

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Journalism, Media and Culture Journalism, Media and Culture (with Placement Year) Journalism, Media and Culture (with International Study Year)
5	UCAS/Programme Code	P500 1460U 1832U
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
8	FHEQ Level	Level 6
9	Last updated	February 2024

10 Programme Aims

1. To provide students with a learning environment that cultivates personal and academic development by offering intellectually exciting and challenging experiences.
2. To provide intensive and rigorous training in multi-media journalism to enable them to acquire an advanced set of skills in media practice.
3. To equip graduates with a thorough understanding of the ethical norms and legal principles relevant to the media industry in order to be able to practice journalism as ethical and reflexive professionals.
4. To provide students with a learning environment where the relationship between journalism theory and journalistic practice is constantly interrogated.
5. To provide learning opportunities to students to acquire a sophisticated knowledge and understanding of the theory and practices of journalism in the context of a critical analysis of the media at a national and global level.
6. To produce professionals and graduates who can interpret, analyse and exercise critical judgement in the evaluation of theories, concepts, accounts and explanations produced within the fields of media, communications and culture.
7. To equip graduates with a knowledge and understanding of media, communicative and cultural activities across local and global situations and across historical and contemporary contexts.
8. To enable graduates to apply theories and concepts to the field of media, communication and culture and critically reflect on the reliability and validity of the resulting explanations.
9. To enable graduates to investigate problems and generate solutions by selecting and employing the most appropriate research methods, coding strategies and analytical frames.
10. To help form innovative and versatile professionals who are able to effectively create, manage and disseminate information textually, verbally and visually.
11. To provide students with the necessary transferable intellectual, vocational and employability skills appropriate to the contemporary contexts.
12. To provide students with the relevant skillsets that will help them understand and adapt to the changes taking place in the media industries.
13. To provide a programme that meets the requirements of an undergraduate Level 6 qualification as defined by the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.
14. To provide a programme that conforms to prevailing University policies and to QAA codes of practice.

For Students Undertaking a Placement Year

15. To provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.
16. To facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.
17. To provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer-term career plans.
18. Enable students to ethically apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace, reflect upon their development and effectively evidence and articulate their learning in relevant future settings.

For Students Undertaking International Study Year

19. Offer students the opportunity to develop graduate attributes which increase employability, particularly communication and (where applicable) language skills, intercultural competencies, adaptability, resilience and global awareness.
20. Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.
21. Provide the opportunity to experience new areas of study outside of their usual programme of study at Newcastle University.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have achieved:

- A1** A critical and creative engagement with major thinkers, debates and intellectual traditions in media, cultural studies and journalism studies.
- A2** A conceptual and critical understanding, informed by research, of forms and practices of media, culture and communication, and how they organise understanding, feelings and meaning in society.
- A3** A critical understanding of how verbal, textual and visual representations, mediated by traditional, new and emerging media, impact upon relationships between individuals, groups, institutions, cultures, and societies.
- A4** An understanding of how cultural contexts and cultural consumption control, create and challenge individual and collective identities, experiences and emotions.
- A5** An understanding of how factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexuality and other social formations affect media representations and cultural practices.
- A6** A reflexive understanding of the mechanisms through which audio, visual, verbal and textual conventions structure communicative processes via different media and in different social and cultural contexts.
- A7** An in-depth knowledge and understanding of how a variety of research methodologies and epistemological traditions as well as attendant techniques of data collection and analysis are used to produce information about journalism, media, communicative action and culture.
- A8** A critical and reflexive understanding of the principles and practices of convergence journalism involved in the production of journalistic content for different platforms (print, online and broadcast).
- A9** Knowledge of professional codes of practice as laid down by the National Union of Journalists and regulatory bodies.
- A10** An in-depth knowledge and understanding of media law and ethics in a transnational context as it pertains to the journalistic profession and media industry.

For students on the Placement Year programme

A11 The ability to apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.

A12 The ability to research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.

A13 The ability to demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.

A14 The ability to relate their work-based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

For Students Undertaking International Study Year

A15 Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Realising these outcomes is achieved primarily through lectures (1-10) with scholars who have national and international reputations in their field of study. These methods and strategies are supported by the use of a range of resources that include newspaper, television, film, radio, internet and music recordings. These are supplemented by seminars (1-7), field-trips (8-10), practical sessions (6, 8-10), tutorials (1-10), use of ICT-based workshops (6, 8-10), training sessions for use of on-line communication tools and multimedia digital technology (6, 8-10) and research supervision (7). These methods are facilitated by strategies that involve individual and collective learning (small group, class and Stage).

All students at Stage 1 are given foundational knowledge in media, communication and cultural studies, as well as multimedia technologies and production of journalist content. At Stage 2, students have the chance to specialise in areas of their choice. At Stage 3, students' knowledge and understanding is further advanced by compulsory modules covering theory and practice, alongside their research-based dissertation. Teaching and learning methods are also enhanced by the involvement of professionals and practitioners from various media and culture industries. In addition, all students now pursue career and employability routes in-house.

Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding are assessed by means of coursework, presentations, research-led assessments and exams. *Coursework* (1-10): essays, projects, portfolios, seminar preparation; *Presentations* (1-10): individual presentations, group presentations; *Research-led* (7): research proposals, dissertation; *Exams* (1-10): unseen examination.

The *coursework* enables students to explore their knowledge and understanding. Such methods encourage more sophisticated and critically inflected understanding of knowledge, theory and concepts. *Presentations* enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a different medium, whilst the *Research-led* assessments encourage deeper understanding and sustained engagement with particular knowledges, theories and concepts. *Exams* are primarily used to provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of core knowledges.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1 Demonstrate high levels of information literacy in order to collect and select topical and up-to-date secondary sources from a variety of outlets including journals, archives, databases, reports, monographs, web pages and research papers.

B2 Critically assesses the validity and suitability of different sources of information containing a variety of ideological or epistemological perspectives, and then effectively disseminate ideas in an organised, coherent and logical manner.

B3 Conceptualise social, cultural and political problems as valid strategies for research inquiry within the field of media, communication and culture, translate them into concise research questions and select the most appropriate methodologies, research and analysis techniques and resources to explicate those questions

- B4** Evaluate the effectiveness of different research strategies and methodologies (such as multimethod research strategies, textual analysis or action research in the field of journalistic practice), aiming to produce valid and relevant solutions with applicability in an industry context.
- B5** Deploy expertise in the area of data analysis through coding strategies and provide critical interpretations of the significance of the data to the field of study by making reference to similar research projects within the relevant academic literature.
- B6** Reflexively recognise how biography, norms and values, ethical standpoints, cultural context and chronology may shape the research process.
- B7** Demonstrate a range of competences in a creative, versatile and innovative manner when producing journalistic content across a range of media platforms.
- B8** Demonstrate a thorough and reflexive understanding of the professional norms and practices encountered in the media and cultural industries.
- B9** Develop and deploy strategies that will enable them to understand and anticipate change in the media industries and adapt their professional practice in order to enhance their employability and respond to these changes.
- B10** To demonstrate within the field of journalism practice the ability to conceptualise ethical dilemmas, reflect on these and apply the relevant conceptual framework and find solutions within the existing legal framework.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Students are given the opportunity to develop their subject-specific skills in a range of forums. Across the degree students are required to support their knowledge and understanding, subject-specific skills and cognitive skills through the collection of supporting evidence. Achievement of all the outcomes in this area is underpinned by lectures (1-10), workshops (7-10), seminars and tutorials (1-10), ICT-based modules (2, 8), fieldwork (10) and individual research supervision (1-5). The development of these skills is also enhanced by the use of group-led learning sessions (2, 6, 8, 10).

The main emphasis in this area is that of research inquiry. Core modules at every stage facilitate students' awareness of a variety of research methods that are appropriate to media, communication and cultural studies. It is important that students' relationship with methodology intensifies as their degree progresses and they develop a methodology of research as part of their research-led dissertation module. Besides the above mentioned methods, independent learning (reading, data collection and analysis) and reflexion play a crucial role in the development of intellectual skills.

Assessment Strategy

Subject specific intellectual skills are assessed through coursework, presentations and research-led assessments.

Coursework: essays (1-10), projects (2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10), group portfolio (7-10), seminar preparation and seminar tasks (1-10) allow to measure students' ability to interpret, analyse and recognise how different knowledges and understandings shape the fields of journalism, media, communication and cultural studies. *Presentations:* Individual presentations, group presentations enable the demonstration of the application of their subject-specific skills (1-10). *Research-Led assessments:* primary research, research proposals, and dissertation allow students to apply perspectives in order to explain phenomena and they also enable students to adapt their skills to provide relevant explanations about and solution to problems encountered in the everyday world (1-5).

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- C1** Interpret, analyse and exercise critical judgement in understanding and evaluating major theoretical perspectives, conceptual frameworks, and evidence obtained from research in studies of media, communication and culture.
- C2** Recognise how different theoretically informed perspectives contribute to different philosophical and ideological perspectives on media, communication and culture.

- C3** Apply complex theoretical perspectives to investigate the political economy of the media, the production, distribution and consumption of media discourses, and to evaluate the impact of media representations on individuals and social groups.
- C4** Engage in abstract thinking, concept-building and creative experimentation and apply knowledge to both empirical situations and practical media.
- C5** Adapt existing theories, concepts and explanations to develop research strategies for existing, new and emerging areas in the field of journalism, media, communication and cultural studies.
- C6** Demonstrate practical skills comparable to industry standards in applying principles and techniques of news-gathering for the written, on-line, broadcast and video production of news texts.
- C7** Develop and apply professional skills to the production of general journalistic content that would meet the requirements of industry regulatory codes.
- C8** Use multi-media journalism skills and competencies in the production of news reports and articles for a number of different platforms that reach the quality standards of broadcastable/publishable output.
- C9** Access, within the existing legal frameworks, information held by organisations and governmental bodies.
- C10** To be able to script, shoot, edit and produce short digital films that reach entry-level professional standards for video journalism.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Developing students' interpreting, analysing and exercising critical judgement in the evaluation of the field of journalism, media, communication and cultural studies is accomplished through lectures (1-3). However, practicals, seminars and tutorials are predominantly used as means to enable students to discuss, learn to evaluate and demonstrate their skills (1-4, 6-10). Specific teaching strategies such as group and individual problem-solving sessions (6-10), computer-assisted learning (7, 8) and research supervision (1, 2) are also used to facilitate students' critical appreciation and application of theories and concepts in the field of media, communication and cultural studies. Email surgeries are also used where students can have designated one-to-one contact on a weekly basis. Such strategies operationalise a range of resources that include academic studies, newspaper, literature, television, film, radio, internet, music recordings and photography, which are used to stimulate discussions that enable the application of theories and concepts to 'real life' examples (1-10).

Assessment Strategy

Subject-specific skills are assessed through coursework, presentations, and timed assessment. These include: *Coursework*: essays, projects, individual and group portfolio, seminar preparation, computer-based workbook, multimedia packages (1-10); *Presentations*: Individual presentations, group presentations (1-3, 5, 6, 8); *Research-led assessments*: primary research, research proposals, dissertation (1, 2); *Exams*: seen examination. Career planning and employability skills are now assessed through specific career-related modules offered as part of programme (1-10).

These methods of assessment enable students a thorough and systematic application of their cognitive skills. The *coursework* allows students to put into effect their analytic skills and capacities to critically evaluate in an in-depth and systematic fashion. *Presentations* enable students to translate abstract thinking into analyses of practical events, engendering awareness of specific audiences. *Research-led* methods of assessment provide an opportunity to apply cognitive thinking to real-life phenomena in the field of media, communication and cultural studies. *Exams* diagnostically ensure that students grasp the basic principles of cognitive thinking. Projects and portfolios of practical work allow students to demonstrate the journalistic skills they have acquired through the production of written or multimedia packages.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1** (informed by a relevant conceptual framework) gather, organise and deploy ideas and information in order to formulate arguments and critical evaluations that underpin essays, presentations, projects and dissertation research.
- D2** (informed by academic or professional conventions) cogently communicate by means of well-prepared, clear and confident presentations, and coherent, concise written documents.
- D3** Demonstrate confidence in critically and creatively evaluating and using a variety of media and communication forms in relation to an appropriate conceptualisation of the audiences to such acts of communication (such as clients, fellow professionals and employers within the cultural industries).
- D4** Make expert use of online and offline resources from the library as well as other information resources.
- D5** Solve problems by making reference to appropriate conceptual frameworks or professional norms, codes and practices.
- D6** Use IT resources and multimedia technology (audio, video and online) in a creative, versatile and innovative manner to present and disseminate appropriate communications, as well as to establish a dialogical relation with the targeted audiences.
- D7** Plan, organise and prioritise work activities to a given length, format, brief and deadline, respond and adapt to client demand, and cope with unexpected situations and unforeseen circumstances.
- D8** Work productively in a group or team showing abilities at different times to listen, contribute and lead effectively; reflect on the work dynamics of diverse, internationalised groups and the challenges and benefits of working in such a context.
- D9** Work in flexible, creative and independent ways, showing self-discipline, self-direction and reflexivity.
- D10** Identify and create personal action plans on the basis of career/employability modules.

For students on the Placement Year programme

- D11** Reflect on and manage their own learning and development within the workplace.
- D12** Use existing and new knowledge to enhance their personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate its impact and communicate this process.
- D13** Use graduate skills in a professional manner in a workplace environment, evaluate their impact and communicate the personal development that has taken place.

For Students Undertaking International Study Year

- D14** Adapt and operate in a different cultural environment

Teaching and Learning Methods

Teaching methods and strategies that are employed to achieve these objectives include standard lectures (1, 2, 3, 4, 7), ICT-based lectures (2-9), workshop sessions (2, 4, 5), library-based interactive sessions (4, 5, 6), seminars (1, 2, 5, 8) and web-based learning (1, 2, 7, 9). Tutorials and research supervision focus on solving problems and working independently (5, 9). At Stages 1 and 2 students have the opportunity to do modules which allow them to develop skills covering employability in the media and cultural industries. These modules involve the direct application of theories, concepts and perspectives to local organisations and companies. This is often undertaken in a consultancy context. Seminars, where appropriate, involve presentations by students providing discussion and analysis of research/case study explorations.

Assessment Strategy

Key skills are assessed through: *Coursework*: essays (1-9), projects, portfolios (1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9), seminar preparation (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9); *Presentations*: individual presentations (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9), group presentations (1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8); *Research-led assessments*: research proposals (1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9), dissertation (1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9); *Exams*: timed assessments, seen and unseen examinations.

The aim of the *coursework* is to enable students to practice and hone their key skills. Such methods encourage more sophisticated and critically inflected understanding of knowledge, theory and concepts. *Presentations* enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding in a different medium, whilst the *research-led* assessment encourages deeper understanding and sustained engagement with particular knowledges, theories and concepts.

Exams are primarily used to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of core knowledges and concepts.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

- A** The programme is studied over three years full-time.
- B** The programme is made up of three stages. Stage 1 modules are FHEQ level 4; Stage 2 modules are FHEQ level 5; Stage 3 modules are FHEQ level 6. Students are required to study a minimum of 90 credits at FHEQ level 6.
- C** The overall credit value of the programme is 360.
- D** Each stage requires the study of modules with a credit value of 120. Each stage is made up of a mixture of *compulsory* (a module which a student is required to study) and *optional* modules. *Compulsory* modules ensure that a baseline of knowledge, skills and understanding at Certificate level, Intermediate level and Honours level are acquired by all students. *Optional* modules enable students to gain broader knowledge and skills in consonant subject areas.
- E** At stages 1, 2, & 3 a minimum of 40 credits of compulsory modules will be taken from a list of journalism practice modules.

F Careers Service Placement Year (1460U)

On completion of Stage 2 and before entering Stage 3, candidates on the P500 Journalism, Media and Culture programme may as part of their studies for the degree, spend a year in a placement with an approved organisation and transfer to 1460U. Students who are required to re-sit their Stage 2 assessment must delay the start of their placement until they have done so. Students who fail Stage 2 may not complete a placement year.

G International Study Year

The programme is made up of four stages for 1832U students. Stage 1 modules are certificate level and Stage 2 modules are Intermediate level. Students on 1832U spend a year studying internationally between Stage 2 and 3 with DPD discretion. This year does not contribute to the overall degree classification. Stage 3 modules are Honours level. Students are required to study 90 credits at the appropriate level.

Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)

The programme contains a number of distinctive features:

- A** The programme critically integrates theory and practice with respect to media, communication and culture, providing students with opportunities to mobilise academic theories and analytical skills to address practice-based activities, problems and contexts.
- B** Research and problem-solving is a central concern of the programme.
- C** An innovative feature of the programme is that it is designed to focus on contextualising media, communication and culture in the workplace through compulsory modules.
- D** There is an intensive vocational training element in journalism practice that encompasses print, online and multimedia journalism in order to produce versatile professionals who are highly employable and adaptable in the current fast-changing media industries.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[P500 Programme Regulations 2024/25](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

Accreditation reports

N/A

Additional mechanisms

N/A

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/#subject>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.