

Course Specification

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Status:	Validated

Core Information

Awarding Body / Institution:	University of Wolverhampton		
School / Institute:	Wolverhampton School of Art		
Course Code(s):	MZ022P01UV MZ022P31UV	Full-time Part-time	12 Months 2 Years
Course Title:	MA Public Relations and Corporate Communication		
Hierarchy of Awards:	Master of Arts Public Relations and Corporate Communication Postgraduate Diploma Public Relations and Corporate Communication Postgraduate Certificate Public Relations and Corporate Communication University Statement of Credit University Statement of Credit		
Language of Study:	English		
Date of DAG approval:	19/May/2017		
Last Review:	2015/6		
Course Specification valid from:	2013/4		
Course Specification valid to:	2020/1		

Academic Staff

Course Leader:	Mr Manuel Hernandez
Head of Department:	Mr Pritpal Sembi

Course Information

Location of Delivery:	University of Wolverhampton
Category of Partnership:	Not delivered in partnership
Teaching Institution:	University of Wolverhampton
Open / Closed Course:	This course is open to all suitably qualified candidates.

Entry Requirements:

Entry requirements are subject to regular review. The entry requirements applicable to a particular academic year will be published on the University website (and externally as appropriate e.g. UCAS

- A good honours degree in a relevant discipline (Media and Communication Studies, Public Relations, Marketing, Business Studies, Journalism)
- A good understanding of how the media industry operates
- A good standard of written and spoken English
- International students should have a score of 6.0 in the IELTS test (in the written part) or equivalent in other accepted tests (e.g. Toefl, Cambridge Advanced Exam (CAE) or Cambridge Proficiency Exam (CPE)
- Students must achieve a minimum of 5.5 in each component of the IELTS or similar tests.
- The university will provide support to those with a score of 6.5 or below through pre-sessional courses or summer courses.

You are also encouraged to apply if you:

- Have significant professional experience in any area of the media regardless of your educational qualifications.
- Have a 2:2 in a relevant subject where you can provide examples of work in the media which shows your ability in the subject.

Distinctive Features of the Course:

The course has been designed bearing in mind the needs of:

- a) Practitioners
- b) Professional bodies
- c) Academics
- d) Students new to the field

Our MA covers the needs of current practitioners looking to improve their professional development and future with an organisation. The course leaders have been in contact with agencies, experts and professional bodies enquiring about the current and future challenges for the practice of PR and in particular asking what organisations should be looking for in their own practitioners. For instance, in its latest report the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) stated: 'Practitioners need to develop knowledge and ownership of digital communications; social media training should become a core part of CIPR/PRCA/University training' (PR 2020: The Future of Public Relations, 2011, p.95). In this regard, our programme covers the impact of new media and social media platforms in the practice of PR in every module. Other institutions such as Leeds Metropolitan and the University of Stirling offer a specific module of PR and new media. Although we see the advantage of devoting one module to discussing the topic in detail, we also think that it is more effective to link the topic to

each of the specialisms that are covered in each module (e.g. crisis management on Principles of Public Relations and management -7MZ011).

Another important point from CIPR's report relevant to the formation of practitioners is the following: 'we need to develop a clear articulation of the definition of public relations. Public relations is not a communication practice, but one that makes use of communication. Public relations is content creation, not at all media relations. Public relations goes beyond media relations – it is strategic, part of objective setting right at the outset in decision-making and planning; public relations is more than the application of journalistic skills'(PR 2020: The future of public relations, 2011, p.95). Our MA has been developed bearing this debate in mind about what makes public relations different from other fields/professions such as marketing and journalism. The programme introduces the foundations of public relations and makes clear what PR's jurisdiction is and what its functions and tools are. It also encourages a critical examination of historical relationships with marketing and journalism with the aim of finding new ways of engaging in the production of effective outcomes in the context of an evolving media industry. Modules such as Principles of Public Relations (7MZ011) will offer students the opportunity to get a better understanding of what differentiates these professions.

The MA programme has been designed to study the challenges facing any modern organisation, regardless of their size. These are: crisis and issues management, CSR, organisational change, business planning and public opinion. But these do not seem to be new challenges, so what is new? Although CSR and organisational change have been part of business and management masters programmes for a long time, few have focused on explaining how to communicate them. Our MA has two modules (7MZ012 & 7MZ013) devoted to the discussion of the strategy and tactics of how to communicate organisational change and social responsibility initiatives and related challenges. The assessment of our closest competitors – other regional institutions – indicates that they are either not covering these specialisms or they cover them in less detail. Beyond the West Midlands most educational institutions are approaching these topics from the point of view of marketing or management with negligible emphasis on communication. However, there are two institutions with similar programmes to ours: The University of Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan University. The University of Leeds has a postgraduate course in Corporate Communications and PR and offers modules on CSR and Change Management.

Regarding the programmes of these two institutions what differentiates us is the range and scope of our content. We have modules offering very specific/specialised content such as The PR agency (7MZ016). Our programme also caters for students with basic training and knowledge of the field, modules such as the Principles of PR (7MZ011) and PR and the Public (7MZ015) offering the opportunity to the uninitiated to familiarise themselves with the foundations of public relations through seminars and workshops run throughout the firsts weeks of each module. To conclude, the following points are a part of what gives to this course the edge or its USP:

- Future MA students at the UoW will study PR from a range of different perspectives, considering the impact of PR on society and the media. They will also learn the techniques and practices of public relations that contribute to the evolution of PR as a management discipline.
- Our teaching staff comes from a wide range of academic and professional backgrounds. They have had considerable experience of working in PR and other media sectors of the industry. Close contact with the industry enables staff to invite guest speakers and visiting lectures who are involved in various aspects of the industry in the UK and abroad.

The choice of title, MA in Public Relations and Corporate Communication, is relevant to those who know about the field or current practitioners and also to those who are interested in a corporate-centric approach to the topic of communication. To graduates with little knowledge of the field the term corporate communication may allude to a specific post/position and therefore a potential opportunity of a career in a large organisation.

Educational Aims of the Course:

The MA in Public Relations and Corporate Communications covers the fundamental academic principles and theories relevant to the field as well as the contemporary environmental drivers and professional practices

that shape the profession in the 21st Century.

The course will focus on the design and planning of organisational change campaigns, corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes and rhetorical and non-rhetorical responses and tactics to tackle issues and crises. Students will be equipped with the tools and skills needed to address different stakeholders and to approach any challenge from a strategic perspective.

This Masters programme is taught by teaching staff and visiting lecturers with extensive professional experience and expertise. This guarantees students will have the opportunity to learn up to date techniques that are relevant to the current workplace, whether their prospective or current posts involve practicing at a local, national or an international level.

Intakes:

September
January

Major Source of Funding:

Office for Students (OFS)

Tuition Fees:

Tuition fees are reviewed on an annual basis. The fees applicable to a particular academic year will be published on the University website.

Year	Status	Mode	Amount
2020/1	H	Full Time	£6400.00
2020/1	Overseas	Full Time	£13350.00
2020/1	H	Part Time	£3200.00
2021/2	H	Full Time	£6550.00
2021/2	Overseas	Full Time	£13950.00
2021/2	Overseas	Full Time	£13950.00
2021/2	H	31	£3275.00

PSRB:

None

Course Structure:

January (Full-time)

Part time students study alongside full time students. However, they do not study more than 80 credits in each academic calendar year.

Year 1

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7MZ013	Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility	20	SEM2	Core
7MZ021	Convergent Media	20	SEM2	Core
7MZ017	Public Relations and Corporate Communication Dissertation	60	CRYRA	Core
7MZ015	Political Communication	20	SEM2	Core

7MZ011	Principles of Public Relations and Management	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ012	Organisational Communication	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ004	Contemporary Media Research Methods	20	SEM1	Core

September (Full-time)

Year 1

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7MZ011	Principles of Public Relations and Management	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ012	Organisational Communication	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ004	Contemporary Media Research Methods	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ013	Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility	20	SEM2	Core
7MZ021	Convergent Media	20	SEM2	Core
7MZ017	Public Relations and Corporate Communication Dissertation	60	CRYRA	Core
7MZ015	Political Communication	20	SEM2	Core

September (Part-time)

Year 1

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7MZ011	Principles of Public Relations and Management	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ012	Organisational Communication	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ013	Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility	20	SEM2	Core
7MZ015	Political Communication	20	SEM2	Core

September (Part-time)

Year 2

Module	Title	Credits	Period	Type
7MZ004	Contemporary Media Research Methods	20	SEM1	Core
7MZ021	Convergent Media	20	SEM2	Core
7MZ017	Public Relations and Corporate Communication Dissertation	60	CRYRA	Core

Please note: Optional modules might not run every year, the course team will decide on an annual basis which options will be running, based on student demand and academic factors, to create the best learning experience.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Academic Regulations Exemption:

None

Reference Points:

[Subject Benchmarks – Postgraduate Masters:](#)

- QAA Benchmarks for Communications, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (2008)
- QAA Benchmarks for Business and Management Masters degrees (2007)

Learning Outcomes:

PGCert Course Learning Outcome 1 (PGCCL01)

Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of your academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice with a conceptual understanding that enables the student: a) to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline b) to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

PGCert Course Learning Outcome 2 (PGCCL02)

Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to your own research or advanced scholarship and ability to continue to advance your knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

PGCert Course Learning Outcome 3 (PGCCL03)

Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.

PGCert Course Learning Outcome 4 (PGCCL04)

Ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

PGCert Course Learning Outcome 5 (PGCCL05)

Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.

PGCert Course Learning Outcome 6 (PGCCL06)

Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring: a) the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility b) decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations c) the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

PGDip Course Learning Outcome 1 (PGDCLO1)

Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of your academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice with a conceptual understanding that enables the student: a) to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline b) to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

PGDip Course Learning Outcome 2 (PGDCLO2)

Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to your own research or advanced scholarship and ability to continue to advance your knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

PGDip Course Learning Outcome 3 (PGDCLO3)

Demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.

PGDip Course Learning Outcome 4 (PGDCLO4)

Ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate your conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

PGDip Course Learning Outcome 5 (PGDCLO5)

Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.

PGDip Course Learning Outcome 6 (PGDCLO6)

Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring: a) the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility b) decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations c) the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

Masters Course Learning Outcome 1 (MACLO1)

Critically analyse on-going debates relevant to the field of public relations and the media industry in general.

Masters Course Learning Outcome 2 (MACLO2)

Produce specific situational analyses and assessments of the political, economic, social and technical factors surrounding an organisation or sector.

Masters Course Learning Outcome 3 (MACLO3)

Draw upon academic models and frameworks for planning, implementing and delivering effective communication and managerial tactics.

Masters Course Learning Outcome 4 (MACLO4)

Interact with culturally diverse stakeholders or constituents to negotiate positive outcomes in challenging situations for all the parties involved, following ethical and professional principles.

Masters Course Learning Outcome 5 (MACLO5)

Apply technical knowledge of ICTs to the process of planning and managing organisational outcomes, as well as to the production of media content for new media/digital platforms.

Masters Course Learning Outcome 6 (MACLO6)

Carry out academic research demonstrating sufficient knowledge of the subject and originality.

Overview of Assessment:

Module	Title	Course Learning Outcomes
7GK006	Quantitative Research Methods	MACLO5, MACLO6, PGCCLO5, PGCCLO6, PGDCLO5, PGDCLO6
7MZ004	Contemporary Media Research Methods	MACLO1, MACLO2, MACLO4, MACLO6, PGCCLO1, PGCCLO2, PGCCLO4, PGCCLO6, PGDCLO1, PGDCLO2, PGDCLO4, PGDCLO6
7MZ011	Principles of Public Relations and Management	MACLO1, MACLO3, MACLO4, MACLO5, PGCCLO1, PGCCLO3, PGCCLO4, PGCCLO5, PGDCLO1, PGDCLO3, PGDCLO4, PGDCLO5
7MZ012	Organisational Communication	MACLO1, MACLO2, MACLO3, PGCCLO1, PGCCLO2, PGCCLO3, PGDCLO1, PGDCLO2, PGDCLO3
7MZ013	Communicating Corporate Social Responsibility	MACLO1, MACLO2, MACLO3, MACLO4, PGCCLO1, PGCCLO2, PGCCLO3, PGCCLO4, PGDCLO1, PGDCLO2, PGDCLO3, PGDCLO4
7MZ015	Political Communication	MACLO1, MACLO2, MACLO3, MACLO4, MACLO5, PGCCLO1, PGCCLO2, PGCCLO3, PGCCLO4, PGCCLO5, PGDCLO1, PGDCLO2, PGDCLO3, PGDCLO4, PGDCLO5
7MZ017	Public Relations and Corporate Communication Dissertation	MACLO1, MACLO2, MACLO4, MACLO6, PGCCLO1, PGCCLO2, PGCCLO4, PGCCLO6, PGDCLO1, PGDCLO2, PGDCLO4, PGDCLO6
7MZ021	Convergent Media	MACLO2, MACLO3, MACLO4, MACLO5, MACLO6, PGCCLO2, PGCCLO3, PGCCLO4, PGCCLO5, PGCCLO6, PGDCLO2, PGDCLO3, PGDCLO4, PGDCLO5, PGDCLO6

Teaching, Learning and Assessment:

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Group and individual tutorials
- Self-directed academic work
- Individual tutor-led supervision for sustained written academic work
- Online research
- Engagement with media technology
- Lectures from visiting professionals
- Practical exercises with visiting professionals
- Visits to media organisations

Assessment Methods:

At the University of Wolverhampton, a variety of modes of assessment will be used to support and test your learning and progress and to help you develop capabilities that are valued beyond your University studies and

into your working life. Your course may include a variety of assessment activities:

Written examinations (including online examinations, open and closed book examinations and quizzes)
Coursework (for example, essays, reports, portfolios, project proposals and briefs, CVs, poster presentation)
Practical (for example, oral and video presentations, laboratory work, performances, practical skills assessment)

In the final year of your undergraduate degree, and at the end of your postgraduate degree, you are likely to be expected to write an extended piece of work or research, such as a dissertation or a practice-based piece of research.

Student Support:

Students can be referred to the skills for learning website and other services provided by the Skills Development Team such as the drop-in sessions. There is a Student Support Centre for the Faculty which gives advice or guidance on study skills/essay writing and one-to-one advice sessions are available for all MA students. If these centres are closed after the process of reorganisation into faculties the students can still be directed to the Skills Development Team services.

In terms of the specific support given through the course the teaching staff of the MA will be available for general academic support. Module advice will also be in place at times to be arranged between students, module leaders and other tutors.

Engagement with technology is always an important aspect of any course and therefore students will have support and advice from the department's technology experts. The department also offers access to multimedia production facilities in the Media Centre. The centre has a group of experienced technicians always available to assist students, whether they need to hire equipment or ask advice on how to operate it or more specific help with sophisticated media productions.

Employability in the Curriculum:

There are two distinct areas of public relations in which to work - in-house for an organisation, or at an agency where you will be handling a range of clients. Public relations practitioners are responsible for the following list of activities:

- Internal Communications
- Media Relations
- Public Affairs/Lobbying
- Community Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility
- Investor Relations or Financial Public Relations
- Issues and crisis management
- Business to Business relations
- Events management

Proficiency in each of these and other new activities such as moderation (of digital communication channels) equip you for potential career opportunities within the public relations industry. As well as these opportunities public relations graduates may go on to assist human resources departments, activist organisations or public sector institutions with social change/social marketing campaigns.