

MA Public Relations

Programme Specification 2020/21

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London
College	London College of Communication
School	University of the Arts London
Programme	Communications and Media (L042)
FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
Course Credits	180
Mode	Full Time
Duration of Course	1 year
Valid From	September 1st 2020
Course Entry Requirements	<p>MA Public Relations attracts applicants from a variety of backgrounds. Applicants are expected to demonstrate sufficient prior knowledge of and/or potential in public relations to be able to successfully complete the programme of study and have an academic or professional background in a relevant subject.</p> <p>An applicant will be considered for admission who has already achieved an educational level equivalent to an Honours degree, preferably at 2:1 level.</p> <p>Educational level may be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honours degree (named above); • Possession of equivalent qualifications; • Prior experiential learning, the outcome of which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required; • Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required. <p>APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning)</p>

	<p>Applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered in exceptional cases. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Related academic or work experience• The quality of the personal statement• A strong academic or other professional reference• OR a combination of these factors <p>Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.</p> <p>Language requirements</p> <p>All classes are conducted in English. If English is not your first language, we strongly recommend you let us know your English language test score in your application. If you have booked a test or are awaiting your results, please indicate this in your application. When asked to upload a CV as part of your application, please include any information about your English test score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IELTS 7.0 (or equivalent) is required, with a minimum of 6.0 in each of the four skills.• If your first language is not English, you can check you have achieved the correct IELTS level in English on the Language Requirements page.
Selection Criteria	<p>Offers will be made based on the following selection criteria, which applicants are expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence of prior knowledge and/or experience of public relations or communications that would indicate potential to successfully undertake the programme of study.• An understanding of the need for a critical and analytical approach to the area of study.• An academic or professional background in a relevant/ related subject.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effective communication of intentions, purposes and issues.
Scheduled Learning and Teaching	<p>During your course you will engage with learning and teaching that includes both online and face-to-face modes. The advertised scheduled activity for the course will be delivered through a combination of live, synchronous and asynchronous on-line learning. This is often described as blended learning.</p> <p>Definitions of our learning and teaching modes can be found here.</p>

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

Percentage of Scheduled Learning	16
Awards	Credits
Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only)	60
Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only)	120

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Develop your intellectual, imaginative and creative skills through the synthesis of theoretical and practical approaches to PR learning.
Aim	Provide you with a conceptual framework to understand the strategic and operational nature of PR so that you can deliver PR programmes that support organisational strategy and add value.
Aim	Provide you with a systematic understanding of the major communication theories, planning principles and business concepts that underpin PR practice.
Aim	Address the nature of publics and stakeholders, relationship management and engagement including the role of persuasion, influence and co-creation.
Aim	Enable you to critically analysis and reflect on PR delivery across a range disciplines, sectors and channels including looking at the role of issues, crisis, sustainability and responsibility and other 21st century challenges.
Aim	Improve your understanding of the impact the media, society and culture has on individuals and organisations and in turn the role PR plays in shaping society and culture.
Aim	Improve your personal professionalism, independence of judgement and foster an enquiring and analytical approach to the study and practice of PR.
Aim	Develop advanced research, critical and analytical skills through evaluating advanced scholarship in the discipline and the use of reflection and analysis
Outcome	Demonstrate a systematic and sophisticated synthesis of contemporary and emerging thinking and scholarship across the domain of PR (Enquiry); Knowledge)
Outcome	Apply comprehensive in-depth knowledge and a high-level of professional skills to develop, implement and evaluate a range of PR activities at both strategic and tactical levels (Knowledge); (Realisation); (Process)

Outcome	Deal with complex PR issues both systematically and creatively, making sound judgements often against incomplete data and communicate conclusions clearly to a range of audiences (Realisation); (Process); (Communication)
Outcome	Show a comprehensive and critical awareness of the relationships between society, culture, PR, marketing communications, organisational strategy and the changing digital landscape (Enquiry); (Knowledge)
Outcome	Apply theoretical models and demonstrate conceptual understanding to a range of PR scenarios (Enquiry); (Realisation)
Outcome	Demonstrate improved self-awareness, openness and sensitivity to diversity in terms of people, cultures, business and communication issues (Process); (Process); (Knowledge)
Outcome	Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems showing decision-making capacities in complex and unpredictable situations (Enquiry); (Realisation)
Outcome	Show improved personal responsibility, initiative and skills as an independent and self-critical learner (Process)
Outcome	Deploy enhanced technical expertise and communication skills including verbal and written communication, effective listening, negotiating and influencing skills and leadership (Realisation); (Communication); (Process).

Distinctive Features	
1	<p>You will benefit directly from LCC's connection with industry and its heritage within the film, design, journalistic and wider creative industries community.</p> <p>Students are exposed to a wide range of PR practitioners. Located in the heart of London, LCC benefits from easy access to and the support of key players in the creative industries</p>
2	<p>You also benefit from all the other creative activity that forms LCC's vibrant learning environment, including the work of its students and alumni</p>
3	<p>A particular feature of the course lies in its emphasis on the role of academic theory and rigour in underpinning PR practice. Although it addresses practical aspects of PR delivery through the Collaborative Unit the other taught components are grounded in the latest PR scholarship and deliberately reflect a range of critical perspectives</p>
4	<p>The course is academically focused and blends in practical skills development. This helps to bridge theory and practice but also boosts employability by helping to differentiate LCC students. Continuing with the theme of employability there is a firm focus on learning for work in your programme providing valuable practical insights</p>
5	<p>Located within an arts environment allows you will be able to leverage the richness of scholarly work connected to cultural studies. PR is a cultural discipline and over the last decade there has been a growing awareness as PR practitioners as cultural intermediaries and the role PR plays in the wider fabric of society</p>
6	<p>Last but not least, the course has the accreditation of both the UK's professional bodies – The Chartered Institute of Public Relations and the Public Relations Consultancy Association. Both associations allow you to take advantage of a range of benefits including access to career days</p>

Course Detail

Gain a solid grounding in the theory and practice of public relations with this highly-regarded Masters degree, which is accredited and/or recognised by the following professional and industry bodies:

- The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR)
- The Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA)
- The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

This course will appeal to graduates already working in public relations who wish to develop their careers through a Masters qualification, those seeking a career move into the sector, or those wishing to build on their first degree and start a PR career based on a strong personal and practical knowledge of the field.

What you can expect?

You can expect to develop the combination of intellectual abilities, practical skills and industry knowledge that is needed to manage the reputation of brands and organisations, add value to their operations and support their goals.

This course gives you a framework for planning public relations programmes, the practical skills for delivering campaigns as well as addressing the role of research and evaluation in PR.

You will examine the disciplines of stakeholder communications, events management, investor relations, public affairs and employee communications and consider how they link to corporate strategy.

You will have the opportunity to plan and implement national and international campaigns yourself on a series of practical assignments and exercises responding to briefs on the course.

Work experience and opportunities

You will have the opportunity to explore the practicalities of using public relations tools such as media relations and crisis management. The specific skills of storytelling and writing for media across traditional and digital media channels are also practised, along with the role of persuasion and influence.

You will develop an understanding of the needs of audiences and how to communicate with them. The course also considers the wider cultural and societal landscape in which

public relations operates, touching on areas such as celebrity, power and the impact of globalisation.

Along with the specialist research methods sessions, consideration of these issues helps develop your analytical skills in preparation for writing a final dissertation on a PR topic of your choice.

What students our say

“The course shows the variety of public relations specialisms and the options available in the industry. You’re also given room for a lot of personal choice in terms of what to focus on.

The course allows you to discover the multitude of facets of public relations, so if you’re not sure what it is that particularly interests you about the communications industry, it will help you figure out what you enjoy the most.”

Sarah Oberthaler, Press Officer, South Bank Centre

"Coming together with students who are specialists in different fields of communications has been great. For me, what was really important was the fresh perspective on public relations that I gained from studying in an arts environment."

Laura Owen, who works in Public Relations at the Home Office.

"Taking this MA is one of the best career moves I have made. I can honestly say it has made certain aspects of my job here a lot easier."

Major Charlie Mayo, Ministry of Defence communications specialist

Mode of Study

MA Public Relations is in Full Time mode which runs for 45 weeks over 15 months. You will be expected to commit 40 hours per week to study.

Course Units

Each course is divided into units, which are credit-rated. The minimum unit size is 20 credits. The MA course structure involves seven units, totalling 180 credits.

Autumn, Term 1

Contemporary Public Relations Theory and Practice (20 credits)

This unit provides an understanding of core theories in the field with a focus on the nature of persuasion, influence and opinion that are at the heart of the PR process. Students then get the opportunity to put some of their learning into practice through generating a PR plan.

Organisational Strategy and Reputation (20 credits)

This unit aims considers PR as an organisational function that manages reputation, and addresses how organisations are formed and the need for integrated management, marketing and organisational communication.

It also discusses the reputational threats, challenges and opportunities that organisations face in the 21st century and the ways in which organisational identity (culture, values and behaviours of organisations) is aligned with organisational image.

Global Media and Cultural Landscapes (20 credits)

This unit places PR within global political, social, economic and cultural debates. Drawing on social and cultural theory, the unit considers the relationship between the media, its audiences and wider society, including the rise of celebrity culture, promotion, consumption and the role of PR within a consumer-led society.

Spring, Term 2

Media Relations, Messaging and Influencing (20 credits)

This unit explores the process of media relations and the role that public relations plays in devising and distributing messages in order to achieve influence through global media channels. The unit encourages practical engagement through in-class exercises and workshops that help students to develop their own skills in writing for the media and advising on interviews and other aspects of media relations.

Digital Communications and Social Media (20 credit)

This unit explores how PR can use digital channels most effectively creating integrated communication solutions. There is a strong focus on creativity and using digital media in both mediated and un-mediated applications, while also looking to the future and to the type of digital applications that are coming on-stream.

Collaborative Unit (20 credits)

The Collaborative Project involves working on a live project brief in a collaboration with other students and in response to a client requirement. It is an opportunity to develop consulting skills and project management experience alongside creativity and communication knowledge, resulting in a plan and portfolio of content.

Summer, Term Three

Media Relations, Messaging and Influencing (continued)

Digital Communications and Social Media (continued)

Final Major Project (60 credits)

The aim of the Final Major Project is to offer an opportunity to engage in a major research project in which the emphasis will be on defining, analysing and developing a constructive response to a research question in the PR field.

As well as drawing on skills and knowledge acquired during Term 1 and 2, taught research methods classes during Term 3 will support the project during which students produce a research proposal that identifies the research question to be addressed and the research plan and appropriate methodology, before beginning work with a supervisor during terms three and four.

Autumn, Term 4

Final Major Project by Dissertation (continued)

In the final Autumn term, students continue to work on the research plan using an appropriate methodology. Work will continue with a supervisor over term four where you will receive feedback on your developing project, and other support through dissertation workshops to help keep the project on track.

If you are unable to continue or decide to exit the course, there are two possible exit awards. A Postgraduate Certificate will be awarded on successful completion of the first 60 credits and a Postgraduate Diploma will be awarded on successful completion of the first 120 credits.

Learning and Teaching Methods

- Lectures
- Tutorials
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Group Work
- Work Based Learning

Assessment Methods

- Group Presentation
- Essays
- Reports
- Collaborative Projects
- Dissertation

Reference Points

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- The College policies and initiatives
- Level descriptors
- Benchmark statements

Course Diagram

Level 7																																																																																	
Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35			36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45																																		
Unit	Induction		Contemporary PR Theory and Practice (20 credits)								S																																																																						
			Organisational Strategy and Reputation Management (20 credits)											S																																																																			
			Global Media and Cultural Landscapes (20 credits)				S	Collaborative Unit (20 credits)							S																																																																		
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The University will use all reasonable endeavours to provide the Course and the services described in this Output. There may be occasions whereby the University needs to add, remove or alter content in relation to your Course as may be appropriate for example the latest requirements of a commissioning or accrediting body, or in response to student feedback, or to comply with applicable law or due to circumstances beyond its control. The University aim to inform you of any changes as soon as is reasonably practicable

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