

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Taught Postgraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	Digital Media, Technology and Society
5	Programme Code	4199F/P
6	Programme Accreditation	none
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Communications, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	April 2026

10 Programme Aims

MA Digital Media, Technology and Society is designed around research, innovation and practice in digital media. Through critical engagement with the social and creatives uses of AIs, algorithms, data, software, and mobile technologies, you will learn to work across a range of digital industries, including roles in storytelling and content management, enterprise and strategy, and applied data-driven research in a variety creative contexts and organisations. The programme is founded on the core principle that digital media should be taught through bringing together leading-edge research and practice to create critically informed innovators and change-makers. Students will work with a range of scholars and practitioners from diverse backgrounds that utilise digital technology and production in the media, culture and communication sectors. At the same time, Digital Media, Technology and Society draws from across the School of Arts and Cultures' community in creative industries, media, music, heritage and the arts, supporting students to become part of a cross-campus network of creativity, innovation and enterprise.

The programme offers a uniquely interdisciplinary education in digital media, building on the intersecting fields at the heart of the Media, Culture, Heritage to equip graduates with a versatile set of skills applicable across many different roles that engage digital media. Students gain a deep understanding of the origins of and emerging impact of digital media, critical methods for analysing and critiquing their contemporary uses across cultural and social contexts, and practical skills for creatively using digital media in an informed and ethical manor. By exploring diverse perspectives and engaging with a range of technical practices, students learn to confidently navigate the complex role digital media are playing in local and global transformations.

Central to the programme is the cultivation of a networked graduate cohort that recognises the importance of building sustainable relationships within the digital media ecosystem. You will actively engage with professionals from across the sector as well as audiences to foster connections that extend beyond the classroom and into the professional realm. Through industry-set briefs, you will learn the value of collaboration, communication and community-building in contemporary digital practice.

The programme exposes learners to leading-edge research and practice in contemporary digital practices, with a particular focus on addressing the urgent issues facing global society including the tensions and opportunities relating to artificial intelligence, digital sustainability and global justice. By engaging with innovative scholarship and practices, students develop the confidence, critical thinking skills and analytical tools necessary to grapple with the complexities of the digital world. In brief, the programme aims to:

1. Provide a broad knowledge and understanding of the practical and theoretical aspects of digital technologies and their global contexts.
2. Equip you with the knowledge and skills for a range of digital media and technology roles, including employment, self-employment, freelancing and consultancy.
3. Enhance your understanding of the complex ethical, environmental and political contexts in which digital media operate, historically, in the present and looking towards the future.
4. Develop practical and rigorous data gathering and analysis skills suitable for work in the digital sector and academic scholarship
5. Connect you with digital industries practitioners regionally, nationally and globally to acquire professional network building skills and intercultural learning opportunities.

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 knowledge and understanding of:

- A1 The social, cultural, ethical and economic contexts in which digital media are developed and used;
- A2 Challenges and opportunities in digital ethics, safety, regulation and sustainability;
- A3 The complex landscape and key theories of digital media and research, roles and pathways within it;
- A4 Design features, techniques and technologies related to digital media;
- A5 An independent and focussed area of expertise within the fields of digital media and technology.

11.a Teaching and Learning Methods

The Learning and Teaching Strategy (LTAS) for this programme is based around facilitating creativity, collaboration and communication. This is achieved through a diverse set of learning and teaching methods across the programme's modules, designed to suit individual modules' learning outcomes. They have also been designed holistically across the programme both to produce a clear learning journey and to ensure a varied, exciting and enriching intercultural learning experience for students. The LTAS for the programme foregrounds two key principles: discussion and diversity; and learning through practice.

Discussion and Diversity: The programme's design recognises and capitalises on the diversity of the student cohort and learning environment, including learning from across the School of Arts and Cultures and beyond. The LTAS has been designed to amplify opportunities for intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue and discussion, giving students agency and confidence to forge an increasingly independent learning journey over the course of the programme, culminating in the final project, which can be either research or practice-led. Modules drawing on staff expertise from across the Media, Culture, Heritage disciplines. They prioritise small-group teaching ensuring students feel empowered to share their own perspectives and forge individual identities in the classroom. These will sit alongside face-to-face and online methods designed to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge.

Learning through Practice: Experiential and problem-based learning is at the forefront of the programme. Students are encouraged to consider theoretical issues in real-world contexts, through case study and practice driven small-group teaching as well as in-person exposure to digital practice and research through instructors who specialise in either or both. Students also have considerable opportunity to put their learning into practice, through the design of workshops. This encourages collaboration and interpersonal development and advances key attributes that are translatable into future careers across the digital media sector.

Learning and teaching methods designed to further knowledge and understanding include:

1. A variety of classroom-based, online and hands-on experiential learning methods designed to provide an understanding of digital media theory and practice are intertwined. These include lectures, seminars and workshops, as well as practical curatorial tasks designed to foster learning through practice. (A1; A2; A5)
2. Small-group learning built around real-life scenarios and case studies, encouraging understanding of challenges and opportunities through experiential and problem-based learning. (A1; A2; A3)
3. Engagement with professional contexts through encounters with industry professionals and partners and real-life sector briefs. Practical exercises will introduce students to the breadth of roles open to them upon graduation. (A2; A3; A4)
4. Use of practical workshops to give grounding in fundamentals, giving way to increased opportunities for independent curiosity-driven research, facilitated through one-to-one supervision and collaborative work. (A4; A5)

11b. Assessment Strategy

The assessment strategy for the programme has been designed to evaluate students' knowledge, understanding and practice of the fields of digital media and to reward self-reflective, independent and innovative approaches to the urgent issues facing these fields. Assessment takes a wide array of forms across the programme, tailored to the specific aims and learning outcomes of each module and the passions of the students. The assessment strategy encourages free-thinking, curiosity, experimentation, collaboration and group-work alongside rigorous independent academic study.

Assessments are, where possible, designed to authentically reflect industry and creative practice scenarios, projects and tasks in the digital sector. Assessments encourage creativity across a variety of forms to foster versatility and to accommodate a breadth of learners and proficiencies. The assessment reflects this, focussing on the depth of knowledge, critical analysis, creativity, interdisciplinary understanding, collaborative skills, ethical awareness, and communication capabilities demonstrated by the learners in their respective assessments.

Assessments go beyond mere tests of knowledge and form a crucial part of the learning process for students. Formative assessments are prominent to encourage development. Regular constructive feed-forward and feedback will be provided to learners on their assessments. Feedback will emphasise strengths and areas of improvement to encourage continuous learning and development throughout the programme.

Assessment methods designed to evaluate and further knowledge and understanding include:

1. Written reports and essays which both evaluate knowledge and understanding and allow students to demonstrate independence using their own case studies. (A1; A2; A4)

2. Digital, data-driven and multimedia assessments that allow students to articulate knowledge and understanding in a range of different ways and using different tools. (A2; A3)
3. Creative methods, from essays to collaborative presentations, allowing students to demonstrate versatility, collectively and exchange of ideas (A2; A4)
4. A final project, in which the student will pursue a topic of their own choosing, informed by the breadth of knowledge, understanding and experience students will have gained across the programme (A2; A4)

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- B1 Critically analyse a range of digital media practices with confidence and agility;
- B2 Identify affordances and risks of digital platforms, computation, media and A.I.;
- B3 Independently investigate, appraise and evaluate data in a range of social and technological contexts with creativity and curiosity;
- B4 Understand and use intersectional and intercultural approaches to social justice issues in digital media, storytelling, and culture

Teaching and Learning Methods

A broader discussion of the LTAS for the programme can be found in 11a. Learning and teaching methods designed to develop intellectual skills include:

1. Lectures and problem-driven small group teaching that encourage the acquisition of the tools with which to think critically, and the application of these in concrete contexts. (B1; B2; B3; B4)
2. A multidisciplinary teaching team and student cohort who are encouraged to share disciplinary experience and expertise through small group teaching that facilitates dialogue, and problem-based learning activities that demand that students employ the wealth of disciplinary knowledge they will be exposed to in considered and practicable ways. (B1; B4)
3. Seminars and workshops built around real-world examples, in which students bring together theory-based concepts and concerns with real-world data and technologies. (B2; B3; B4)
4. Guided independent study, supported with one-to-one supervision and access to an array of staff across SACS through office hours, drop-in surgeries and other opportunities for informal discussion led by the student's interests. (B1; B2)

Assessment Strategy

In addition to the overall assessment strategy detailed in 11b, assessment methods designed to evaluate and further intellectual skills include:

1. Written essays and reflections that encourage students to think critically about real-world case studies of their own choosing and their own creative work. (B1; B3; B4)
2. Reflective reports and proposals, which require students to draw on an interdisciplinary pool of knowledge and skills to respond to a brief. (B1, B4)

3. Creative and experimental digital media assessments, including portfolios of writing and other media outputs which reward innovation and independence. (B2; B3)
4. A final research project led by students based on either their own interests or a sector-set challenge. (B3; B4)

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1 Work collaboratively and/or independently with a range of digital media professionals at varying career stages;

C2 Apply ethical frameworks to research practice and production and advocate for ethical digital practice that responds to urgent global challenges;

C3 Choose and use appropriate methods and technologies for digital media research and practice;

C4 Tell diverse stories using creative methods and digital tools including working with data and Artificial Intelligence with confidence and criticality.

Teaching and Learning Methods

A broader discussion of the LTAS for the programme can be found in 11a Learning and teaching methods designed to develop practical skills include:

1. Lectures introducing students concepts and methods, particularly around urgent issues of ethics and to give students examples of best practice. (C2; C3)
2. Discussion-based small-group teaching, in which students will be encouraged to communicate and listen to peers in a supportive environment. (C1; C2)
3. Practical exercises in working with data, media and digital technologies. These will foster practical skills through experience, with an emphasis on using tools for creative story telling (C3; C4)
4. Workshops to develop digital skills in which students are supported by technical experts to experiment with different forms of communication and presentation. (C1; C3; C4)

Assessment Strategy

In addition to the overall assessment strategy detailed in 11b, assessment methods designed to evaluate and further practical skills include:

1. Written essays on case studies, original research and reflection in which students will address best practices in work on digital media in a variety of forms and styles. (C2; C3)
2. The production, design and critique of digital media such as data visualizations, social media content and interactive AIs, as well as the creative presentation of those materials in posters, presentations and other creative outputs. (C1; C3; C4)
3. Collaborative pitches in response to real world challenges and other short-form formative tasks which give students the chance to develop skills in the kinds of agile and concise communication that is often required in the sector. (C1; C2)
4. Reflective exercises encouraging consideration of ethics, challenges, and successes, giving students opportunities to reflect on development across the programme (C2; C4)

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

- D1 Justify and explain decisions in context;
- D2 Design plans and administration for achievable research projects and adapt to varying contexts and contingencies;
- D3 Communicate and collaborate effectively, and be able to mediate between stakeholders towards project delivery;
- D4 Take initiative to be able to participate within, lead and manage diverse teams across different professional and academic environments;
- D5 Think ethically and creatively across a range of creative contexts relating digital to issues of sustainability and global social justice.

Teaching and Learning Methods

- A broader discussion of the LTAS for the programme can be found in 11a. Learning and teaching methods designed to develop transferable/key skills include:
1. Lectures, seminars and workshops through which students are introduced concepts and practices in digital media, and which give the opportunity for students to put into practice this knowledge and understanding. (D1; D5)
 2. Practical exercises in which students must work together to produce media and presentations, and that encourage collaboration and communication amongst students and with relevant third parties. (D2; D3; D4)
 3. Hands-on workshops in which students are guided through conceptual and technical dimensions of working with data, digital media, and related technologies (D1; D2; D5)
 4. Small group seminars and workshops developing collaboration and problem-solving skills around set tasks (D3; D4)

Assessment Strategy

- In addition to the overall assessment strategy detailed in 11b, assessment methods designed to evaluate and further transferable/key skills include:
1. Written assessments responding to a variety of challenges from the sector, promoting confidence and versatility in writing critically about digital media. (D3; D5)
 2. Exercises producing media and technologies based on real-world data and sector-defined challenges (D2; D5)
 3. Formative and assessed group exercises to develop proposals and prototypes responding to contemporary issues in digital media and technology (D3; D4)
 4. A final research project rooted in a rigorous research practice based on either student defined interests or a sector-set problem (D1; D2; D5)

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

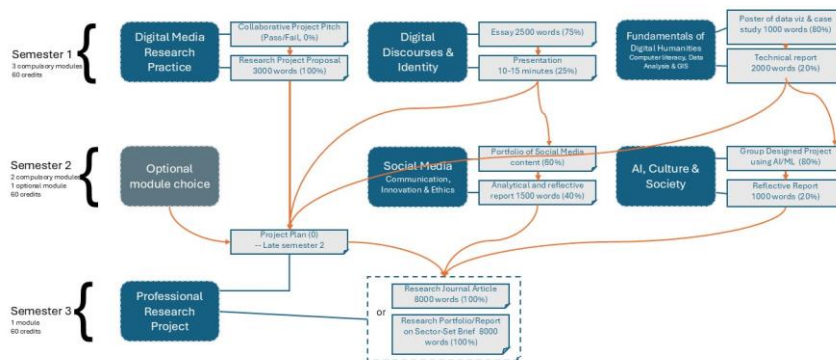
MA Digital Media, Technology and Society is for students who want to tackle the challenges and opportunities of emerging digital technologies in the fields of communication, media, cultural production and the arts. Through a combination of independent and collaborative research projects based on real world problems, you develop abilities to engage with critical and cultural theories, analyse various forms of data, and use platforms for creative digital

outputs. The program emphasises critical approaches to the study and use of technologies to give you a strong ethical foundation in media, communications and cultural work.

The programme will equip you for versatile future careers or self-employment in the fields of media, communication, cultural and creative programming, community engagement and participation, research and policy, in independent, governmental, and charity contexts where critical, imaginative and ethical approaches to digital technologies and digital content creation are paramount.

- Semester 1 focuses on developing knowledge and skills in three key areas: digital research methods; technical skills for working with data, analysis and interpretation; foundational concepts in digital media, communication and culture.
- Semester 2 advances your focused areas of expertise through modules on the newest developments in understanding and working with AIs in a creative and media research context; social media production and critique in a variety of communication contexts; and choosing from an array of modules that develop your knowledge and skills in the sub-areas important to your trajectory
- In Semester 3 you develop and complete an independent research project that culminates either in a publishable quality research paper or portfolio/report responding to a sector-set research problem.

MA Digital Media: Technologies, AI and Society – Student Journey



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

The programme offers a leading-edge education for students preparing for futures as digital communicators, engagers, facilitators, cultural producers, policy makers, managers and leaders. It strategically draws on the position of the Media, Culture, Heritage subject area within Newcastle University’s School of Arts and Cultures to provide students unparalleled access to a multi-disciplinary team of educators and experts in digital media, technology and cultural studies. Graduates will have an exceptional degree that brings together rigorous training in research methods, theories and practical skills to produce, work with and analyse a whole range of digital media across the sector.

The Media, Culture, Heritage subject areas successfully creates a strong sense of belonging and a meaningful learning environment, reflected in a high level of student satisfaction and NSS results (National Student Survey). At the same time, the programme is designed with a global, cross-cultural learning experience at its heart, which brings together students and staff from across the United Kingdom and the world.

The programme is taught by a uniquely interdisciplinary team drawn from across the School of Arts and Cultures that brings together expertise in media, cultural studies, heritage, geography, psychology, film, art, music, journalism and public relations. Students are encouraged to collaborate through shared learning with students studying programmes in Media and Cultural Studies, Creative and Cultural Industries, Heritage and Curation, Digital Humanities, Journalism and Public Relations. The programme combines a set of compulsory modules to give students a strong foundation in the field and close-knit community of peers, with the freedom to access to modules and training across the faculty of Humanities and Social Science allowing students the freedom to pursue of areas of interest and develop diverse expertise.

The programme takes advantage of the school's [industry-facing, multi-purpose and flexible facilities](#), to allow students maximum creative freedom and development in their studies. Students have access to high-spec computing facilities, latest creative software, professional audio and other media production equipment, and a team of highly skilled technicians with expertise in creative production to support all practical projects.

As part of a leading-edge programme, students of the Digital Media, Technology and Society programme actively engage in pressing social issues emerging from our increasingly digital societies, including questions of sustainability, privacy and security, ethics, and the changing role of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence in reshaping everything from our daily lives to the global economy. The programme aims to produce truly unique graduates through hands-on-teaching capable of using the latest tools, research methods, and data to address a wide array of challenges facing individuals, organizations, companies and governments.

The city of Newcastle is home to a vibrant milieu of cultural organizations and creative companies that provide students endless opportunities engage with, learn from and contribute to the rapidly developing scene of digital media and technologies. Students have the opportunity to conduct original research on sector-set problems emerging from real-world questions and data coming directly from industry and organizational partners.

The core of the programme is dedicated to teaching students through research and theoretically informed practice grounded in professional experience. Through a combination case studies, critical discussions, interdisciplinary digital skills development, collaborative working and sector-set creative challenges, students will develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to use digital technologies for social, cultural and creative purposes in a variety of sectors and organisational settings, locally and globally.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[Programme Regulations 2026-27](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

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

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

Accreditation reports

Additional mechanisms

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

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

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/>

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

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.

Annex

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Module	Module (20 credits unless otherwise stated)	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
			A	B	C	D
MCH8032	Digital Media Research Practice	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 3	1, 2, 3	1, 3
MCH8085	Digital Discourses and Identity	Compulsory	1, 2,	1, 4	2	5
ARA8295	Fundamentals of Digital Humanities: Computer Literacy, Data Analysis and GIS	Compulsory	3, 4	1, 3	4	1
SAC8010	AI, Culture and Society	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 4	1, 2, 4	1	1, 3, 4
MCH8039	Professional Research Project in Digital Media (60 credits)	Compulsory	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 3, 4	2, 3	2, 4
SAC8014	Social Media: Communication, Innovation and Ethics	Compulsory	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 4	1, 2, 4	3
ISO8003	Design of Information Systems	Optional	1, 4, 5	2	1, 3	1, 3, 4, 5
MCH8012	Freelancing in Media and Communications	Optional	1, 2, 4, 5	2, 4	1, 4	1, 3
MCH8104	Cultures of Data Visualization	Optional	1, 2, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4	1, 3, 5
MCH8169	Digital Communication for Cultural Institutions and Organisations	Optional	1, 2, 3, 5	2, 3, 4	2, 3, 4	3, 4, 5
MCH8177	Digital Politics, Communication and AI	Optional	1, 2, 3, 5	1, 2, 4	2	1, 5
MCH8013	Global and Environmental Public Relations	Optional	1, 2, 3	2, 4	1, 2	1, 5
MUS8028	Pedagogical Technology in Music Education	Optional	1,4,5	1	1, 3	2,3,5
NBS8323	Digital Start-up	Optional	1, 2, 3	1	1, 3	3, 4
NBS8628	Digital Transformation for Social Good	Optional	2, 3, 4	1, 2	1, 2	3, 4

Commented [LC1]: Please can the intended learning outcomes be added for the optional modules? Thanks