

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. General information

Awarding body / institution	Leeds Trinity University
Teaching institution	Leeds Trinity University
'Parent' School (<i>ICE / SAC / SSHS</i>)	SCBL
Academic Group	Communication
Professional accreditation body (<i>if applicable</i>)	National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC)
Final award (<i>eg. BA Hons</i>)	MA
Title of programme(s)	Journalism
Subsidiary award(s) (<i>if any</i>)	PgCert and PgDip in Journalism (fallback awards)
Honours type (<i>Single / Joint / Combined</i>)	n/a
Duration and mode(s) of study	One year full-time
Month/year of approval of programme	June 2021
Start date (<i>this version</i>) (<i>month and year</i>)	September 2021
Periodic review next due (<i>academic year</i>)	TBC
HECoS subject code(s)	100442
UCAS course code & route code (<i>available from Admissions</i>)	No UCAS code. Direct application only.
SITS codes (<i>Course / Pathway / Route</i>) (<i>available from Student Administration</i>)	JOURNLM
Delivery venue(s)	Leeds Trinity University and professional placements

2. Aims of the programme

Rationale and general aims, including what is special about this programme (*from the student's and a marketing perspective*)

This is a postgraduate programme that aims to provide students with the full range of multimedia practical skills which - combined with the appropriate legal, ethical and industry knowledge - will equip them to become professional journalists and media workers.

The programme is aimed at graduates of any undergraduate course seeking to convert and add to their knowledge and experience at postgraduate level through a vocational, professional training. Whilst the qualification meets professional body accrediting requirements, there is a significantly higher expectation of independent learning around newsways and the practical outputs of the programme – in particular the 60-credit Journalism Project.

More specifically, the programme aims to produce graduates who are:

- Able to source original stories and interviews with an understanding of the importance of accurate and relevant sources
- Highly competent in the application of storytelling techniques for online, broadcast and social media journalism
- Able to use a range of technical software and equipment as used in industry, including for mobile journalism
- Able to use social media for newsgathering and for publication, including an understanding of differing demographics and platform storytelling techniques
- Fully conversant with UK media law and regulation and the workings and structures of British government, and able to apply this knowledge in the production of journalism
- Able to appreciate the role of journalism in society and operate within the ethical norms of a professional journalist
- Able to demonstrate advanced application of practical skills, knowledge and understanding in the production of a final journalism project.

3. Student learning outcomes of the programme

Learning outcomes in terms of:

- **knowledge and understanding (K)**
- **intellectual / cognitive / 'thinking' skills (I)**
- **practical skills specific to the subject (P)**
- **employability skills (E)**

The 'K1', etc codes are used in section 7b) and module descriptors to refer to each of these learning outcomes.

On successful completion of the programme, students will have demonstrated:

- K1 The application of principles of UK media law, regulation and ethics in the production of journalism.
- K2 The application of knowledge and understanding of the workings and structures of British government in the production of journalism.
- K3 High levels of competence in research and writing and in the application of technical knowledge.
- I1 The application of analytical techniques in assessing the accuracy and relevance of source material.
- I2 The critical evaluation of approaches to solving problems in a disciplinary context, particularly the social and ethical consequences of newsgathering, production and dissemination.
- I3 The application of analytical techniques in understanding the differing needs of platforms and audiences and measuring impact (e.g. through analytics).
- I4 The synthesis of a high level of critical thinking and analytical skills to form an effective and evidenced argument.
- P1 An ability to produce written material for print, digital platforms, broadcast and social media.
- P2 An ability to produce video, audio and photographic content for digital platforms, broadcast and social media.
- P3 An ability to produce content through mobile journalism such as smart phones.
- P4 An ability to take and transcribe shorthand notes.
- P5 Practical use of content management systems and social media sharing platforms.

Employability skills

- E1 **Self-management** – the ability to plan and manage time; readiness to accept responsibility and improve their own performance based on feedback/reflective learning; the ability to take initiative and be proactive, flexible and resilient;

- E2 **Teamworking** – the ability to co-operate with others on a shared task and to recognise and take on appropriate team roles; leading, contributing to discussions and negotiating; contributing to discussions; awareness of interdependence with others;
- E3 **Business and sector awareness** – an understanding of the key drivers for business success, including the importance of customer/client satisfaction and innovation; understanding of the market/sector in which an organisation operates; the ability to recognise the external context and pressures on an organisation, including concepts such as value for money, profitability and sustainability;
- E4 **Problem-solving** – a capacity for critical reasoning, analysis and synthesis; a capacity for applying knowledge in practice; an ability to retrieve, analyse and evaluate information from different sources;
- E5 **Communication** – the ability to present information clearly and appropriately, both orally and in writing, and to tailor messages to specific audiences and purposes;
- E6 **Application of numeracy** – a general awareness of mathematics and its application in practical contexts; the ability to carry out arithmetic operations and understand data, to read and interpret graphs and tables and to manage a budget;
- E7 **Application of information technology** – the ability to identify the appropriate IT package for a given task; familiarity with word-processing, spreadsheets and file management; the ability to use the internet and email effectively;
- E8 **Entrepreneurship/enterprise** – the ability to demonstrate an innovative approach and creativity, to generate ideas and to identify and take opportunities;
- E9 **Social, cultural & civic awareness** – embracement of an ethos of community and civic responsibility; an appreciation of diversity and ethical issues; an understanding of cultures and customs in the wider community.

See also the learning outcomes for subsidiary awards set out in section 4 below.

3a External benchmarks

Statement of congruence with the relevant published subject benchmark statements

(including appropriate references to any PSRB, employer or legislative requirements)

All Leeds Trinity University programmes are congruent with the Framework for HE Qualifications (FHEQ) and, where appropriate, the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) / National Qualification and Credit Framework (NQF). The programme aims and objectives are also consonant with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Masters Degree Characteristics Statement (2020) featuring a greater emphasis on independent learning leading towards project-based work.

The course is accredited by the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) and also aims to meet the requirements of the Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC), which both have rigorous professional standards based on industry needs.

4. Learning outcomes for subsidiary awards

Guidance

Generic Learning outcomes for the award of Postgraduate Certificate:

On successful completion of 60 credits at Level 7, students will have demonstrated an ability to:

- (i) develop new practical and technical skills to a high level and advance knowledge and understanding in the discipline and/or area of professional practice;
- (ii) approach complex journalistic stories in a systematic and creative manner and make sound judgements in the absence of comprehensive information/data;
- (iii) communicate to different audiences using appropriate journalistic conventions;
- (iv) develop the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment including the ability to exercise initiative and personal responsibility.

Generic learning outcomes for the award of Postgraduate Diploma

On successful completion of 120 credits at Level 7, students will have demonstrated, **in addition to the outcomes for a Postgraduate Certificate**:

- (i) the ability to utilise knowledge such as media law, ethics and regulation that is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline and/or area of professional practice to produce journalism that evaluates current issues;
- (ii) comprehensive knowledge of journalistic research techniques and how these can be critically applied to existing knowledge;
- (iii) further development of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment including autonomous decision-making in complex situations.

5. Content

Summary of content by theme

(providing a 'vertical' view through the programme)

This programme is designed to provide students with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to enter a highly competitive marketplace as skilled, legally aware journalists with the professional skills relevant for higher level practice.

The MA Journalism comprises six modules covering:

- 1) News Skills – the core skills of journalism regardless of the medium, including training in the taking of shorthand to a minimum of 60wpm and voice training.
- 2) Law, Ethics and Regulation – the knowledge required to be legally safe, operate within regulatory frameworks and make ethically sound decisions relating to professional practice. Includes a court visit.

- 3) Live Production – technical, production and narrative skills for broadcast. Includes voice coaching.
- 4) Public Affairs – the knowledge of British local and national government. Includes the observation of a council meeting.
- 5) A placement, or placements, in an industry setting that has a journalism bias. This is usually for six weeks but has a minimum of three weeks.
- 6) Journalism Project - equivalent to a 20-minute radio or tv documentary or a multimedia production, plus contextual analysis.

6. Structure

MA JOURNALISM

Duration: 9 months full-time, plus completion of final project, 12 months after registering for the MA.

Total credit rating: 180 credits (90 ECTS)

Candidates are required to take:

JOU7173	News Skills	Semester 1 & 2	30 credits
JOU7043	Law, Ethics and Regulation	Semester 1 & 2	30 credits
JOU7063	Live Production	Semester 2	30 credits
JOU7215	Professional Placement	Semester 1, 2 & summer	15 credits
JOU7015	Public Affairs	Semester 1	15 credits
JOU7106	Journalism Project	Semester 2 & summer	60 credits

7. Learning, teaching and assessment

7a) Statement of the strategy for learning, teaching and assessment for the programme

The MA Journalism programme puts **digital literacy and skills** at the heart of student learning. Students use industry-standard software and kit, and have expert support from our media technicians as well as tutors. They use a range of specialised software including Premiere Pro and Adobe Audition; they publish to an external-facing Wordpress journalism website; they use apps and online tools throughout their practical work as trainee journalists. All this prepares them for their role in both an industry based on digital skills and our wider society.

Employability and enterprise are the watchwords around which the programme is designed. It is a practical course which aims to get graduates jobs in the journalism industry. We therefore ensure that we consult regularly with employers and our accrediting bodies to keep the curriculum current and relevant. We host a Journalism and Media Week every year where we bring in industry speakers and alumni to talk directly to students. Professional placements are a compulsory element of the programme, and a mentoring programme pairs individual students with an industry practitioner.

We encourage **student involvement and engagement** by – for example – inviting student input into course development and electing a student representative for the course. Every student has a personal tutor who supports and guides them. Portfolio assessments mean students have the ability to shape their own output and even develop specialisms. Newsdays are led by students rotating through different roles. An element of reflection is included in the Journalism Project assessment, allowing students to explore their own practice within the context of the wider body of work in and on journalism.

The programme aims to provide an **inclusive learning experience**. The need for diversity in the media industry has become more urgent and more widely recognised and we want that to start at the point of entry and training. We therefore aim to make our teaching, learning and assessment as flexible as possible to accommodate differing needs amongst our students where possible.

Our assessments are designed to encourage students to **make connections across their learning** – so they are applying what they learn in Media Law and Public Affairs as part of their practical, journalistic portfolio assessments which are published on our external-facing website so must meet legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks.

In addition, assessment is designed to help **scaffold student learning**, enabling students to develop in confidence and practical skills across the programme, culminating in running their own newsroom. This makes them ready to go out on placement with industry-ready skills to offer.

Wherever possible, practical assessments mirror what happens in industry – for example newssdays, where students run their own newsroom and must produce original stories to strict deadlines. We therefore strive to make our assessments **authentic and connected to real-world experience**. This is in line with BJTC requirements as well.

Some module assessments (notably for Media Law and for Public Affairs) are exams which students take as part of the NCTJ diploma. These have been aligned to avoid students having to take both an internal and an external exam.

7b) Programme learning outcomes covered

	Skills development														E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9
	K1	K2	K3	I1	I2	I3	I4	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5											
	<i>Media law, regulation & ethics</i>	<i>Public affairs</i>	<i>Research, writing, technical knowledge</i>	<i>Analytical approach to source material</i>	<i>Social & ethical problem solving</i>	<i>Analytics</i>	<i>Critical thinking & analysis</i>	<i>Writing skills</i>	<i>Video & audio skills</i>	<i>Mobile journalism</i>	<i>Shorthand</i>	<i>CMS & social media platforms</i>		Self-management	Teamworking	Business & sector awareness	Problem-solving	Communication	Application of numeracy	Application of IT	Entrepreneurship / enterprise	Social, cultural & civic awareness	
JOU7173 News Skills																							
JOU7043 Law, Ethics and Regulation																							
JOU7015 Public Affairs																							
JOU7063 Live Production																							
JOU7215 Professional Placement																							
JOU7106 Journalism Project																							

8. Entry requirements

Postgraduate programmes

Applicants should normally have achieved the following prior to registration for the programme:

A good honours degree in a relevant subject (or equivalent) (usually 2.2 or above) or equivalent industry experience.

Students whose first language is not English should be able to demonstrate good standards at IELTS 6.0 as the minimum requirement.

Applicants will be invited to attend an interview, where we will discuss the applicant's interest in the programme and journalism in general.

Applications are welcome from those with few or no formal qualifications. Any previous relevant work experience and learning will be assessed and, where appropriate, accredited as part of the application process. Please see Leeds Trinity's policy document, Recognition of Prior Learning Guidelines and Procedure.

9. Progression, classification and award requirements

Details of requirements for student progression between levels and receipt of the award(s)

(A certain level of attainment which must be achieved in a specific module; any modules exempted from condonement, any deviation from the standard institutional stipulations for award classification, e.g. exclusion of Level 4 module marks from Foundation Degree classification)

The following regulations apply, together with the General Academic Regulations:

- Programme Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees - **this programme does not allow for condonement of marginal fail because of accreditation requirements.**

Students must pass all 180 credits in order to graduate with a Masters qualification. The fallback awards of PgDip and PgCert are also available.

Students sit the NCTJ Diploma alongside the Masters programme. It is possible for students to leave at the Postgraduate Diploma stage with the NCTJ Diploma having passed all elements.

10. Prerequisites

Details of modules students must study and achieve credit for before enrolling on a module at a higher level, or attaining their final programme award

N/A

11. Additional support needs

Arrangements made to accommodate students with additional support needs and any unavoidable restrictions on their participation in the programme/scheme

Candidates with disabilities will be welcomed on the course and reasonable adjustments will be made wherever possible to accommodate their individual needs. Candidates with visual or hearing impairments might have difficulty with certain modules such as for TV and Radio production and these will be addressed as individual cases arise and every reasonable effort made to enable candidates to participate fully. Some candidates with physical impairments might

encounter difficulties with lifting and managing camera equipment. In some cases this might require personal assistance. Again these matters will be discussed as individual cases arise. All such instances will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and would go through the Disability Office to draw up a Learning Support Plan. Shorthand is a competence standard and while every effort will be made to support students with disabilities to acquire this professional skill, there may be instances where alternative assessment is required.