

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	Cert HE Journalism (Level 4)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	N/A
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home School/other teaching departments	School of Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Part-time (2 years) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	UEHMEJRN
HECoS Code	100442 journalism
Start date of programme	Prior to 2008/9
Date of programme approval	Prior to 2008/9
Date of last programme amendment approval	June 2013
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Programme Director	Prof Tim Markham
Date of last revision to document	18/07/25

Admissions requirements

The Cert HE in Journalism is open to all who are interested in learning basic practical journalism skills and understanding their professional and cultural contexts.

We welcome applicants without traditional entry qualifications as we base decisions on our own assessment of qualifications, knowledge and previous work experience. We may waive formal entry requirements based on judgement of academic potential.

Course aims

This programme gives students an introduction to the practice and theory of journalism, with an emphasis on transferable professional skills and critical awareness of the media and creative industries.

Programme aims:

To offer students the chance to develop skills in journalism, to understand the industrial, political and social context of their work, and to evaluate their performance.

To develop students' media culture so that they can put their own and others' work in context, and thus develop their professional capacities and employability.

To develop students' communication, study, written, team-work and performance and creative skills as appropriate, together with students' ability to evaluate their own practice.

Course structure

In order to be awarded the Certificate of Higher Education in Journalism, students must complete two compulsory 30-credit modules, Journalism in British Life and Introduction to Journalism Practice, as well as 60 credits in optional modules from the list below.

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
4	FFME007S4	Journalism in British Life	30	Compulsory	T1
4	FFME027S4	Introduction to Journalism Practice	30	Compulsory	T1-2
Year 2					
4		Option	30	Optional	T1, 2 or 3
4		Option	30	Optional	T1, 2 or 3
Indicative Options					
4	ARMC157S4	Introduction to Digital Culture	30	Option	1
4	SC04045S4	Working with Digital Media	30	Option	2-3
4	ARMC217S4	Media Studies: Key Thinkers and Approaches	30	Option	2
4	ARMC231S4	Cinema Today	30	Option	3
4	FFME025S4	Screenwriting	30	Option	1
4	ARMC240S4	Working with the Film Camera	30	Option	2-3

Core:	<i>Module must be taken and passed by student</i>
Compulsory:	<i>Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)</i>
Option:	<i>Student can choose to take this module</i>

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

Learning is student-centred through practical exercises, lecturer presentations, individual and group work, discussion, research, and critical evaluation of practice and skills.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

Assessment methods range from journalistic articles and essays to strategic plans and critical reflections.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

Subject Specific:

- Demonstrate awareness of the language and aesthetic practices of journalism and knowledge of the main theories relating to journalistic production;
- Demonstrate understanding the historical, social and political context of media production, markets and institutions.
- Demonstrate understanding of the practice and theory of print culture and electronic multimedia, in a variety of historical, cultural and commercial contexts.
- Demonstrate knowledge of mainstream media forms and alternatives to the mainstream, of media genres and national and international perspectives.

Intellectual:

- Demonstrate ability to learn as well as critique current institutional practices and offer alternatives.
- Analyse texts in different forms of media.
- Assess a wide variety of information in media form, and present them in practical projects
- Critically evaluate practical media work

- Demonstrate ability to evaluate own work critically
- Communicate ideas in different media formats
- Plan own learning and skill development

Professional:

- Through practical options – demonstrate skills in journalistic techniques and the communication of ideas in print or electronic form;
- Demonstrate skills in communicating ideas in narrative form;
- Analyse a creative brief and to identify appropriate creative models;
- Analyse the effectiveness of your own creative work.
- Through discussion groups and through team work (journalism, screenwriting) demonstrate ability to work with others and to respect their views.
- Write clearly and concisely
- Demonstrate ability to make informed decisions
- Evaluate appropriate uses of new technologies for researching areas of the media

Personal and Social:

- Interpersonal skills such as the ability to work in a group or as a member of a team.
- Communicate effectively using different media and appropriate interpersonal skills
- Take responsibility for own learning and time management
- Work under pressure and to deadlines

Careers and further study

Graduates can pursue career paths in:

- journalism (newspapers and magazines, print, online and digital)
- public relations
- the creative industries.

This course can also provide transferable skills and knowledge to work across a broad range of professional communications roles and settings.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle

module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services.](#) This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is available [online](#).

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