

## 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

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

**UCAS Code(s):**

**HECoS Code(s):**

**QAA Benchmark Group:**

**FHEQ Level of Award:** Level 7

**Programme accredited by:** Professional Publishers Association

**Date Programme Specification last updated/approved:** 2018

**Home Department:** MCCA

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

### Programme overview

This full time, one-year MA Journalism programme is 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 and the role of journalism in society situating them firmly in a practical context. You will be introduced to a variety of research methodologies, including fact-checking and verification skills. You will learn how to research and write news stories for both print and online, and the importance of fairness, ethics, legal considerations, 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.

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.

You will also learn how to produce genuinely multimedia work and how to use social media effectively to research and disseminate stories and how to engage with a live online audience. You will have options to study video/mobile journalism, data journalism, verification and open source investigative journalism and podcasting

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 magazine project. 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 and our Media Forums, which feature leading journalists and others in related fields..

Students graduating from this programme work as journalists in print, online, in broadcast and in communications roles, working in national and international media and related organisations. 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.

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.

## **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 the MA Journalism programme will be able to demonstrate the following knowledge, understanding and skills in all the learning outcomes below,

Students who achieve a total of 60 credits from any modules will be eligible for the Postgraduate Certificate in Journalism and will have demonstrated a developing competence in the relevant module specific learning outcomes below.

## Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Demonstrate both conceptual and practical knowledge of a wide range of journalistic practices, and the ability to apply these to the research, writing and presentation of a portfolio of journalistic work – both news and features - to a high standard across media	All modules
A2	Demonstrate the ability to identify and use appropriate methodological tools and techniques in the research and analysis of issues and information	Intro to News Reporting, Multimedia Reporting ; Features; Critical Social Media Practices
A3	Demonstrate an advanced understanding of issues concerned with audience and genre, and deploy this in their practical work	All practice modules
A4	Demonstrate an understanding of the media and media industries and how they may be conceptualised theoretically	Journalism in Context
A5	Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of appropriate legal and ethical issues and the ability to apply this knowledge when making and publishing journalism	Media Law, Regulation and Ethics
A6	Demonstration of the interpersonal skills necessary for a successful shared production process in all sectors	Intro to News Reporting Multimedia News Reporting; Features
A7	Demonstration of a personal approach to your own practice including an understanding of the development of style and clarity in your work	All practice modules
A8	An understanding of the different editorial roles found in the industry, and of their relationship to one another	All practice modules; Production

## Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Demonstrate ingenuity, originality and appropriateness in your approach to journalism	All modules
B2	Demonstrate flexibility in use of media and application of technical skills	All practice modules
B3	Demonstrate the ability to assess situations quickly and act appropriately	All practice modules
B4	Demonstrate the ability to synthesise complex information and rapidly summarise them	All practice modules
B5	Demonstrate a high level of critical evaluation skills that enable you to make informed and reasoned creative decisions and to critique your own completed work and that of others	All modules
B6	Demonstrate critical reasoning skills in complex problem solving	All modules

## Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Deploy a high level of journalistic skill in the research, writing and dissemination of news stories and features	Introduction to News Reporting, Multimedia Reporting; Features
C2	Deploy the relevant critical, analytical and empathetic skills when interviewing people for the purposes of journalism	All practice modules;
C3	Acquire and deploy basic technical competence in using video, data journalism, digital investigations and podcasting in journalistic environments	Optional skills-based modules; Features
C4	Apply specialist social media skills, including verification, when producing and disseminating journalism	All practice modules
C5	Use photography effectively to enhance their own or others' journalism	News Reporting Multimedia Reporting; Features, Production

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C6	Apply sub-editing and journalism production skills to their own and others' journalism	Multimedia Reporting Production
C7	Apply specialist knowledge of media law, regulation and ethics to their own and others' work	Media Law, Regulation and Ethics; All practice modules
C8	Deploy freedom of information laws in the practice of journalism	News Reporting Multimedia Reporting
C9	Apply a high level of presentational skills and to communicate clearly and with style in a variety of formats	All practice modules
C10	Collaborate productively with others in a shared media production process	Multimedia Reporting Features; skills-based optional module
C11	Display the confidence and competence to work independently, flexibly, responsibly and to deadline in the preparation, management and production of journalism	All practice modules

### Transferable skills (Elements)

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	All the skills learned in B and C above are transferable across a wide range of media and can be utilised in a wide range of employment. All are also transferable life skills which will enhance the ability of students to operate as fully engaged citizens of a democracy	All modules

### Grading Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	<b>Journalism Practice:</b> 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><b>Essay Marking:</b> 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><b>Journalism Practice:</b> 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><b>Essay Marking:</b> 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 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.</p>
60-69%	Merit	<p><b>Journalism Practice:</b> 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</p>

		<p>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><b>Essay Marking Criteria:</b> 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><b>Journalism Practice</b> 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><b>Essay Marking</b> 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><b>Journalism Practice</b> 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</p>



		<p>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><b>Essay Marking</b> 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	<p><b>Journalism Practice and Essay Marking Criteria:</b> Work which is unsatisfactory and indicates that the student failed to understand or apply appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the learning outcomes.</p>
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
Introduction to News Reporting	MC71122A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Journalism in Context	MC71121A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Media Law and Ethics	MC71159A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Power, Politics and Public Affairs	MC71160A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Multimedia News Reporting	MC71126A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Journalism Production	MC71155B	15	7	Compulsory	2
Features	MC71123C	60	7	Compulsory	2 & 3
Skills-based option modules equal to the value of 30 credits, chosen from an approved list published annually	+++++	30	7	Option	1 or 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.