

MA/MSc Digital Journalism

Programme Specification

Awarding Institution:

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

Teaching Institution: Goldsmiths, University of London

Final Award: MA/MSc Digital Journalism

Programme Name: Digital Journalism

Total credit value for programme: 180

Name of Interim Exit Award(s):

Postgraduate Certificate in Digital Journalism

Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Journalism

Duration of Programme: 1 year full time or 2 years part time

UCAS Code(s): Not applicable

HECoS Code(s):

(100442) Journalism 50%

(100366) Computer Science 50%

QAA Benchmark Group: Not applicable

FHEQ Level of Award: Level 7

Programme accredited by: Not applicable

Date Programme Specification last updated/approved: January 2025

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

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

Programme overview

Journalism is changing rapidly to deal with fundamental changes in technology and in the way people access and disseminate information in the digital world. The MA/MSc in Digital Journalism has been specifically developed to create graduates who will not only be able to deal with current technologies as they affect Journalistic practice, but will also have the necessary deep understanding and skill to adapt to future technologically-informed changes in practice and, in some cases, to develop the technologies that will bring about these changes.

Students will receive highly specialised training in digital technologies, enabling them to develop technical and editorial skills in all aspects of computer-supported news gathering and digital media production. The goal of the program is for its graduates to help produce, shape, refresh, and reinvent journalism in fast-changing mobile and global media. The program will offer the highest calibre of journalism and computing science training. Students will learn the fundamentals of multimedia journalism while developing an enterprising capability and literacy in computer science. This program design will use the content of each discipline to inform the execution of the other. Under the guidance of senior faculty staff and visiting specialists, students will combine creative computing software and code with journalistic methods to harness data and produce applications promoting new information and communication models for media organisations and the creative industries.

Graduates of the programme will be capable of occupying the specialist role of a "computational journalist" or "multimedia journalist" among others in the media, non-profits, PR, and technology organisations and developing entrepreneurial start-up projects. The MADJ is a 180-credit programme consisting of two 30-credit modules, four 15-credit modules and a 60 credit final project (non-traditional thesis) in terms of compulsory modules.

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.

Programme entry requirements

The programme is designed to take students with different histories and skills: those with a strong technical background and in interest in Journalism, and those with a journalistic background and in interest in what new technologies offer to journalism. The degree denomination (MA or MSc) will be determined by the relative stress put on technology and journalistic practice in the final Major Practical Project. All students will be expected to engage with both.

All students would normally have, or be expected to gain, a first degree of at least second class or equivalent; a lower degree class may require an additional viva or written examination. Students without these formal academic qualifications would be eligible for admission if they have relevant industrial experience at a senior level, for example as software designers or as practising journalists, although this may be also subject to a qualifying examination or viva.

It is expected that the programme will attract approximately 50% overseas students. Non- native English students should normally have a minimum IELTS score of 7.0 or equivalent. Students with IELTS scores under 7.0 will be strongly encouraged to do the College pre- sessional training in English language. Students may be called to interview.

Aims of the programme

1. Study the skills, art, and ethics of digital journalism combining critical thinking and multimedia narrative construction with technical training in the ability to create problem solving or information retrieval applications and synthesise data into relevant content.
2. Develop their abilities to report / write and create multimedia clearly, precisely, accurately, with energy and voice, and for specific online audiences.
3. Be provided with a comprehensive resource for mobile and online journalism, one that deals with digital media as their own distinct forms of communication rather than merely adjuncts to print or broadcast.

4. Learn how to purposefully blend text, graphical content, multimedia and hypertextual, interactive elements. Explore how trends in personal publishing and social networking are forcing change in journalism and other information industries.
5. Use a variety of techniques to capture and monitor newly published or real-time information.
6. Develop a critical understanding of the theory and practice of online communication.
7. Attain a working knowledge of media laws that, when working as a professional communicator, they can assert legal rights and avoid needless infractions of the law.
8. Learn to incorporate and evaluate appropriate elements of multimedia and multi- platform storytelling, including information design, layout, organisation and visual communication theory and techniques.

Programme learning outcomes

Students who exit the programme with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Digital Journalism should be able to apply the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Apply a conceptual and practical understanding of emerging technology and digital media in the creation of news packages and student online portfolios.	Digital Sandbox, Multimedia News Reporting Mobile Journalism

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Choose and employ appropriate technologies to solve problems	Digital Sandbox
B2	Identify, gather, evaluate, verify and present materials for journalistic outputs	Introduction to News Reporting Multimedia News Reporting Mobile Journalism

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Systematically understand and apply knowledge of storytelling techniques across platforms	Introduction to News Reporting Multimedia News Reporting Mobile Journalism
C2	Use a range of digital innovation tools and techniques in your own journalistic practices	Digital Sandbox

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Engage with the skills necessary to work as a member of a co-located or virtual team undertaking a range of journalistic tasks.	Multimedia News Reporting

Students who exit the programme with the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Journalism should be able to apply the following additional learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Systematically understand key aspects of the wider practical and theoretical contexts in which journalists work.	Critical Social Media Practices, Multimedia News Reporting Media Law, Regulation and Ethics
A2	Demonstrate and apply detailed knowledge of relevant ethical and legal issues	Introduction to News Reporting Multimedia News Reporting Mobile Journalism Media Law, Regulation and Ethics

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Identify, analyse and critically evaluate legal, ethical or regulatory issues within digital journalism and propose viable alternatives where appropriate	Media Law, Regulation and Ethics
B2	Critically synthesise and evaluate current research and scholarship in relation to contemporary developments in global news and digital journalism	Critical Social Media Practices, Multimedia News Reporting Journalism, Media Law, Regulation and Ethics,

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Demonstrate self-direction by producing balanced news stories and features using appropriate journalistic styles and techniques	Introduction to News Reporting; Multimedia News Reporting Data Journalism and Visualisation
C2	Demonstrate critical awareness of issues related to coding and software configuration and design.	Digital Sandbox, Data Journalism and Visualisation
C3	Systematically utilise knowledge of current debates and developments in the production of theoretical and practical work related to digital journalism	Critical Social Media Practices, Multimedia News Reporting , Media Law, Regulation and Ethics]

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Deploy originality in the application of knowledge via evidence of systematic research and writing.	Critical Social Media Practices, Multimedia news Reporting Journalism, Media Law, Regulation and Ethics,

Students who exit the programme with the award of MA/MSc Digital Journalism should be able to apply the following additional learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
A1	Articulate a deep and practical understanding of the processes involved in the digital, mobile, and online identification, production and presentation of news and information.	Critical Social Media Practices, Multimedia News Reporting Media Law, Regulation and Ethics, Major Practical Project
A2	Consolidate and utilise comprehensive understanding of the relevance of media law and ethics to journalistic practice, and the recognition of the line between public interest and the right to privacy.	Media Law, Regulation and Ethics, Critical Social Media Practices, Major Practical Project
A3	Apply a practical and conceptual understanding of emerging technology and digital media in the creation of a substantial and relevant journalism project	Major Practical Project

Cognitive and thinking skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
B1	Apply a wide range of advanced skills in critical thinking, research, analysis, academic writing and communications.	Critical Social Media Practices, Media Law, Regulation and Ethics, Major Practical Project
B2	Critically evaluate journalistic narrative and practical production work, including your own, in relation to effective practice and to appropriate theoretical issues.	Introduction to News Reporting Multimedia News Reporting Mobile Journalism Data Journalism and Visualisation, Major Practical Project

Subject specific skills and professional behaviours and attitudes

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
C1	Deploy essential journalistic skills of newsgathering, research, interviewing, writing briefs and composing pitches, developing treatments, writing commentary for digital media, and news reading.	Critical Social Media Practices, Introduction to News Reporting, Multimedia News Reporting Media Law, Regulation and Ethics, Major Practical Project
C2	Use digital media technology to problem-solve, research and investigate real journalistic challenges and story ideas.	All practice modules
C3	Act autonomously and creatively to execute a significant piece of original work.	Major Practical Project

Transferable skills

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D1	Exhibit the capacity to handle ideas in creative, critical and evaluative ways	All modules
D2	Demonstrate advanced communication and discussion skills in written, oral and digital contexts	All modules
D3	Demonstrate the ability to be independent and creative workers and learners, able to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in their work.	All modules

Grading Criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/ Exceptional)	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.

70-79%	Distinction	<p>Work assigned a Distinction mark is likely to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. address the topic in an explicit manner 2. announce its structure at the start and stick closely to this announced structure 3. have relationships between statements that are very easy to recognise 4. have an excellent or original line of argument that can be followed very easily 5. give wide-ranging and appropriate evidential support for claims that are made <p>Within this category of very good work, the mark awarded will be 70% or above. The mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria. At minimum, a piece of work at this level needs to answer the question or address the issue concerned, be well- constructed, and (perhaps most crucially) show evidence of independent reading and thinking. This grade reflects the specific Learning Outcomes have been achieved to a high degree (including material that is relevant but not defined in the content of the unit); and, in addition, strong evidence that the content of the module has been appropriately embedded in the wider context.</p>
60-69%	Merit	<p>Work awarded a good pass mark is likely to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. correctly identify and discuss the general subject area of the topic/question 2. have a clearly detectable structure that is largely adhered to 3. have relationships between statements that are generally easy to follow 4. have a good quality line of argument 5. support claims by reference to relevant literature <p>Within this category of good work, the mark awarded will be in the range 60-69%. The mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria. At minimum, a good pass piece of work must attempt to answer the question or address the issue concerned, be clearly written, and show signs that the student has read beyond the basic source material. For lecture-based assessments, this usually means going beyond what was presented in the lectures themselves; for essays that are not lecture-based, this means going beyond recommended 'essential reading'. A top good pass will in addition be likely to have a clearer structure, a stronger line of argument, and draw on a broader range of material. This grade reflects the specific Learning Outcomes have been achieved; and, in addition, good evidence that the content of the module has been embedded in the wider context.</p>
50-59%	Pass	<p>Work awarded a borderline pass mark is likely to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. present relevant material but fail to use it to answer the question or address the issue 2. have a structure, but one that is rather loose and unannounced 3. have relationships between statements that are sometimes hard to follow 4. have a fair quality line of argument (information drives argument, rather than other way round) 5. tend to make claims without sufficient supporting evidence

		<p>Within this category of work, the mark awarded will be in the range 50-59%. The mark awarded will depend on the extent to which the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria. At minimum, such a piece of work must show that the student has a fair knowledge of the basic material relating to the question or issue concerned. Higher marks within this category will be awarded as a function of the accuracy with which this material is handled, the relevance and quantity of the material that is presented, and the clarity with which the essay is written.</p> <p>This grade reflects the specific Learning Outcomes have been largely achieved.</p>
30-49%	Fail	<p>Failing work is likely to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fail to adequately address the topic or to answer the question, either by reproducing material that is only partly relevant or by inaccurately reproducing material that is relevant 2. lack a clear structure or framework 3. have relationships between statements that are often difficult to recognise 4. have a poor quality line of argument 5. make poor use of evidence to support most of the claims that are made <p>Within this category the mark awarded will be below 50%. The mark awarded will depend on the extent to which the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria. The mark awarded will depend on how badly the work fails to meet the above-mentioned criteria. 30% might be awarded to an answer that contains some indication that the student can recall once having heard or read something relevant to the question.</p> <p>This grade reflects the specific Learning Outcomes have not been achieved.</p>
10-29%	Bad fail	<p>Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes (shall be deemed a valid attempt and not necessarily required to be re-sat). 20% might be awarded to an answer that contains something that shows that the student has attended the relevant lecture module, even if there is little in the answer that is of direct relevance to the question. A 10% answer contains no evidence that the student knows anything from the literature that is relevant to the question.</p>
1-9%	Very bad fail	<p>A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.</p>
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	<p>A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.</p>

Mode of study

On campus

Programme structure

PGCert: Digital Sandbox and Multimedia News Reporting can be taken alone as a PGCert.

PGDip: Digital Sandbox, Multimedia News Reporting and the four 15 credit modules can be taken as a PGDip.

MA: The MA is awarded for all modules completed and passed.

Full-time mode

Academic year of study 1

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Digital Sandbox	MC71247A	30	7	Compulsory	1,2
Data Journalism and Visualisation	MC71246A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Media Law and Ethics	MC71158B	15	7	Compulsory	1
Critical Social Media Practices	IS71055B	15	7	Compulsory	2
Multimedia News Reporting	MC71266A	15	7	Compulsory	1,2
Introduction to News Reporting	MC71262A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Mobile Journalism	MC71264A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Major Practical Project	MC71184A	60	7	Compulsory	2,3

Part-time mode

Academic year of study 1

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Digital Sandbox	MC71247A	30	7	Compulsory	1,2
Data Journalism and Visualisation	MC71246A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Critical Social Media Practices	IS71055B	15	7	Compulsory	2

Academic year of study 2

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Media Law and Ethics	MC71158B	15	7	Compulsory	1
Multimedia News Reporting	MC71266A	15	7	Compulsory	1,

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Major Practical Project	MC71184A	60	7	Compulsory	2,3
Introduction to News Reporting	MC71262A	15	7	Compulsory	1
Mobile Journalism	MC71264A	15	7	Compulsory	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 three 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 [Centre for Academic Language and Literacies](#) 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.

Placement opportunities

Academic staff help students to find placements even though placements are not part of the programme curriculum.

Employability and potential career opportunities

This programme helps students develop their critical and analytical abilities as well as a great number of practical sought-after skills and competencies. It therefore can lead to many types career including:

- Digital journalist
- Online editor at large news organisation
- Multimedia reporter
- Community/social media journalist or editor
- Project Manager for journalism projects
- Computational or Data Journalist
- Investigative journalist
- Interactive documentary producer
- Data mining specialist or Online Research Methods resource Entrepreneur/founder of media startup
- Web or Mobile designer
- Data visualisation specialist
- Video journalist
- Mobile Journalist
- Photojournalist

Programme-specific requirements

All taught postgraduate degrees have a minimum total value of 180 credits and involve one calendar year of full-time study. Some programmes may extend over more than one calendar year and, when this is the case, they have a higher total credit value. Programmes are composed of individual modules, each of which has its own credit value. Part-time students normally take modules to the value of 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. Normally, all modules are at level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

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

Tuition fee costs

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

Specific programme costs

Not applicable