Communication and Media and Game Design Studies BA (Hons)

COURSE DETAILS

- A level requirements: ABB
- UCAS code: I619
- Study mode: Full-time
- Length: 3 years

KEY DATES

- Apply by: 29 January 2025
- Starts: 22 September 2025

Course overview

This programme enables you to combine our popular BA Communication and Media with a Minor pathway in Game Design Studies – a new and distinctive provision in the study of interactive audiovisual media.

INTRODUCTION

The world we live in is dominated by media in many forms: from entertainment and culture through news and social media to politics and promotion, the media shapes our understanding of what we know and what we consume. Whether you want to work in one of these areas, to research their impact or simply to understand more about our relationship with media, this programme provides a thorough introduction with plenty of opportunities to develop specialist skills.

A wide range of optional modules allow students to pursue their own interests and focus on particular media and communication forms, analysing how they are organised as text, how they represent the world to us and ourselves to the world (from global power politics to constructions of individual identity), and how the media industries are organised to produce and profit from them. But we teach all of our students to acquire strong research skills and they are given the opportunity to practice them through independent or collaborative research.

As a Games Design Studies student, you will develop skills in coding and programming, games scholarship, and creative design through a combination of modules from across the School of the Arts, as well as a suite of bespoke interdisciplinary modules concerning the design and interpretation of games. Topics include the history and development of gaming

cultures, the complex nature of interactive media, and the critical issues that accompany engagement with virtual worlds.

Digital games represent one of the fastest growing forms of entertainment media: consequently, there is a growing need for many jobs that are not only in the games industry, but in surrounding industries as well. This programme develops a wide range of skills that prepare students for employment at various entry points in the job market, including content creation, publishing, journalism, and marketing.

Year in Industry

This programme is available with a [Year in Industry](). Year Three is spent on a paid placement within an organisation in industry, broadly defined. You will be supported by the School of the Arts and the Department throughout, and your reflexive written account of the experience will contribute towards your final degree result. If you wish to study this programme with a Year in Industry, please put the option code 'YI' in the 'Further Choices' section of your UCAS application form.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Practical skills, including media writing, blogging, analysis of social media data, and video-making
- Research skills
- Commercial and cultural understanding
- Critical analysis
- Problem solving
- The ability to construct arguments and convey ideas effectively
- Effective communication and presentation skills
- Creative principles
- Techniques of critical thinking and analysis

Course content

Discover what you'll learn, what you'll study, and how you'll be taught and assessed.

YEAR ONE

Your first year will consist entirely of compulsory studies. Besides introducing you to Communication & Media and Game Design Studies as subjects, the first year is designed to support you as you acquire and practice the academic and analytical skills you will need to succeed as a student and in your chosen career.

COMPULSORY MODULES

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES B (COMM102)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will introduce students to foundational knowledge in the field of communication and media studies. Students will learn how communication practices and media technologies have developed historically and their relevance for social, political and economic changes, as well as learning about the development of Communication and Media as a broad and diverse academic field. The module familiarises students with different theoretical perspectives both historical and contemporary.

MEDIA INDUSTRIES AND INSTITUTIONS B (COMM110)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This is an introduction to issues and concepts surrounding media and communication industries and institutions. The module gives students exposure to core and current debates and issues such as the political economy of media, relations with power and regulation, and processes of globalisation, digitalisation and conglomeration. Students will learn about creative roles and the practices and lived experiences of professional media workers, including the process of conceiving and developing media texts. Successful students will be able to critically consider media and communication studies with an emphasis on its industries and institutions.

COMMUNICATION, CULTURE, AND MEDIA ANALYSIS B (COMM112)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module will give students foundational knowledge about ways that communication, media, and culture can be systematically and critically analysed: students will learn about key concepts and theories from the field of media and communication studies and about how these are applied as tools for analysis. The module offers examples of the craft of screen analysis, cultural analysis, and social scientific communication studies. These will be analytical approaches that students can subsequently use in the course of their studies.

DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA (COMM114)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module will provide a broad introduction to digital communication and social media as an object of study. It will facilitate students in thinking about the role of the internet, digital platforms and social media apps and their role in culture, society and democracy. It will firstly ask what is different about digital and social media compared to more traditional media, and pose the question of whether we need new tools and ways of thinking in relation to these newer media. It will then introduce several topics and case studies to allow students to think about the role and potential influence the rise of these tools may or may not have had on society.

INTRODUCTION TO GAME DESIGN STUDIES (SOTA101)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The module Introduction to Game Design Studies explores the phenomenon of video game studies from a variety of Arts and Humanities perspectives. Therefore, the module will focus on three key interrelated contexts for the analysis and theorisation of video games as digital media culture: the text of the game itself as an aesthetic and formal virtual object, genre and system of representation; the video game player as a type of audience or user who is immersed, interactive, and embodied; the video game industry as a global media business, one with a strong Japanese presence and with a profound effect on the wider media context.

GAMES AND MEANING (SOTA102)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module introduces students to the semantics of video game design and the techniques of close reading. It examines how mechanics, environment and audio design, genre conventions and iconography can be used to create meaning, both in support and subversion of explicit narrative. Students will learn to make connections between the disparate artforms involved in game design and develop the ability to form their own readings of games. The module is taught in 2-hour workshops which involve a mixture of theory lectures and in-depth discussion of specific games, including student-led choices. Assessment consists of a 2000-word coursework essay (85%), of which there is a formative, peer-reviewed 'pitching' exercise in week 6, and a 5-10 minute in-class presentation or video essay (15%), delivered during the second half of the module.

CREATIVE PRINCIPLES IN GAME DESIGN (SOTA103)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module provides an introduction to the principles and materials of game creation, highlighting available creative pathways within the Game Design Studies and Game Design programmes. Students will learn basic terminology and concepts, and critically engage with various topics within the field of game design. Comprehension of these topics is supported by lectures and seminars, and through critical engagement with texts, articles, interviews, and other resources over the course of the term. Students will then apply what they've learned to realize original ideas in the form of design documents.

SPATIAL DESIGN IN GAMES (SOTA104)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module will cover practical topics related to the design of virtual spaces in games. Students will critically examine the architectural principles embedded within existing games and will apply these principles to the design of original 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional game spaces. Lectures are supported by design texts and other textual resources.

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

YEAR TWO

In year two the optional modules offer plenty of choice, so you can begin to specialise in the areas which interest you most or which might prove valuable for your chosen career. For example, you can delve more deeply into film and the entertainment industry, the representation of self and society, or the interplay between global media and war, as well as developing your understanding of programming, artificial intelligence and some of the more artistic aspects of game design.

• All students take two compulsory modules – **COMM207** and **COMM208** – which will introduce you to academic research and support you to practice and develop your research skills.
• **SOTA260** is compulsory for students taking the Year in Industry pathway.

COMPULSORY MODULES

COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH I (COMM207)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will enhance students' understanding of academic research in the field of communication and media studies. It is the first of a series of two modules that will equip students with the skills and techniques needed to analyse, execute, interpret, and present academic research. The module will also prepare them for advanced academic projects such as their final-year projects/academic dissertations. This module will introduce students to the basics of academic research – from the key elements in a research study to the difference between primary and secondary, and quantitative and qualitative research. Students will be taught how to write literature reviews and what ethical considerations to bear in mind when designing a research study.

COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH II (COMM208)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module will enhance students' understanding of academic research in the field of communication and media studies. It is the second of a series of two modules that will equip students with the skills and techniques needed to analyse, execute, interpret, and present academic research. The module will also prepare them for advanced academic projects such as their final-year projects/academic dissertations. This module will introduce students to specific quantitative and qualitative research methods for the study of media texts, audiences and producers, continuing on from the semester 1 Research Methods module. These will include textual analysis, content analysis, thematic analysis, discourse analysis; surveys, interviews, focus groups, ethnography; as well as archival research and digital research. Students will also be taught how to formulate research questions, what makes a good student dissertation/final year project and how to communicate their research. They will then be required to prepare research proposals for their final year projects/dissertations.

OPTIONAL MODULES

PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT (SOTA260)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The module aims to prepare students for a smooth transition into a work placement year and, more broadly, to develop lifelong skills, attitudes and behaviours and support students in their continuing professional development. This will help students lead flexible, fulfilling careers working as a professional in their field, and enable them to contribute meaningfully to society.

CONVERGED MEDIA AND SCREEN ENTERTAINMENT B (COMM251)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Converged Media and Screen Entertainment B examines key ideas and arguments in the broader field of media industry studies with a view to provide students with wide-ranging account of how the screen industries produce and distribute commercial entertainment within a converged media environment, while operating as part of organizational arrangements and professional practices that separate them from industries with an information focus. The module accounts for the local, national and global dimension of screen entertainment with case studies and examples taken from a variety of geographical contexts and covers a number of industries, mainly film and television, but also with references to games and social medial.

Organised around 4 blocks – Terms of Reference, The Global Spectre of Entertainment, The Production of Entertainment and Entertainment Labour – the module kicks off with some conceptual issues and definitions around what entertainment is and how the landscape in which it is produced and disseminated is defined by media convergence and – increasingly – deconvergence. With these terms of reference accounted for, the second block surveys some key characteristics related to the global nature of screen entertainment: the issues at stake in regulating its circulation across different geographical, political and cultural environments; the ways in which its production tends to be clustered around particular hubs and networks, the ways in which it contributes to global media flows organised around distribution power and the ways it is also disseminated through informal or piracy networks.

After an independent study week that enables students to catch up with reading and prepare for their first assignment, the module continues with a block on the production of entertainment, with an emphasis there being on some of the textual characteristics of entertainment products as these are influenced by marketing and brand integration, by intellectual property management and the increasing reliance on narrative universes and world-building, and by promotional content designed to move swiftly across media platforms and to attract online interaction. Some of these characteristics distinguish clearly entertainment media from media that revolve around information. Finally, the last block deals with issues relating to working in screen entertainment industries, focusing primarily on issues relating to unions and crafts and the ways they try to control entertainment with an environment where the power of the unions has declined as well on issue of diversity in the screen industries work force.

INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL STUDIES B (COMM254)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Introduction to Cultural Studies provides a foundational understanding of the key approaches, methods and theoretical perspectives in the interdisciplinary field of cultural studies. The module starts with an historical overview of the development of cultural studies and explores its links with related fields such as anthropology, sociology, and everyday life studies. The module is taught in four blocks. Blocks 2-4 are organised around core thematic areas of focus which provide, respectively, an introduction to perspectives in the study of contemporary visual cultures; an introduction to urban cultural studies and the spatial humanities; and critical reflection on 'future cultures' and the shifting boundaries that define understandings of 'nature' and 'culture' in the age of the posthuman and the Anthropocene. Engaging with theoretical perspectives and debates that address a broad range of contemporary issues in the study of culture, media and everyday life, the module draws extensively on ethnographic, text-based and other qualitative methods, with a particular emphasis towards understandings of culture and media as forms of social, embodied and political practice and the everyday 'doingness' of cultural experience.

DIGITAL MEDIA AND DATA B (COMM245)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will be of particular interest to students interested in data and how it is collected and used in modern society; in the politics and policy questions around social media; and in the interactions between media, platforms, and citizens. It will introduce students to the study of online media and platforms, with a particular focus on 'big' social trace data. As well as developing their understanding of how Internet-based media systems work, students will engage with key online political communication policy questions.

GLOBAL NEWS, MEDIA AND WAR (COMM213)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The media are now central to any discussion of contemporary war and conflict while global news reporting is supposedly in decline. How can we understand the interplay between global news, media and war in the context of rapidly evolving communication technologies and journalistic practices? This module explores the broader context of global news focusing on media in different parts of the world and the way they report on global issues. It considers the professional practice of foreign reporting and the challenges that notions of ethics, objectivity and attachment present for journalists. Then it engages with both the responses of states, including the use of media management and persuasion, and those of audiences who are often conflicted in reaction to distant conflict. The module concludes with an investigation of specific wars of recent years and a look at the future of reporting war and beyond.

PUBLIC RELATIONS, MEDIA AND DIGITAL SOCIETY (COMM240)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will explore theoretical perspectives on Public Relations, including critical perspectives on its role in media and digital society and the professional practice of promotional writing, a key skill within and beyond PR. Students will develop understanding of what it means to be a creative professional in the PR industries by learning to organise their time effectively, to produce work to specific briefs and to ensure attention to detail in the delivery of projects.

THE CINEMATIC CITY (FILM201)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The modern city and the cinema developed together, and as they developed they referred to each other: cities have always been a prime space for film, while many urban theorists have found it useful to think of cities as cinematic spaces. The module introduces you to cinematic ways of representing the city, through the study of a number of representative films that deal with some major metropolis.You will have the opportunity to produce your own short smartphone film of the city of Liverpool as part of a small-scale group project. This will allow you to put your ideas into practice and to reflect on the filmmaking process. No prior knowledge of practical filmmaking is required to enrol in this module but you will need to be willing to familiarise yourself with the process of shooting and editing of a smartphone film.

WORKING IN MUSIC INDUSTRY (MUSI252)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module introduces students to who does what in music industry. Essentially, music industry is a collaborative effort between musicians and various personnel from a range of music companies. Music companies 'add value' to musicians by providing them with services they find difficult or impossible to provide for themselves. These 'music companies' are spread across the music industries of recording, music publishing and live performance; increasingly companies from outside traditional music industry also offer services to musicians (for example, online and IT companies). The module will consider what key jobs and roles exist in the world of converting imaginative ideas into commodities for sale in music markets.

MUSIC IN GAMING (MUSI273)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module examines the function and design of music in video games (including games-consoles, PCs, and smart-phone 'apps'). It considers the historical development of music in gaming, the relationship between game-music and technological advance, and the role and function of music in different types of game (and how this dictates compositional choice). This is achieved via a combination of case-study analyses and engagement with appropriate literature and research. Delivery incorporates lectures, workshop/seminars, and directed activity. Assessment incorporates a discursive essay and a portfolio of case-study analyses. The module assumes the study and discussion of case-study examples, but is delivered and assessed in a manner which does not require technical music skills (ie notational literacy or formal analytical method).

INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC PSYCHOLOGY (MUSI290)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Music Psychology is a multi-disciplinary field that aims to understand and explain musical activities and experiences through the scientific study of mind and behaviour. This module introduces key contemporary topics and research in this area, including the origins of music, music and emotion, the brain on music, musical development, music and cognitive performance, and music and health. The module will follow a flipped classroom instructional strategy that includes a set of video lectures, hands-on seminars, and individual tutorials. In the lectures, students will be introduced to central concepts, perspectives, and research on a variety of core topics of Music Psychology. These topics will then be actively explored during the seminars through a set of practical activities and group discussions. Individual tutorials will support students to develop their knowledge of research in the field, refine their areas of interest within the topics discussed and coursework preparation. The assessment framework includes one coursework assignment and one multiple choice exam.

INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAMMING (COMM226)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module introduces the core principles and techniques of computer programming. The emphasis of the module is to develop technical skills in coding, including the use of variables, loops, functions and libraries. Concepts are introduced in a practical and accessible way, and placed within the context of communication and media. The aim of the module is to develop students' abilities in coding so they can understand better the role of algorithms in society, and are ready for further study in data science and visualisation. By the end of the module, students will have a strong grounding in coding and recognise its role in communication, media and data science.

GLOBAL HOLLYWOOD B: FROM FILM ART TO MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT (COMM203)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module examines the transformation of Hollywood cinema as a distinct mode of film practice with its own codes and conventions to a complex and multifaceted global media enterprise that now encompasses film, television, the internet and other screen-based media. With film being increasingly consumed away from the theatres, and with the talent that is involved in entertainment media circulating fluidly across different media and markets, Hollywood is not only about cinema but about a number of entertainment industries that are controlled by a handful of giant conglomerates. The module is organised in two blocks. The first block examines the key characteristics of Hollywood cinema as these were crystallised in the earlier decades of the 20th Century. Concepts such as the studio system, the classical narrative and style, modes of representation, film genres, stardom, technology and performance are discussed in detail. The second block deals with the transformations that started taking Hollywood by storm especially from the 1970s onwards, including: the emergence of the blockbuster film culture, the conglomeration of the film industry, the rise of franchise entertainment, the links to independent film production, Hollywood's relationship to television (cable and online/streaming) and others.

IMMERSIVE MEDIA AND VIRTUAL WORLDS B (COMM211)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The second-year module Immersive Media and Virtual Worlds explores the histories, theories, and industries related to the production of immersive experiences, digital technologies and virtual realities and worlds. In particular, the module will focus on video games and cinema.

FEMINIST MEDIA STUDIES: TEXTS AND AUDIENCES B (COMM206)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module introduces students to feminist media studies: they will become familiar with key concepts and debates relating to gender, with reference to a range of media, as well as thinking about how we conceptualise media audiences. Students will consider the gendered nature of representations as well as various media cultures; the intersection of gender with, for instance, race, class, and sexuality; and sites of/for audience participation, 'prosumption' and the resistance of normative ideals.

MEDIATING THE PAST (COMM256)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module examines the role of the media and cultural industries in shaping the narratives that define who – and where – we are in relation to our past(s). As an examination of media and the past, the module acknowledges that the study of the mediation of history is closely bound up with the history of media itself as a set of technologies, discourses and practices. The weekly lectures each focus on a specific topic, although there is considerable overlap between ideas and themes that run throughout the module. As well as gaining a theoretical understanding of some of the core issues relating to the representation and mediation of the past, the module also incorporates a practical element in the form of a museum field trip. The module provides a detailed overview of themes and critical perspectives on heritage and cultural memory, including: media and historiography; heritage and nostalgia; the relationship between media, memory and forgetting; museums and the curating of memory; identity, imagined communities and post-memory; and the impact of digital cultures on archival practices.

UNDERSTANDING DOCUMENTARY (COMM282)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

Besides introducing you to a variety of remarkable and sometimes rare documentary texts, this module examines the key purposes, forms and approaches employed at different moments in the history of documentary, how documentary represents the "real world", and notions of "truth", ethics and audience engagement. The module also focuses on how documentary form and content can be analysed.

AI AND DIGITAL MEDIA (COMM258)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

In this module, students will learn about Artificial Intelligence algorithms that influence the development of digital media systems and content. Students will critically address key questions around the social, political and economic consequences of online platforms' use of AI systems and how they are or could be regulated.

DIFFERENT PLAY (SOTA202)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module introduces students to academic work that challenges the conventions of mainstream gaming, or what has been called 'queer game studies'. It examines the relationship between queerness and play, and how the formalising of play into games, especially digital and technological games, has sustained and promoted societal norms. Themes covered include the representation of marginalised identities, queer reclamation of 'failure' and the ways that technology can reproduce or subvert social structures. Students will learn to reexamine the conventions of game design with a view to conceiving a wider range of possibility for games, as well as engaging with the fundamental concepts of academic queer theory. The module is taught in 2-hour design workshops, with an introductory lecture in the first week. Assessment consists of a 1000-word design sketch for a game (40%) and a 1500-word coursework essay (60%). The textbook for the module is Ruberg & Shaw eds 'Queer Game Studies' (2017), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

GAMES PLAYING ROLES (ENGL397)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

Games are ubiquitous today; even if you don't think you play them, you do, via schemes like loyalty cards. This module examines the role of games in contemporary society, and the ways in which this has been reflected within contemporary literature. Throughout this module, we will consider the relationship between games and literature in relation to three key areas—"Ludic Literature", "Gaming Cultures", and "Games of the Future"—with each area involving the analysis of particular literary texts to consider what they reveal about contemporary society and its interests in games and gaming. Illustrative authors include: Raymond Queneau and members of the OuLiPo, Orson Scott Card, William Gibson, Daniel Suarez, and Ernest Cline.

3D MODELLING AND ANIMATION FOR GAMES (SOTA203)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module continues from the principles of spatial design covered in SOTA104 and introduces students to materials and techniques related to creating objects and complex structures within game spaces. Students will also learn about proper character rigging and state-based animation to create a range of game assets that can be used in standard game engines like Unity and Unreal Engine.

COMPOSITION FOR DIGITAL GAMES (MUSI206)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module provides an introduction to the design and implementation of sound and music in video games. Students engage with game music scholarship and case studies, then apply their knowledge to create original sounds and music for premade game projects.

GAME DESIGN INDEPENDENT PROJECT (SOTA204)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module provides students with a chance to work on the development of an individual project within their chosen specialization with the appropriate member of staff. Supervisors and project specifics will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

FINAL YEAR

Your final year offers an even wider range of options, designed to provide opportunities to specialise further in your chosen areas of the subjects and to strengthen your employability and research skills. All of our students undertake a project involving their own sustained, research-based work in their final year, either in Communication & Media or in Game Design.

• Students must choose one of the following modules in the list below: **COMM401, COMM342, COMM335, SOTA303 or SOTA300.**
• On the Game Design Studies side of your programme, you must take either **PHIL342** or **COMM309** in semester 1, and one of **COMM318**, **COMM326** or **COMM343** in semester 2.

OPTIONAL MODULES

DISSERTATION (COMM401)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

A dissertation is a self-contained piece of original research. It is your chance to study a topic that interests you in depth, guided by a member of the Department's academic staff who will act as a supervisor for your research. While it is not expected that the dissertation will achieve the standard of a published article, a general idea of the length, format and style of presentation envisaged can be obtained by scanning academic articles in the area that the dissertation will deal with. In terms of presentation, dissertations must be word-processed, double spaced and bound.

FINAL YEAR PROJECT (COMM335)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

This module will provide students with the opportunity to work on a final year project. The nature of the project will be negotiated between the students and their supervisors. It might include: working on live academic research projects or working on live projects in collaboration with academic staff and external partners or working on practical outputs related to a specified (research) task.

VIRAL VIDEO (COMM342)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

This module offers students a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical production skills enabling the design, production and marketing of 'viral videos'. Students develop their own creative practice and take a highly active role in designing, presenting and producing their own videos, and promoting them through video-sharing and social media networks.

Viral videos are an important and rapidly evolving cultural phenomenon. As yet there is little consensus on a definition but essentially they are videos that gain popularity by being shared and recommended through online and offline sharing and recommendations (France et al 2016: 20).

The module is aimed at students considering a career in digital communications, public relations and corporate, political and third sector communications.

France, S., Vaghefi, M. and Zhao, H. (2016) Characterizing viral videos: Methodology and applications. Electronic Commerce Research and Applications 19: 19–32.

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS WORK PLACEMENTS MODULE (SOTA300)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

This module is an opportunity for you to undertake a placement in a setting which matches your academic and possible career/industry interests, develop materials and/or undertake tasks within a practical or vocational context, apply academic knowledge from your degree, and develop your personal and employability skills within a working environment. SOTA300 is not open to students who have taken SOTA600.

MEDIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS (COMM317)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

The module studies human rights through the lens of the media in order to critically understand the changing nature of human rights' representation and the role media play in representing and responding to critical human rights issues. It explores the interconnections between media and human rights focusing on media and human rights theory, policy and practice and exploring both historical developments and contemporary issues. In particular, the implications of the global media in the current information age for a range of key human rights' issues are analysed. Among the issues that will be reviewed are terrorism and war on terror, freedom of speech, human trafficking, asylum and immigration, torture and genocide, humanitarian intervention.

GAME DESIGN COLLABORATIVE PROJECT (SOTA303)

Credits: 30 / Semester: whole session

This year-long module provides students with the opportunity to contribute to a large-scale design project with other members of their cohort. Students will be assessed individually, but will develop team-based skills and produce a portfolio of work within their chosen pathway of a level appropriate for professional applications.

GAMES AND ALGORITHMIC CULTURE (COMM309)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Games and Algorithmic Culture investigates how videogames are responding and contributing to the current technological and cultural changes in the use of AI, data mining, procedurally generated content, metrics and automation. The module provides a fundamental knowledge of the videogame industry and its new markets and trends, such as eSports, live streaming, independent productions, casual and mobile gaming. It explores how these new social, cultural and aesthetic trends of game culture are framed around a broader algorithmic culture that pervades our contemporary technics of digital production and distribution. The module will enable students to understand the specificity of games as new media, to critically analyse the technical, economic and social factors that frame contemporary digital culture, and identify areas of intervention within the global entertainment industry.

STARDOM AND MEDIA CELEBRITY (COMM303)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module examines the significant contemporary media phenomenon of stardom and celebrity. It investigates fame and public identity across a range of media contexts, platforms and public spheres, including film, television, social and digital media, music and advertising. Students will analyse the way in which stardom and celebrity is constructed by producers, consumers and users through film texts, marketing discourses, multimedia platforms, and national/transnational contexts and specific historical circumstances. They will embark on research projects that develop an understanding and application of critical and cultural theory to their own case studies. The module offers a critical insight into the history of stardom within mainstream and alternative media from early media personalities and Hollywood stardom, to powerful international cross-media stars or 'ordinary' celebrities in reality and social media. It will explore conceptual approaches to celebrity culture and star images, including the democratisation of stardom through the everyday performance of self, ideas of authenticity and identification, and portraiture. It will consider the financial value of stars and celebrity to global media industries and networks, including branding, labour studies and media control. And it will analyse the interplay between the economic, the political and historical, the theoretical, and the formal elements that inform our ongoing engagement and fascination with public personalities.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION: POLITICS, SCIENCE, ACTIVISM, AND THE MEDIA (COMM304)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

Global heating, deforestation, natural disasters, mass extinction of wildlife – the world is currently facing extraordinary environmental degradation that increasingly affects people's daily lives and our common future on this planet. At the same time, the veracity of these issues as well as questions of remedies are being heavily contested. It is the news media and social media platforms where viewpoints are promoted, exchanged, discussed and the battle for dominant issue interpretations is fought. In this module, students will learn about the most salient fault lines of mediated environmental discourse. Who are the stakeholders that engage in environmental debates and what are their arguments? What are the challenges for journalists and other content providers in communicating complex environmental issues to their respective audience? And what do we know about the short and long term effects of different forms of communication and sometimes widely differing arguments and narratives? Students will develop the knowledge and analytical skills to be able to tackle these issues via their own theory-driven and empirical work.

MEDIA AND CAMPAIGNING (COMM302)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module explores the role of the media during electoral and other campaigns. It explores the relationships between media, politics and the democratic process. We will study the evolution of the electoral campaign and changes to the form and content of campaigns might have impacted broader democratic concerns. We consider some of the key concepts and theories which seek to conceptualise the communication and mediatisation of public and political mechanisms. We will assess whether campaigns matter, whether the system put in place to oversee campaigns is fit for purpose, and how well the media report on and scrutinise campaigns.

RESEARCHING DIGITAL CULTURES IN THE AMERICAS (HISP348)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module develops research and critical skills when examining digital cultures with a particular focus on the Americas. It takes examples that encompass North, Central, and South America as well as the Caribbean. Building confidence in handling theoretical tools in the analysis of digital cultures it examines a range of professional and amateur content creators from social, institutional and personal perspectives and considers issues of curatorship, archival approaches, the ethics of (re)appropriation and remediation, and the relationship between the self and the public and private spheres.

SOUND STUDIES (MUSI322)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 1

This module will introduce students to various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of music and sound in their social and cultural contexts. The module considers sounds and music as experienced across diverse settings (private, public, individual and collective) and considers key issues relating to how the sonic is embedded in everyday life and impact upon our perception and understanding of the world. Using a wide variety of examples drawn from popular music, art music and other audiovisual media it will outline key issues relating to the sociology and philosophy of sound.

SCREEN INDUSTRIES AND SPORTS (COMM326)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

Screen Industries and Sports is a new module that aims to examine the complex and multifaceted relationship between screen media and sports, focusing primarily on the ways in which the screen industries engage with sports as a commercial product that reaches audiences globally through a proliferation of legacy and digital media. In doing this the module asks questions about how sports are produced, packaged and disseminated, how global media corporations increasingly control sports and the kinds of issues that are at stake. It is organised around 4 blocks, with the first block examining primarily the relationship between the television industries and sports, the second looking at how the relationship between sports and screen media is being reconfigured in the digital arena, the third on how mega sports events shape and are being shaped by screen industries and the final one focusing on issues of diversity and cultural difference and how they figure in the broader picture. Together, all these sessions are designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of how screen industries are intricately linked to the evolution of sports as one of the most commercial media products of the 20th and 21st century.

ISSUES IN PHOTOGRAPHY (COMM323)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

Investigating both early and contemporary photography, this module examines the role photography plays in remembering private and public events, particularly those that test the limits of visual representation. It will unpack contemporary debates among photographers, journalists and art historians on topics such as photographing suffering and the relationship between photography, affect and emotions. We will discuss the difference between analogic photography and digital photography; ID pictures and family photos; artistic photography and journalistic photography; and personal and public pictures. Students will also learn to read, discuss and critically write about how the different components of a photograph (such as framing, montage, lighting and materiality) serve as a tool of expression and means to interpret events.

POPULAR CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND POLITICS (COMM318)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module explores how popular culture can be political by examining a range of popular cultural commodities discursively. The module surveys a range of views on how to examine popular culture in order to contextualise discourse analysis. This is examined and then used to critically consider the political potential of popular culture. Successful students will be able to critically analyse a range of popular cultural commodities such as film, television programmes, digital popular culture, popular music and the tabloid press. The module is delivered in the forms of lectures and more hands on analysis during seminars. Students are assessed by an essay, which is an analysis of a popular culture commodity.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND THE MEDIA (COMM343)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module will explore the relationship between children, young people and the media with a focus on society and politics. It will provide an overview of the main historical debates and theories in the field. It will also focus on key processes such as socialisation and social identity. Students will be required to write a book chapter on one of the key module themes.

ISSUES IN 'CULT' TELEVISION (COMM300)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module focuses on debates about the nature, cultural television practices and significance of 'cult' television. Students will critique the idea of 'cult' from textual, industry and audience perspectives, as well as considering its relationships with the rise of 'quality' TV forms in the US and UK and with fan studies, including tracing shifts in representation and audience practices related to marginal groups and identities.

CURATION AND HERITAGE (MUSI353)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module will consider how popular music is presented as heritage in different contexts such as museum exhibitions, library collections and DIY online archives. It will examine the different ways in which popular music heritage has been represented, mobilized and interpreted. Taking a case study approach it will explore who is invested in discussions of heritage, how heritage is defined, and what this can tell us about representations of the popular past. The module will have a particular focus on the context of gallery and museums and will examine curatorial approaches to popular music and its related cultures.

THE FILM MUSIC OF JOHN WILLIAMS (MUSI370)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This module examines the film-music output of the composer John Williams. It considers the historical development of John Williams' compositional style, in the context of Hollywood convention and the evolution of the 'blockbuster'. It situates his style in relation to classical and other relevant influences (especially late romantic and early modernist techniques). It considers the relevance of his close relationship with particular directors (e.g. Lucas and Spielberg). It relates particular compositional techniques (such as leitmotif) to the filmic and narrative context. Delivery incorporates lectures, workshop, and directed activity. Assessment incorporates a discursive essay and a portfolio of case-study analyses. The module assumes the study and discussion of case-study examples, but is delivered and assessed in a manner which does not require technical music skills (i.e. notational literacy or formal analytical method).

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF RHETORIC IN BRITISH POLITICS (POLI323)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

This is the first substantive module in the UK to examine the rhetoric of British political parties at Undergraduate level. It roots its theories and methods in the classical schools of rhetorical analysis, alongside developing a more contemporary understanding of discourse analysis. This module will enable students to think critically about the political message, how it is constructed, and delivered to a range of audiences.

MEDIA, POLITICS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (POLI345)

Credits: 15 / Semester: semester 2

The module will look at the manner in which a range of media engage with climate change and energy security, and the political and social implications that follow. Students should achieve an understanding the context of coverage (including the science, the surrounding political environment, and journalistic practice). They should also be able to understand the principal features of coverage (and their impact), and the political implications that follow. The module will be delivered via lectures, workshop-tutorials, and online tutorials. It will be assessed by exam, short essay and a student's performance in a presentation undertaken in a group alongside other students.

Programme details and modules listed are illustrative only and subject to change.

HOW YOU'LL LEARN

Weekly lectures and seminar discussions may be supplemented by screening sessions, presentations and opportunities for group work where appropriate. We regularly invite expert speakers and practitioners to speak to our students about their work. Some modules also make use of our specialist equipment or software.

Dissertation and work placement modules involve more independent study, but always under the careful individual supervision of a member of academic staff.

HOW YOU'RE ASSESSED

We are committed to using a range of different forms of assessment, so types of assessment vary widely from module to module. Depending on your choice of modules, these may include coursework projects, essays, blogs, reports, literature reviews, writing exercises, presentations, online tests and unseen examinations.

LIVERPOOL HALLMARKS

We have a distinctive approach to education, the Liverpool Curriculum Framework, which focuses on research-connected teaching, active learning, and authentic assessment to ensure our students graduate as digitally fluent and confident global citizens.

Careers and employability

This degree will open you to a myriad of jobs in media-related industries and you will have opportunities to undertake a relevant work placement or their own independent research. Many of our modules seek to develop practical skills – such as media writing, blogging, analysis of social media data and video-making.

Our graduates have gone on to careers including:

- social media, advertising, and marketing
- corporate communications and public relations
- arts administration
- political campaigning (including political parties, trade unions, and charities)
- management
- government, and the civil service
- broadcasting and journalism
- teaching in universities, colleges, and schools.

Former graduates include a television documentary maker, a BBC Radio 1 DJ, senior journalists at local and national newspapers, a partner in a New York-based advertising company, and the features editor of a music weekly.

94.9% OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA STUDENTS WILL GO ON TO WORK AND/OR FURTHER STUDY 15 MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION.

Discover Uni, 2018-19.

Fees and funding

Your tuition fees, funding your studies, and other costs to consider.

TUITION FEES

UK fees (applies to Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland)	
Full-time place, per year	£9,250
Year in industry fee	£1,850
Year abroad fee	£1,385

International fees	
Full-time place, per year	£22,400
Year in industry fee	£1,850
Year abroad fee	£11,200

Fees shown are for the academic year 2024/25. Please note that the Year Abroad fee also applies to the Year in China.

Tuition fees cover the cost of your teaching and assessment, operating facilities such as libraries, IT equipment, and access to academic and personal support. [Learn more about paying for your studies.](#).

ADDITIONAL COSTS

We understand that budgeting for your time at university is important, and we want to make sure you understand any course-related costs that are not covered by your tuition fee. This could include buying a laptop, books, or stationery.

Find out more about the [additional study costs](#) that may apply to this course.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND BURSARIES

We offer a range of scholarships and bursaries to provide tuition fee discounts and help with living expenses while at university.

Check out our [Liverpool Bursary,](#) worth up to £2,000 per year for eligible UK students. Or for international students, our [Undergraduate Global Advancement Scholarship](#) offers a tuition fee discount of up to £5,000 for eligible international students starting an undergraduate degree from September 2024.

[Discover our full range of undergraduate scholarships and bursaries](#)

Entry requirements

The qualifications and exam results you'll need to apply for this course.

Your qualification	Requirements About our typical entry requirements
A levels	ABB Applicants with the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) are eligible for a reduction in grade requirements. For this course, the offer is **BBB** with **A** in the EPQ. You may automatically qualify for reduced entry requirements through our contextual offers scheme.
GCSE	4/C in English and 4/C in Mathematics
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma	BTEC applications are encouraged. We evaluate each BTEC application on its merits and may make offers at DDM.
International Baccalaureate	33 points, with no score less than 4
Irish Leaving Certificate	H1, H1, H2, H2
Scottish Higher/Advanced Higher	ABB in Advanced Highers, combinations of Advanced Highers and Scottish Highers are welcome
Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced	Grade A plus BB at A level
Access	Applications considered. Pass Access with 30 Level 3 credits

Your qualification	Requirements [About our typical entry requirements](#)
	graded at Distinction and 15 Level 3 credits graded at Merit.
International qualifications	Many countries have a different education system to that of the UK, meaning your qualifications may not meet our direct entry requirements. Although there is no direct Foundation Certificate route to this course, completing a Foundation Certificate, such as that offered by the [University of Liverpool International College](#), can guarantee you a place on a number of similar courses which may interest you.

ALTERNATIVE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- If your qualification isn't listed here, or you're taking a combination of qualifications, [contact us](#) for advice

- [Applications from mature students](#) are welcome.

THE ORIGINAL

REDBRICK