you learn the conventions and legal/ethical framework of newsgathering and reporting by writing news stories for a real audience, in real time. You will also learn how to produce genuinely multimedia work through a series of skills-based workshops in either Video or Data-driven journalism, and how to use social media effectively to research and disseminate stories, and to engage with a live online audience.

In the second and third terms you will build on these skills, while concentrating on feature writing and developing an understanding of genre, audience and style. Students are encouraged to explore their interests and develop their own personal practice, and you will produce a portfolio of features (some of which will be published on [www.eastlondonlines.co.uk](http://www.eastlondonlines.co.uk)), a multimedia longform piece, and a group online magazine project. You will also explore the latest developments in social media and its relationship to journalism, exploring the underlying dynamics of change that emerge from networks, sharing and crowds in the age of the internet.

At all times you will be encouraged to relate the work you are doing to the industrial context in which you will be working, and to make links with people working in the industry. We are proud of our visiting speaker programme, which features leading journalists from many different fields.

Students graduating from this programme work as journalists in print, online, and in television and public relations. The flexibility and cross-media nature of the programme means that students are well equipped to move between media as their careers develop. Some choose to freelance but most go straight into full time jobs in the industry.

Graduates from this programme go on to work on national newspapers and magazines, television, radio and in other aspects of the media, such as public relations and communications.

### **Programme entry requirements**

Applicants will normally hold an appropriate first degree (2:1 or above) and have some experience in journalism (student publications, freelance work or work experience is usually acceptable). If applicants do not have sufficient experience they may be asked to demonstrate their ability to write in a journalistic style at an appropriate level.

If English is not your first language you must hold an overall IELTS (or equivalent English language qualification) of 7.0 with a 7.5 in writing and no element lower than 6.5.

## **Programme learning outcomes**

The programme's learning outcomes are the result of continuing consultation with professional journalists, visiting tutors, professional colleagues in the Association for Journalism Education, external examiners and ex-students.

The programme is updated annually to ensure that it is in line with current practice in the industry. Students also develop a wide range of transferable qualities and skills necessary for employment in a variety of contexts, including: effective communication 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. Such skills are inherent in most of what students will learn on this programme.

Students who successfully complete 60 CATS of modules – 'News', 'Media Law, Regulation and Ethics' and 'Power, Politics and Public Affairs' – may exit the programme with the award of PG Certificate in Journalism. The Postgraduate Certificate is awarded without grade. Students who are awarded the Postgraduate Certificate in Journalism will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

**Knowledge and understanding**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
A1	Systematically demonstrate an understanding of the different editorial roles found in the industry, and their relationship to one another.	News
A2	Critique 'official sources' and interpret press statements, public pronouncements, and statistics.	Power, Politics and Public Affairs; News
A3	Systematically demonstrate an understanding key aspects of the mechanics of central, local and devolved government across the UK specifically as they relate to the practice of journalism and the Eastlondonlines boroughs	Power, Politics and Public Affairs
A4	Systematically demonstrate an understanding of the essentials of law in contempt of court/crime reporting, privacy, defamation, investigative journalism methods, copyright and intellectual property, issues of regulation and ethical dilemmas, reporting abroad, social media and online journalism	Media Law, Regulation and Ethics

**Cognitive and thinking skills**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
B1	Synthesise and summarise complex information from a range of sources	News
B2	Critically evaluate potential legal, regulatory and ethical threats in your own and others' work	Media Law, Regulation and Ethics

**Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
C1	Critically deploy the journalistic skills in the research, writing and dissemination of news stories, including understanding of freedom of information legislation as related to the practice of journalism	News
C2	Apply specialist knowledge of media law, regulation and ethics to own and others' work	Media Law, Regulation and Ethics
C3	Devise and write a pitch for a piece of journalism that applies a variety of appropriate research techniques	Power, Politics and Public Affairs

**Transferable skills (Elements)**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
D1	Demonstrate self-direction by generating ideas for news stories, working to deadlines, and constructively collaborating with others.	News

Students who successfully complete 120 CATS of modules – ‘News’, ‘Power, Politics and Public Affairs’, ‘Media Law, Regulation and Ethics’, ‘Journalism in Context’, ‘Journalistic Practice (Digital Methods)’, ‘Critical Social Media Practices’ and ‘Journalism Production’ – may exit the programme with the award of PG Diploma in Journalism. The Postgraduate Diploma is awarded without grade. Students who are awarded the Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism will be able to demonstrate the following additional learning outcomes:

**Knowledge and understanding**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
A1	Experiment with a range of social media tools, participatory platforms and crowd-sourcing techniques and deploy knowledge of key research tools including advanced search techniques and social media verification	Critical Social Media Practices, Journalism Practice (Digital Methods)

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
A2	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of copyediting, fact-checking and layout skills, including the concepts of 'house style' .	Journalism Production
A3	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of digital storytelling.	Journalism Practice (Digital Methods)
A4	Demonstrate an understanding of the key aspects of the media and media industries and how they may be conceptualised theoretically.	Journalism in Context; Critical Social media practices
A5	Demonstrate a critical understanding of issues concerned with audience and genre.	Journalism Production, Journalism Practice (Digital Methods); Critical Social media practices

**Cognitive and thinking skills**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
B1	Demonstrate a knowledge of the affordances of technology and the digital culture that drives these disruptive changes	Critical Social Media Practices
B2	Implement critical evaluation to e skills to support creative decision-making and the to critique your own completed work and that of others	Journalism in Context

**Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
C1	Actively engage with key human and technical sources of information, and implement the skills of verification to validate, recognising the issue of unreliable sources and information.	Critical Social Media Practices
C2	Devise and write a pitch for a piece of journalism that demonstrates the skills to critically apply a variety of appropriate research techniques	Power, Politics and Public Affairs
C3	Apply sub-editing and journalism production skills to their own and others' journalism	Journalism Production
C4	Apply specialist social media skills, including verification, when producing and disseminating journalism	Journalism Practice (Digital Methods), Critical Social media practices
C5	Critically and creatively implement a range of techniques – including photography and social media, and either video or data-driven journalism – to produce a portfolio of work.	Journalism Practice (Digital Methods)
C6	Critically apply your knowledge and understanding of relevant theory taught during the module to the critique of your own and/or other journalistic practice.	Journalism in Context

### Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Demonstrate effective written that synthesises and simplifies complex information and ideas to a variety of audiences	Journalism Production; Journalism in Context

Students who successfully complete the MA Journalism programme will be able to demonstrate the following additional learning outcomes:

### Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Systematically demonstrate conceptual and practical knowledge of a wide range of journalistic practices, a.	Features
A2	Demonstrate a critical and comprehensive understanding of issues concerned with audience and genre	Features

### Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Systematically and creatively, demonstrate ingenuity, originality and appropriateness in your approach to journalism	Features
B2	Demonstrate critical reasoning skills in complex problem solving in relation to features	Features



**Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
C1	Devise and produce an original online magazine brand, together with its associated social media presence and any online brand extensions, demonstrating an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the contemporary magazine industry	Features
C2	Deploy the relevant critical, analytical and responsive skills required for interviewing people for the purposes of journalism	Features
C3	Deploy originality in the application of photography to enhance their own journalism	Features
C4	Demonstrate the autonomous skills and competencies to systematically work independently, flexibly, responsibly and to deadline in the preparation, management and production of a portfolio of features work.	Features
C1	Systematically and creatively deploy a journalistic skill in the research, writing and dissemination of features	Features

## Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Demonstrate independence and creativity in self-learning, exercising initiative and taking personal responsibility for work.	Features
D2	Deploy the skills deal with complex issues and ideas in systematic, , critical and evaluative ways.	Features
D3	Demonstrate self-direction by proactivley generating ideas, working to deadlines, and constructively collaborating with others.	Features

## Grading Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	<p>Journalism Practice Marking Criteria: Exceptional work of publishable quality showing originality and based on extensive research and independent thought. Represents the achievement of the learning outcomes to an outstanding level.</p> <p>Essay Marking Criteria: A mark of 80% or higher is awarded when a candidate satisfies the requirements for a distinction, but to an outstanding degree. Such work may be of publishable quality, and will be a significant contribution to debate within the field.</p>
70-79%	Distinction	<p>Journalism Practice Marking Criteria: It will demonstrate the very effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes. The portfolio will demonstrate an understanding of the target audience, grasp of the subject, critical awareness of the historical and cultural background of your subject, evidence of originality and individual research, evidence of interviewing ability, investigation, ingenuity, originality, scope or appropriateness in your approach to the subject, writing style and ability to communicate with clarity, and presentation. It will be work that the Department would normally regard as appropriate to exhibit, publish or broadcast externally.</p> <p>Essay Marking Criteria: the essay demonstrates the very effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes of the module. The outstanding work will show evidence of extensive relevant</p>

		reading and an impressive grasp of current major issues in the field. This knowledge will have been reviewed critically with insight and independence of thought. Arguments and the presentation of evidence will demonstrate sophisticated reasoning, with clear awareness of issues of methodology and evidence, and be particularly clear, well focused and cogent.
60-69%	Merit	<p>Journalism Practice Marking Criteria: Work that overall achieves a high standard. It will demonstrate the effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes. The work will have achieved the majority of its goals and will demonstrate a significant degree of originality and ambition with a good level of technical competence. It will be based on an original idea and will be well structured. It will show significant evidence of research/planning and demonstrate a critical awareness of the medium and understanding of the audience. It will be work that the Department would normally regard as appropriate to exhibit or publish or broadcast externally.</p> <p>Essay Marking Criteria: candidates demonstrate the effective application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the module learning outcomes. The essay will show consistency and fluency in discussing and evaluating evidence and theories drawn from a wide range of sources. They will demonstrate an ability to relate this reading to their topic, and will clearly have understood and assimilated the relevant literature.</p>
50-59%	Pass	<p>Journalism Practice Marking Criteria: Work of an overall satisfactory standard. It will demonstrate the satisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes. The work achieves its primary goal(s). Technically it will be competent in quality with a recognisable overall structure. It will be based on a degree of research/planning and exhibit some critical awareness of the medium.</p> <p>Essay Marking Criteria: the essay demonstrates the satisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understandings and skills specified in the learning outcomes of the module. There is clear evidence of knowledge and understanding, but where there may be limited development of ideas, critical comment or methodology. Within these limitations there will be indication that the candidate has grasped fundamental concepts and procedures in the field.</p>

30-49%	Fail	<p>Journalism Practice Marking Criteria: Work of an overall unsatisfactory standard. It will demonstrate the unsatisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes. The work will demonstrate little originality or ambition. It is likely that its goals will not have been achieved to a satisfactory extent and its level of technical competence will range from adequate to poor with a weak structure. It will show evidence of a lack of research/ planning and indicate little critical understanding of the medium and generally ineffective ability to sustain the involvement of the audience. It will be work that the Department would not regard as appropriate for any exhibition or publication.</p> <p>Essay Marking Criteria: indicates that a candidate has demonstrated an unsatisfactory application of appropriate knowledge, understandings and skills specified in the production modules learning outcomes.</p>
10-29%	Bad fail	Journalism Practice and Essay Marking Criteria: Work which is unsatisfactory and indicates that the student failed to understand or apply appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

## Mode of study

The majority of this programme will be delivered in person on campus, in lectures, workshops and seminars. Individual tutorials may be given online. Students will also work in the community as reporters for EastLondonLines. In addition there will be lectures from invited speakers from the industry – these may be online.

Feedback is a fundamental part of the learning process and comes in a number of different ways: through tutorials and individual feedback with staff; through formative and summative feedback on your practical editorial work, both verbally and written, delivered individual and to the group; and through peer review.

## Programme structure

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
News	MC71122A	30	7	Compulsory	1
Journalism in Context	MC71121A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Media Law, Regulation and Ethics	MC71159A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Power, Politics and Public Affairs	MC71160A	15	7	Compulsory	1
<del>Asking the Right Questions-DELETED</del>	<del>MC71116A</del>	<del>15</del>	<del>7</del>	<del>Compulsory</del>	<del>1</del>
Features	MC71123C	60	7	Compulsory	2 & 3
Journalism Production	MC71155B	15	7	Compulsory	2
Journalistic Practice (Digital Methods)	MC71154C	15	7	Compulsory	1
Critical Social Media Practices	IS71055B	15	7	Compulsory	2

## Academic support

The programme is embedded in the Department's ethos of diversity and interdisciplinarity. This is reflected in the combination of practice and theory which allows us to challenge norms and engage with real-world issues.

The programme is practice-driven, but grounded in and informed by theory. Students are also given opportunities to apply theory to their practice projects in exercises and presentations and encouraged to use their practice to inform and deepen their understanding of theory.

MCCS is committed to the college's 'Liberate My Degree' strategy and is determined to develop a diverse and inclusive curriculum that incorporates the interests and concerns of a diverse student body. We want to learn from students themselves and, in our module evaluation forms, we invite students to identify examples of diversity and inclusivity in each module and suggest how our teaching and learning materials might be improved. This process is overseen by DLTC, a dedicated Anti-Racist Committee (ARC) and an ongoing process of curriculum review.

The Department is dedicated to providing personal tutoring for all our students in a way which is consistent, equitable, structured and proactively supportive of their academic

progression. Personal tutoring in the Department is guided by the College's personal tutor policy and supported by a dedicated senior tutor for postgraduate students. Meetings with their personal tutor provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their learning progression, set goals and identify areas where they would like to improve. In addition, personal tutors make themselves available to students seeking advice with routine academic concerns and pastoral issues.

### **Placement opportunities**

There are no formal placement schemes but all MA Journalism students undertake work experience during vacation periods; students are expected to arrange this directly, we provide significant support through informal links between the programme and major journalism employers, such as Times Newspapers, the Guardian and The Independent, which provide regular opportunities, as well as magazines and various online platforms. Some of this can translate into paid part-time and full-time work.

### **Employability and potential career opportunities**

The majority of students find staff or regular freelance work in print or online journalism, although we also have students in broadcasting. A few choose to take up jobs in allied fields such as public relations.

### **Programme-specific requirements**

If English is not your first language you must hold an overall IELTS (or equivalent English language qualification) of 7.0 with a 7.5 in writing and no element lower than 6.5.

### **Tuition fee costs**

Information on tuition fee costs is available at: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/>

### **Specific programme costs**

You will be expected to cover local travel costs associated with reporting on EastLondonLines and other assignments. You will be expected to have your own pens, notebooks, smart phone (with working camera), and laptop – all essential for working as a reporter.