Postgraduate Programmes in
Media and Communication
(by Distance Learning)
Welcome to the Department of Media and Communication

The Department of Media and Communication at the University of Leicester is one of the UK’s leading centres for research and teaching in communication, media and culture and is internationally recognised for its excellence in methodologically innovative and empirically based research.

Established in 1966, the Department has expertise in many different aspects of communication and media research. Our academic staff have published numerous books, articles and research reports, several of which have become standard texts around the world. We provide a supportive and stimulating learning environment in which UK and international students at all levels can engage in debates on the local, national and global nature of contemporary mass media.

Distance Learning at the University of Leicester

Distance learning now enjoys a key role in many of the world’s higher education systems and it is likely to expand in the future as new ways of teaching and studying, which make use of new communication technologies, become available. The University of Leicester is committed to the further development of flexible learning systems. Our distance learning students acquire knowledge principally through their study of printed texts. There is often provision for some face-to-face tuition, although this is not as substantial as in conventional full-time learning; there is more intensive use of other means of communication such as email and audio-visual media.

Benefits of Studying by Distance Learning

Distance Learning offers students the option to study part-time from home while remaining in full-time employment.

Objectives

- Explore key themes and issues in contemporary media and communication research.
- Introduce some of the skills and approaches that can be used to study the media, emphasizing the importance of analysing media and communication processes in their social, political, economic and global contexts.
- Provide access to the current thinking of key researchers and writers in the field from around the world.
- Offer people who are already employed in the communication industries a chance to review current professional and industrial practices.
- Present a challenging and comprehensive introduction to the media for those who plan to work in the communication field in the future.

Aims

The communication media are more pervasive and more influential in politics, industry, business, family and leisure, education, and social regulation than ever before. There are few areas of knowledge which have as much relevance and importance in contemporary life. As the media become more ‘global’ in their ownership, content and audience reach, they raise profound questions about national sovereignty, industrial power and public access and representation.

Our programmes are designed to:
- Serve as a broad introduction to the study of communications media.
- Provide access to the current thinking of key researchers and writers in the field from around the world.
- Offer people who are already employed in the communication industries a chance to review current professional and industrial practices.
- Present a challenging and comprehensive introduction to the media for those who plan to work in the communication field in the future.

Careers

Our Master’s programmes provide an excellent foundation for study at research degree level. There is a broadly based examination of history and global development, and a theoretical diversity of approaches to the study of media and communication. There is a strong emphasis on research methods training, and an international perspective via case studies and exemplars of media developments around the world.

Other key career destinations include higher education institutions, press and broadcast organisations, international news agencies, government departments (e.g., publicity, education, health), advertising, public relations, and non-governmental organisations.

For more information contact our Distance Learning Team:
- t: +44 (0) 116 223 1754
- e: css-dl@le.ac.uk
- w: www2.le.ac.uk/departments/media/dl

For information on Distance Learning Agents and Partners see page 10.
The MA in Mass Communication taught me a wide range of skills which have been crucial to both my professional and personal development.

Kate, Mass Communication Graduate

Current Programmes
- MA Mass Communication
- MA New Media and Society
- MA New Media, Governance and Democracy
- MA Communication, Media and Public Relations
- MA Communication, Media and Advertising

Each programme shares a common first year (on successful completion of which students may choose to exit with the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Mass Communication).

The second year makes provision for more specialised study in the topic area identified in each programme title, with the opportunity of further specialisation through the pursuit of a dissertation (for an MA) or for early exit on completion of coursework (for a Postgraduate Diploma).

MA Mass Communication
This programme provides you with the knowledge and research expertise to address a wide range of questions in media and communications such as the changing social uses of media; media production, organisation and control; issues of management, training and ethics in media practice; media regulation; comparative cross national studies of media; analysis of media texts; the implications of media for the knowledge, beliefs and behaviours of audiences; media technologies; the contribution of media to economic growth, nation-building, community development, and individual identity and well-being.

MA New Media and Society
In addition to a thorough grounding in the origins, theoretical development and research methods used in the study of media and communication, this programme invites you to explore the history, growth and development of the Internet and other related technologies, the different applications to which new communication technologies have been put, and their social and psychological impact upon users and societies. Legal and regulatory factors are examined as are issues linked to the political economy of the Internet. The programme is international in perspective, examining global developments, but also offers more detailed examination at the local and regional level. It aims to impart knowledge and encourage reflective practice among media professionals.

MA New Media, Governance and Democracy
This programme allows you to build on the broad introduction to media and communication research and specialise by studying the developments that have occurred around the world in the provision of electronic government. The programme examines the political, economic and social reasons for the establishment of e-government and explores online government developments in the wider context of debates about the rapid spread and adoption of new information and communication technologies, e-democracy and the civic engagement of citizens. The programme also considers the importance of these developments in offsetting growing political alienation and distrust of politicians and governments.

MA Communication, Media and Public Relations
The specialised modules in this programme are designed for those wishing to acquire detailed knowledge of the latest research into news access and journalistic practices, and on the growth, functioning and significance of PR in contemporary society. Modules cover PR and propaganda; ‘spin’ and the role of public relations in political and commercial communication; PR and the new media; media management in times of conflict, PR and the promotional practices of special interest groups; NGOs and the news. There will be opportunities for regional specialisation and a chance to explore PR practices in a global context.

MA Communication, Media and Advertising
This programme places the academic study of advertising in a broad context. The programme is designed for graduates with experience in advertising, marketing or related sectors who seek to enhance their qualifications and for those with an academic background in the social sciences or humanities who aspire to careers, or to teach, in these sectors. The specialist modules explore the advertising industry in a global context, examining advertising as a form of communication shaped by economic, cultural and social factors, and as an occupational practice. These modules will examine how advertising works in different media, advertising history and development; ethical, regulatory and social issues; the nature and impact of advertising; and consumer behaviour and marketing research.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

YEAR ONE
- Key Issues and Approaches in Media Study
- Media History and Social Regulation
- Media in Global Context
- Communication and Globalization
- Investigating Media
- Media Industries – Convergence, Divergence

Assessment: Five assignments and one examination

YEAR TWO
- Professional Practices
- Audience and Reception

Mass Communications
- Choose TWO modules from Option Modules List

New Media & Society
- The Political Economy of New Media
- Communication Technology and Society
- Political Communication
- e-Government & e-Democracy: Theory and Practice

New Media Governance & Democracy
- Journalism: News Access and Source Power
- Critical Public Relations: Contexts and Issues

Communication Media & Advertising
- Advertising: industry, contexts, impacts
- Advertising as Communication

Assessment: Four assignments

DISSERATION
- MA in Mass Communication / New Media & Society / New Media, Governance & Democracy / Communication, Media & Public Relations / Communication, Media and Advertising

Assessment: Five assignments and one examination

Postgraduate Certificate in
Mass Communication

Postgraduate Diploma in
Mass Communication / New Media & Society / New Media, Governance & Democracy / Communication, Media & Public Relations / Communication, Media and Advertising

Postgraduate Programmes in Media and Communication (by Distance Learning)
This module contains a comparative analysis of public and private ownership media and considers the relative significance of their production. It examines issues in the histories of print and audio-visual media, and social development. Specific topics include nationhood, nationalism and national identity, imperialism, dependency, and globalisation and a critical evaluation of ‘alternative’ uses of media.

Year Two Modules

Communications and Globalisation – 10 Credits

Through this module you will acquire a critical understanding of different approaches to the study of the media in relation to processes of political, economic and social development. Specific topics include nationhood, nationalism and national identity, imperialism, dependency, and globalisation and a critical evaluation of ‘alternative’ uses of media.

Investigating Media – 10 Credits

The ‘methods’ module of the course, designed to improve your ability to evaluate media research, learn some of the key research skills for the study of the media, and find out how to carry out your own research projects, is academic or professional purposes.

Media Industries: Convergence, Divergence – 10 Credits

This module combines a study of the distinctive features of particular media organisations or industries with issues which are generic to all media industries. In terms of ownership, control, technology, markets and marketing, there has been growing convergence between these industries, yet these different media have distinctive histories, traditions and signifying systems.

Year Two Modules

Professional Practices – 10 Credits

A variety of viewpoints of professional practice are discussed in this module, drawing on a wide range of academic approaches and disciplines. Units explore issues of management, training and ethics in journalism and other aspects of media production.

Audience and Reception – 10 Credits

This module presents a critical account and discussion of the significance of different ways of thinking about media influence, media use and patterns of media consumption. It examines the relationship between theory and research design and the influence of the different research approaches on the provision of education about the media.

Option Modules

Media Texts – 20 Credits

This module examines a number of different approaches to the study of media texts and includes discussions of studies of language use in media and the languages of media, the relevance of discourse analysis, and studies of genre and narrative in both written texts and the moving image.

Communication, Technology and Society – 20 Credits

This module introduces you to the broad theoretical perspectives and debates concerning the relationship between modern communication technologies and the nature of contemporary social structures and practices. It will provide you with a critical appraisal of the ways in which this relationship has been conceptualised and understood and will explore the potential social impacts of new communications technologies.

The Political Economy of New Media – 20 Credits

This module invites you to integrate the concerns traditionally associated with communication research with those arising from the changing communications industries. You will gain an understanding of the developing frameworks of government regulation in different national contexts and develop knowledge of current trends towards media convergence, new media audiences/users, the Internet and the ‘attention economy’, and the global digital divide.

Political Communication – 20 Credits

This module examines developments in theories and practices of political communication and places them in an international context. It examines issues such as the increasing role of mass media in political systems around the world and its relationship to ideas of Americanisation and globalisation. The growing importance of political marketing in developed democracies is appraised alongside consideration of the evolution of political advertising as a primary means of communicating politics to a mass audience.

e-Governance and e-Democracy: Theory and Practice – 20 Credits

This module offers a comprehensive examination of global e-government developments, including the use of the Internet by parliaments and political parties, the impact of government web sites on civic engagement, the implementation of e-voting initiatives, and the growing importance of the Internet as a political news source and platform for political debate. It will also consider the potential significance of alternative technology platforms for electronic public service delivery such as digital interactive television and mobile telephony.

Journalism: News Access and Source Power – 20 Credits

This module aims to acquaint you with the fast-growing research literature and surrounding theoretical discussion about news access and source power. The module explores this interaction between the news media and sources in different contexts and provides up-to-date discussion and comparative materials that will help you to arrive at a better understanding of this critical relationship.

Critical Public Relations: Contexts and Issues – 20 Credits

What is PR? How does it contribute to democratic processes? This module explores the history and development of public relations, examines the different models it can follow, ethical concerns and codes of practice followed at national and global levels, and looks beyond media relations to examine the impact of new media technologies on political and corporate communications.

Advertising: industry, contexts, impacts – 20 Credits

This module explores advertising history and development; the advertising industry in a global context; advertising as an occupational practice; advertising ethics and regulation; and advertising and social issues.

Advertising as Communication – 20 Credits

This module examines how advertising works in different media; the nature and impact of advertising; advertising and children; marketing and the measurement of consumer behaviour.

Dissertation – 60 Credits

Candidates who would like to complete degree of MA are required to complete a 12,000-15,000 word dissertation on an approved topic.
Study Support

Personal Tutor
Each student is assigned a Personal Tutor who may be contacted by email, phone, fax or post for academic guidance on all coursework.

Course Conference (UK)
An annual 4-day course conference is held in May at the University and is open to all students. The conference offers a series of lectures and seminars presented by guest speakers and academics from the Department. There are also opportunities for face-to-face tuition with your Personal Tutor. The conference is a good opportunity to meet and interact with the academics, student alumni and colleagues from the course. Attendance at the conference is not compulsory but many students have enjoyed the experience of life on campus and have found their encounters with staff and fellow students highly motivating.

University of Leicester Library Services for Distance Learning Students
A range of library and information resources and services are available to distance learning students via the University Library. You have access to electronic journal articles, books and databases, and a postal book loan and photocopying service is also available.

PhD by Distance Learning

What is the distance learning PhD?
The distance learning route to a PhD is designed for those who wish to continue in full-time employment or would for other reasons find it difficult to study for a PhD either full-time or part-time on campus. There is no difference in examination procedures or standards expected for PhDs gained by distance learning or on campus. The award of a doctorate requires the presentation of an 80,000-word thesis based on a piece of individually-supervised research. The programme leading to this is designed to meet the particular needs of distance learners by combining online research training with individual research supervision. The research training is delivered over two years through readings and online learning activities using the University’s Blackboard virtual learning environment.

If you are accepted as a candidate, you will be registered as an ‘Advanced Postgraduate (APG) Student’. Progression to PhD candidature is subject to successful completion of the online training modules and the approval of a detailed research proposal and thesis plan. Following the completion of your research training, you will focus solely on the research leading to your PhD thesis. Throughout your research you will have regular contact with your supervisor via whatever means – email, telephone or postal communication – is mutually convenient.

You must visit Leicester for your APG-transfer interviews, as well as for your final examination. You will not be required to visit the University campus at any other time during your registration, although you will be welcome to do so in order to meet your supervisor and fellow students and to attend additional training events if these are relevant to your research.

PhD Applications
You must complete the University of Leicester postgraduate application form and provide a detailed outline of your proposed research. This should take the form of a brief paper (1,500 to 2,000 words) which should state:
- Your reasons for choosing the proposed topic
- The main aims and objectives of the research you plan to conduct
- An indication that you are familiar with related research and relevant literature
- Details of the methodology you propose to use

We take great care to ensure that the right students, supervisors, and research topics come together. At doctoral level we can only undertake to supervise students pursuing research topics for which we have staff with appropriate expertise. If we think you and the outline of your research topic look suitable, but we feel that we need more information before we can make a decision, we may ask you to write a much more detailed research proposal. This process can take some time. When an appropriate research topic, suitable research design and supervisor have been agreed, a formal application can be made to enable you to register with the University and begin the programme.

Period of registration for PhD
The minimum period of registration for the Distance Learning PhD is four years and the maximum is six.

Enquiries
Please contact the Department on:
t: +44 (0)116 252 5275/2748
f: +44 (0)116 252 5276
w: www.le.ac.uk/departments/media/dl
e: mediaom-dl@le.ac.uk
Applications and How to Apply

Admission Requirements for Master’s Courses
You should normally have a minimum of a good second class undergraduate degree (or equivalent) in a relevant discipline. If you do not possess a good first degree or an equivalent qualification, relevant professional experience will also be taken into account. You may be invited to submit an entry assignment in support of your application.

Exceptionally, applicants with limited academic qualifications but with suitable professional experience can be admitted.

Admission requirements for PhD
Typically, as a distance learning doctoral student, you will have considerable professional experience in media, communication or a related field. You will usually also have some knowledge of the topic which is to form the basis of your research, and will be looking for a way to formalise and extend this within the framework of a research degree. To be considered for registration for a research degree in the Department of Media and Communication, applicants must have a good first degree (i.e. at least at Upper Second Class Honours level or equivalent) and, normally, a Master’s level qualification or equivalent.

English Language Proficiency
If English is not your first language, you are required to provide evidence of your proficiency in written and spoken English. The minimum requirement is an overall band score of 6.5 on the British Council IELTS test or 600 on the TOEFL (250 on the computer test) or an acceptable equivalent.

Duration of Study Master’s Courses
Postgraduate Certificate – 12 months
Postgraduate Diploma – 20 months
MA Programmes – 24 months

Start Dates
There are intakes in April and October each year.

Course Fee
Fees information can be obtained from www.le.ac.uk/departments/media/dl or by contacting the Distance Learning Hub.

Enquiries
For more information contact our Distance Learning Team:

+44 (0) 116 223 1754
css-dl@le.ac.uk
www2.le.ac.uk/departments/media/dl

To Apply
Please complete our online application form. This can be done online by going to www.le.ac.uk/pgapplyonline and finding the course.

Please submit the following:
• Your completed application form
• Your two completed references, preferably from former university lecturers or current employers.
• Copies of your degree qualification certificates
• Copies of your transcripts of your modules and marks
• Proof of English Language competence if applicable
• Your CV

If you have any questions please contact your local agent or University Distance Learning Adviser, who will advise you on the application procedures for your chosen course.

What happens when we receive your application?
Once we receive your application and all supporting documents we aim to make a decision about your application within three weeks.

If your application is successful, confirmation will be sent to you with details about what to do next.

If your application is unsuccessful we will notify you by email.

Distance Learning Academic Partners and Agents

The University works with a range of approved partners across the world. If you live in a country where we have a partner located, we strongly recommend that you take advantage of the free local support available as it can enhance your learning experience.

The services offered varies by region, however, in all cases our partners are able to provide pre-enrolment counselling and assistance with your application.

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For any countries not listed above you will be supported directly by the Distance Learning Hub. For more information and to make an application contact our Distance Learning Team:

+44 (0) 116 223 1754
css-dl@le.ac.uk
www2.le.ac.uk/departments/media/dl
This brochure was published in April 2016. The University of Leicester endeavours to ensure that the content of its prospectus, programme specification, website content and all other materials are complete and accurate. On occasion it may be necessary to make some alterations to particular aspects of a course or module, and where these are minor, for example altering the lecture timetable or location, then we will ensure that you have as much notice as possible of the change to ensure that the disruption to your studies is minimised.

However, in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for the University to cancel or change a programme or part of the specification more substantially. For example, due to the unavailability of key teaching staff, changes or developments in knowledge or teaching methods, the way in which assessment is carried out, or where a course or part of it is over-subscribed to the extent that the quality of teaching would be affected to the detriment of students. In these circumstances, we will contact you as soon as possible and in any event will give you [30 days] written notice before the relevant change is due to take place. Where this occurs, we will also and in consultation with you, offer you an alternative course or programme (as appropriate) or the opportunity to cancel your contract with the University and obtain a refund of any advance payments that you have made.