

## AQH-B2-3a Undergraduate Programme Specification Template

August 2015

### AQH-B2-3a Transitional Undergraduate Programme Specification Template

Please note:

- *Guidance notes for staff or suggestions for the design and functionality of the database are in italics.* Guidance notes should be deleted in the final version.

#### SECTION A: CORE INFORMATION

1. Name of programme                      Mass Communications

2. Award title (eg BA Honours)        BA Honours

3. Programme linkage

Is this part of group of linked programmes between which students can transfer at agreed points? (eg a version with / without a placement year, a group of programmes with a common first year etc)

no

4. Is the programme a top-up only?

no

5. Does the programme have a Foundation Year (level 3) associated with it so that students enter for a four-year programme and progress directly from the Foundation Year to Stage 1 without having to re-apply? (ie an 'Extended Studies' programme)

Yes

If yes:

You can take a Foundation Year (level 3) as an integral part of this programme of study. For details of the Foundation Year see the programme specification for *Media Extended*

6. Level of award (eg Level 6 for BA/BSc)

Level 3		Level 4		Level 5		Level 6	x	Level 7	
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7. Awarding body: University of Sunderland

8. Which department is it in?

Arts, Design & Media

9. Programme Studies Board?

Film, Media and Culture

10. Programme Leader

Robert Jewitt

11. How and where can I study the programme?

*Tick all boxes that apply*

<b>At Sunderland:</b>	
Full-time on campus	x
Part-time on campus	x
As work-based learning full-time	
As work-based learning part-time	
As a full-time sandwich course	
As a part-time sandwich course	
By distance learning	

**12. How long does the programme take?**

	Min number of years / months	Max number of years / months
Full-time	3 years	9 years
Part-time	5 years	9 years
Distance learning		
Work-based learning		

**SECTION B – FURTHER CORE INFORMATION**

**Use Outline Programme Proposal Form for ADC ([AQH-B2-2](#)), for questions 13 to 25**

**26. Learning and teaching strategy.**

The learning and teaching strategy for this programme is aligned to the University Learning and Teaching Plan 2013-16 whose aims are to:

- develop independent, active and reflective learners
- create learning environments where teaching approaches, learning technologies, and institutional structures and culture foster these learners
- ensure that staff are supported and developed for their roles, and valued for their contribution to learning and the learner experience
- promote learning partnerships in which innovative, supportive and challenging practice inspires students to approach their courses and careers with curiosity, enthusiasm and creativity.

The main learning and teaching methods employed are a combination of:

**Lectures**

- to present and explain factual information and give a grounding in the key theories, genres and works associated with design practice.

**Seminars**

- to allow guided group discussion as a means of clarifying and elaborating on aspects of course work and thinking.

**Demonstrations and hands-on tuition**

- to show you practical techniques both in the studio and on the computer.

### **Group critiques**

- to allow you to practice presenting your work to others and to develop the ability to become reflective in your practice, and to learn from the feedback of others.

### **Tutorials**

- are very frequent throughout the programme. They are either one-to-one with the tutor or in small groups to discuss your ideas, thinking, approach, analysis, facts.

### **Electronic learning resources**

(electronic journals, internet, self-learning DVDs, videos, etc)

- develop skills of research and analysis, and encourage you to become an independent learner embracing the notion of professional self development.

### **Independent learning or private study**

- encourages you to become resourceful and self-reliant using your own initiative and time management skills. With experience you also learn when it's better to seek appropriate guidance. This is a core skill that employers are keen to see in any graduate.

### **Presentations**

- Over time, you will gain practice presenting your work as would be expected in industry in a client presentation situation. This not only helps with your oral and visual presentation skills, it helps you to develop the skills to evaluate your own work and concisely identify the key points that can sell the idea to your audience.

## **27. Retention strategy.**

The University has a range of strategies in place to guide and support students which help to maintain retention.

### **induction**

Students enrolling on this programme are taken through a week of induction activities, introducing them to the University, the staff and fellow students. There is normally a range of fun creative projects, a field trip, prizes, library inductions and students union activities all designed to help students make friends, settle in to University life, find their way around and get ready for their studies

### **student handbook**

All design students receive a student handbook that explains important things about their academic studies, how and where to get advice and support, and directs them to some of the wider support systems in place for students.

**Student Reps**

Students on all programmes at each stage elect a student representative who can speak for them at the various committees and forums where decisions are made about how the programme is run.

**Registers and Communications/Meetings**

The University has a system of attendance monitoring using registers that students scan into each contact session, electronically. Any absences are noted and admin staff contact each missing student by text message to make sure everything is okay and to ask if they need any support. Further unexplained absences result in more formal letters being sent to ask for a meeting with the student at which any issues can be resolved.

**SSLC**

Each department holds Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings at least once per term at which students and staff are invited to identify things that are worth commending about the operation of each programme, as well as things that need to be addressed. An action plan ensures that all agreed actions are followed up and addressed.

**personal tutor**

All students are allocated a personal tutor who is there to turn to and who can support them or direct them to where appropriate help may be obtained. Students can request a change of tutor without any questions asked.

**student experience manager**

The Faculty has a Student Experience Manager who they can meet to discuss anything if a student prefers to discuss issues with someone who is outside of their immediate academic community.

**comprehensive additional support**

All on-campus students have access to the University's central support services including Counselling, Disability Service, Health and Well-being, Chaplaincy, financial support and advice, International Office and Careers and Employability Service. The Students' Union provides an independent service which offers advice and support across the full range of personal and academic problems which students may encounter. These services are available via the Student Gateway or directed by tutors.

**28. Any other information.** *Please add anything you think may be useful to the approval panel.*

## SECTION C - TEACHING AND LEARNING

### 29. What is the programme about?

The programme develops skills and critical understanding that are relevant to the study of mass communication. There is a strong emphasis on knowledge and understanding of theoretical and analytical frameworks underpinned by elements of practice situated within a range of relevant communication contexts. Students explore historic and current media, developing critical skills and knowledge through the exploration of real world case studies. The programme draws from a range of optional modules that span the media subject area drawing upon Journalism, Public Relations, Broadcast Media, Radio, Digital Film Production, as well as Film, Media, and Cultural Studies options.

#### **This Programme aims to:**

- familiarise students with a range of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of the mass communication
- develop students' analytical skills within areas of both theory and practice
- introduce students to the range of learning methods and methodological practices appropriate to mass communications
- produce graduates with advanced and specialist skills in mass communications
- produce graduates with specific knowledge(s) of professional practices, contexts and processes within the media
- produce graduates whose practice in mass communication is informed by, and contextualized within, relevant theoretical issues and debates
- develop in students a high level of communication skills in the presentation of critical, creative and professional work
- produce graduates capable of independent & questioning work in the area of mass communication

### 30. What will I know or be able to do at each Stage of the programme? *These should be brief bullet points for each sub-heading.*

#### **Learning Outcomes Stage 1 – Skills**

By the end of this Stage of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

S1: ability to evaluate own work and practices [EVALUATION]

S2: skills in essay writing including academic conventions of research [WRITING]

S3: ability to engage with and apply theories and concepts in the analysis of media texts [ANALYSIS]

S4: ability to use information technology for the retrieval and production of material [I.T.]

S5: ability to present work and conclusions clearly to others [COMMUNICATION]

S6: successful organisation and time management strategies [MANAGEMENT]

### **Learning Outcomes Stage 1 – Knowledge**

By the end of this Stage of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

K1: knowledge of the theoretical concepts and issues necessary for further study [THEORY]

K2: understanding of the impact of historical changes in mass communication [HISTORY]

K3: knowledge of the institutional contexts in which the social, political and cultural operate [INSTITUTIONAL]

K4: knowledge of the concepts, principles and operation of media production (PRACTICE)

### **Learning Outcomes Stage 2 – Skills**

By the end of this Stage of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

S7: technical skills in making production work [COMMUNICATION]

S8: Ability to evaluate and apply appropriate theoretical perspectives and research methods in analysing specific areas of mass communication output and consumption [ANALYSIS]

S9: An ability to evaluate own work in a reflexive manner with reference to academic and professional issues, debates and conventions [EVALUATION]

S10: Developing ability in independent research and organisational management [MANAGEMENT]

S11: Ability to synthesise ideas and present own work to others effectively [COMMUNICATION]

## **Learning Outcomes Stage 2 – Knowledge**

By the end of this Stage of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

K5: knowledge and understanding of key theories and debates relating to the analysis of mass communication. [THEORY]

K6: Knowledge of a variety of historical developments in mass communication [HISTORY]

K7: Knowledge of principles and institutional requirements in producing media [INSTITUTIONAL]

K8: knowledge and critical understanding of research methods [EVALUATION]

## **Learning Outcomes Stage 3 – Skills**

By the end of this Stage of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

S12: advanced ability to apply theoretical concepts to specific media [THEORY]

S13: advanced ability to analyse and critique media [ANALYSIS]

S14: advanced ability to analyse and critique examples of own work [EVALUATION]

S15: advanced skills of synthesis and presentation in written work [WRITING]

S16: advanced research and writing skills [WRITING]

S17: the ability to work independently and to successfully manage a major project to completion [MANAGEMENT]

## **Learning Outcomes Stage 3 – Knowledge**

By the end of this Stage of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

K9: advanced critical understanding of theoretical issues and debates within the field of mass communication [THEORY]

K10: advanced knowledge of production processes and the institutional contexts of media production [INSTITUTIONAL]

K11: advanced knowledge of recent history and modern media developments [HISTORY]



### 31. What will the programme consist of?

Each undergraduate programme consists of a number of Stages from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 4, each of which is equivalent to a year's full-time study. The summary below describes briefly what is contained in each Stage. Most programmes have a mixture of core (ie compulsory) modules and optional ones, often with increasing choice as you move through the programme and gain in experience. In some programmes the choice of optional modules gives you particular 'routes' through the programme. The programme structure including a detailed list of modules can be found in the [programme regulations](#).

#### **Stage 1**

At stage 1 students are introduced to the relationship between theory, research, criticism and practice as it applies to academic media studies and its history. This is supported by the inclusion of 60 credits from practice-based modules in order to introduce the basic techniques required to develop students' understanding of the relationship between theory and practice. Students also explore critical case studies across a range of mass communication contexts. These may include the ethical considerations of privacy and consensual surveillance in a digitally networked environment through to the exploration of political rhetoric and visual language within factual broadcast output. Such case studies will explore the ethical implications of media content and form the basis of critical engagement throughout the degree.

The decisions students make at stage 1 will determine the choices available to them at later stages due to module pre-requisites. The number of optional modules available at stage 1 are more limited than at later stages as they act as introductions to the specific subject areas. As students move through the subsequent levels they will be presented with more module choices enabling them to develop specialist skills – subject to pre-requisites.

#### **Stage 2**

Stage 2 draws on, and allows students to integrate and refine, the knowledge and skills they have attained as modules further develop the theoretical, analytical, critical and practice skills introduced at stage 1.

At stage 2 students will begin to specialise in their chosen areas of media practice. It is expected that they will taper their subject specific skillset to include modules drawn from one or two of the programme areas. This will allow students to reappraise their current knowledge and practical skills in lieu of the dynamic media landscape, and enable them to design a suite of modules that should respond to the demands of the market place and foster their creative skills.

The students are prepared for this process via the Module Choice Fair that takes place towards the end of stage 1. They also engage in close

consultation with their Programme Leaders, Module Leaders and/or Personal Tutors following the Module Choice Fair.

### Stage 3

At stage 3 the emphasis in modules shifts further towards advanced self-directed learning with tutorial support. Students will be required to develop early dissertation proposals at an earlier point which will be assessed, developed and inform their dissertations. Alternatively, students can opt to take a production-based equivalent to the dissertation providing they have acquired sufficient skills from previous stages. Practical modules continue to be underpinned by explorations of ethical and contextual considerations relating to a number of media contexts.

By stage 3 students will have a clear understanding of the practical skills they need to develop at an advanced level and they benefit from the same support and advice processes provided at stage 2 at this later stage.

32. How will I be taught? *Modes of teaching and learning aligned with KIS – choose one or more*

Scheduled teaching activities	x
Independent study	x
Placement	

The Programme uses a diverse range of teaching and learning strategies that assist in the development of technical and professional skills of students. In the early stages of the Programme, the modules are staff led, providing teaching and learning through staff led sessions and seminars. However, by stage 3 the self-negotiated projects/dissertation lead to a greater student-led emphasis within their learning with staff guidance. Each module offers a variety of individual tutorials, seminars, hand-outs, demonstrations, peer reviews, and feedback.

The main learning and teaching methods employed are a combination of:

**Lectures** to present and explain factual information and give a grounding in the key theories and approach to practice.

**Seminars** to allow guided group discussion as a means of clarifying and elaborating on aspects of course work and thinking.

**Independent learning or private study** encourages students to become resourceful and self-reliant using their own initiative. With experience they also learn when it's better to seek appropriate guidance. This is a core skill that employers are keen to see in any graduate.

33. How will I be assessed and given feedback? *Modes of assessment aligned with KIS: choose one or more.*

Written examinations	X
Coursework	X
Practical assessments	X

This programme uses the Generic University Assessment Criteria		
This programme uses the Subject Specific Assessment Criteria	<b>x</b>	

The main assessment methods employed are a combination of:

***Written assignments, essays and reports***

are used to test knowledge and understanding. They also test your academic research skills and the ability to select critical detail from large amounts of information and to interpret, evaluate, organise and present a coherent argument or report based on that information.

***Seminar and presentations***

are used to test your ability to sift key information and present it coherently and succinctly to an audience. Depending on the nature of the project, the assessment may require that you present individually or as part of a team.

**Marking Procedure**, Marks at level 4 are discussed and agreed by the assessment team, if the assessment was made by one member of staff then a second marker will view the work and moderate or agree the marks before the module assessment board. Modules at Levels 5 and 6 are marked individually by staff. Marks are collated then discussed by the internal marks Team. The Levels 5 and 6 Modules are also sampled by an External Examiner. All marks then go through a Module Assessment Board.

**Student feedback** on assessment is provided both verbally and in written form, in both cases referring clearly to the assessment criteria and learning outcomes of the module. This enables students to understand the level of their mark, and draws their attention to areas for improvement.

**34. [Teaching, learning and assessment matrix](#)**

How does research influence the programme?

Teaching on the programme is enriched by Sunderland’s cutting-edge research. The programme team hosts the Centre for Research in Media and Cultural Studies ([CRMCS](#)). Media research at Sunderland has been rated ‘world leading’ (25%) and internationally excellent (38%), according to the latest (2014) Research Excellence Framework (REF).

The majority of the teaching team who contribute to the programme are members of the Centre and its active research culture that includes fortnightly research seminars and conferences. The Centre continues to consolidate and develop its research

activities, skills and methodologies through initiatives based on individual projects, collaborative exchange, and contact with external scholars and funding partners such as the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Most members of staff hold research degrees at Doctoral and Masters level and are presently engaged in the wider academic community as external examiners on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at other institutions.

Learners are also responsible for undertaking and developing their own independent research across the programme, culminating in the Stage 3 dissertation/media project. Students benefit from working in close conjunction with subject specialists, many of whom have developed specialist modules from their research. Core modules are also informed by staff research interests.

## **SECTION D EMPLOYABILITY**

### **35. How will the programme prepare me for employment?**

This programme provides an excellent foundation for a wide range of careers in the media and communication sectors including: Advertising; TV; Radio; Digital Media; Journalism; Marketing; Public Relations, and Organisational Communications. Creative skills are developed across all stages.

The knowledge and transferable skills gained on this programme will be relevant to roles in many areas of employment including businesses, the public sector, the voluntary sector and education. Another option at the end of your course is to continue your studies to Masters or PhD level.

Students undertake a number of practice-based modules that involve practical projects and collaborative work. Many students get involved in Spark, which is a multi-platform community media project. Spark operates a full-time FM community radio station, a monthly eMagazine, and an online TV channel. Students are responsible for local news-gathering, programme production and advertising.

Placement modules are also available to students on the programme, subject to relevant pre-requisites. Students are prepared for placements via a series of seminars and tutorials by supervising academic staff and appropriate officers from Student Services before their work placement. Assessment is by academic staff.

In addition, the University offers a number of centrally based opportunities designed to support student innovation. Some of these are based with Spark in the Media Hub (which includes *Sportsbyte*, *Northern Lights*, *Fashion North* and *SRNews*). Students can contribute to the University's student magazines, such as *Spark* and *Vibe*, and work on presenting and/or managing Spark FM, the University's award-winning community radio station. Students also enter their work in a variety of prestigious national and international competitions, including National Student Television Awards (NASTA), Royal Television Society awards, Nations and regions, Radio production Awards and Student Radio Awards.

Employability support is provided via [Sunderland Futures](#), offering mentoring sessions, internships, placements and leadership skills sessions. Students can demonstrate they have the skills that employers are looking for via the Sunderland Professional Award ([SuPA](#)) scheme, providing evidence and formal recognition for those students engaged in extra-curricular activities. Students can also bolster their degree with the Higher Education Achievement Report ([HEAR](#)) which captures academic and additional achievements.

Other career networking activities that students can attend and participate in include the Wednesday lunchtime Masterclasses, a series of lectures and workshops running throughout the academic year featuring invited industry practitioners

The programme enables students to study abroad at stage 2, which enables students to gain higher levels of independence and maturity while simultaneously broadening their cultural experience and social networks. At Stage 2 students may study in the USA, Canada, Australia and a number of EU countries, where University or subject-specific agreements exist. In each case, students are interviewed and are approved to study abroad subject to satisfactory progress on their degree programme. Students must also have approval for their proposed programme of study. During the period of study abroad tutors maintain contact with students via email. Credits for approved study abroad are counted towards the student's degree programme.

Language skills can increase your international mobility, and it is usually possible to take a module from the free University Language Scheme, which will earn credits towards your degree. The language module can be taken on top of or as part of the 120 credits needed to complete a year. Students can choose between French, German, Spanish, Japanese and Chinese at a range of levels.

**36.** Professional statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) accreditation. *Choose one of the following.*

PSRB accreditation is not relevant to this programme	x
PSRB accreditation is currently being sought for this programme	
This programme currently has PSRB accreditation	

## SECTION E PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REGULATIONS

Use [Programme Regulations Form](#), for questions 39 and 40

The programme gives you the opportunity to develop skills which you can use in the future. Some skills are more specific than others to the subject area, or to a particular type of activity, but all skills can be applied in a range

of employment situations, sometimes in quite unexpected ways. The skills which this programme is designed to develop are listed below.

### **Learning Outcomes Stage 1 – Skills**

S1: ability to evaluate own work and practices [EVALUATION]

S2: skills in essay writing including academic conventions of research [WRITING]

S3: ability to engage with and apply theories and concepts in the analysis of media texts [ANALYSIS]

S4: ability to use information technology for the retrieval and production of material [I.T.]

S5: ability to present work and conclusions clearly to others [COMMUNICATION]

S6: successful organisation and time management strategies [MANAGEMENT]

### **Learning Outcomes Stage 2 – Skills**

S7: technical skills in making production work [COMMUNICATION]

S8: Ability to evaluate and apply appropriate theoretical perspectives and research methods in analysing specific areas of mass communication output and consumption [ANALYSIS]

S9: An ability to evaluate own work in a reflexive manner with reference to academic and professional issues, debates and conventions [EVALUATION]

S10: Developing ability in independent research and organisational management [MANAGEMENT]

S11: Ability to synthesise ideas and present own work to others effectively [COMMUNICATION]

### **Learning Outcomes Stage 3 – Skills**

S12: advanced ability to apply theoretical concepts to specific media [THEORY]

S13: advanced ability to analyse and critique media [ANALYSIS]

S14: advanced ability to analyse and critique examples of own work [EVALUATION]

S15: advanced skills of synthesis and presentation in written work [WRITING]

S16: advanced research and writing skills [WRITING]

S17: the ability to work independently and to successfully manage a major project to completion [MANAGEMENT]

## SECTION F ADMISSIONS, LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORT

### 41. What are the admissions requirements?

The University's standard admissions requirements can be found in the university regulations. Programme-specific requirements which are in addition to those regulations are given below.

Entry from a University of Sunderland Foundation Year (*give details or delete*)

*n/a*

Can students enter with advanced standing?	<b>Yes</b>	
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If yes, to which Stages?

Stage 1	
Stage 2	
Stage 3	x
Stage 4	

If yes, with what qualifications?

Transnational students can enter at Stage 3 with advanced standing providing they have completed the MQA diplomas in Broadcasting and Mass Communications from IACT (Subang Jaya, Malaysia).

The course will also take direct entry to stages 2 and 3 two or three depending on prior experience or having suitable qualifications such as HND or Foundation degree. The key criteria here will be based on relevant previous experience and this will be assessed at interview.

### 42. What kind of support and help will there be?

Every student receives personal copies of the programme handbook or has access to them online. These contain a wide range of information including the current Induction information and the relevant safety policy as well as information on how to access the full University Services.

Every student, at the beginning of the induction period, is supplied with detailed timetables of the induction activities and of the course on to which he/she has enrolled.

Students requesting or showing signs of needing additional support or who have specific learning needs will be advised and directed to the support available. All students are asked to complete induction evaluation questionnaires to comment on the effectiveness of the induction programme.

On commencement of the programme, all students are allotted a personal tutor who will support them through their studies. Both the personal tutor and the programme leader support students by helping them to understand and navigate through the modular credit scheme and also, where appropriate, by acting as a signpost to refer students to any of the other support systems within the University or beyond.

Tutorials will normally take place at least twice a term (and more often as necessary) in order to discuss programme-specific issues and identify any personal difficulties and to help to develop and maintain the students progress file. Students normally see their personal tutor individually at appropriate points during each term to discuss their progress. Students will be referred to Student Services, Financial Counsellor, Students Union and other appropriate agencies who offer expertise to deal with issues of a more personal nature. Students are informed about the careers service, the counselling service, the chaplaincy and the international student service during induction and when necessary during tutorials. The careers service delivers aspects of the programme at Stages 2 and 3.

All on-campus students have access to the University's central support services including Counselling, Disability Service, Health and Well-being, Chaplaincy, financial support and advice, International Office and Careers and Employability Service. The Students' Union provides an independent service which offers advice and support across the full range of personal and academic problems which students may encounter. Students wishing to lodge a complaint or an appeal can seek advice from the Students' Union or from Academic Services. Full details of all these services can be found on the University's web-site. Where appropriate, academic or support staff in the Faculty will sign-post students to these specialist services.

*a. in the university as a whole:*

The University provides a range of professional support services including [health and well-being](#), [counselling](#), [disability support](#), and a [Chaplaincy](#). Click on the links for further information.

**43. What resources will I have access to?**

On campus	x	In a partner college		By distance learning	
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**On campus**

*Tick all that apply*

General Teaching and Learning Space	x
IT	x



Library	x
VLE	x
Laboratory	
Studio	
Performance space	
Other specialist	Media Centre: Cinema; Editing and Recording Suites, including the TV Studio and Chroma Key facilities
Technical resources	Cameras, lights and sound recording equipment for the purposes of audio and AV production

Text for details listed above:

### University Library resources

University Library Services offer a range of resources, both in print and online, in support of University learning, teaching and research activities. The three site libraries provide information collections, a variety of study spaces, IT facilities and experienced library staff during core hours, with online services and support available at any time off-campus. In addition, both The Murray and St. Peter's libraries offer 24/7 access during main teaching weeks.

On joining the University, all students attend a Library Induction session and library staff are available to help with enquiries during library opening hours. In addition, library staff are experienced in working with academic colleagues in designing and delivering customised Information Skills workshops, either timetabled sessions embedded into core modules or individual sessions provided on request. These workshops provide students with the skills they need to identify and evaluate information from both print collections and electronic sources, including subject specific databases and gateways, online journals and other quality sources available on the Internet. Students can also access subject specific help sheets, online tutorials, FAQs and many more sources of information on the Library website [www.library.sunderland.ac.uk](http://www.library.sunderland.ac.uk)

Information about the University's facilities can be found [here](#).

#### 44. Are there any additional costs on top of the fees?

No, but all students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials.	
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Yes (optional) All students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials. In addition there are some are additional costs for optional activities associated with the programme (see below)	x
Yes (essential) All students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials. In addition there are some are essential additional costs associated with the programme (see below)	

Students may opt for modules which featuring accreditation from industry bodies (Eg NCTJ). These modules may feature additional voluntary professional qualifications that students can pay to take. Also, some modules may feature optional placement visits that students may be asked to contribute towards.

**45. How are student views represented?**

All taught programmes in the University have student representatives for each Stage (year-group) of each programme who meet in a Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) where they can raise students' views and concerns. The Students' Union and the faculties together provide training for student representatives. SSLCs and focus groups are also used to obtain student feedback on plans for developing existing programmes and designing new ones. Feedback on your programme is obtained every year through module questionnaires and informs the annual review of your programme. Student representatives are also invited to attend Programme and Module Studies Boards which manage the delivery and development of programmes and modules. Various Faculty committees, particularly Faculty Academic Experience Committee, Academic Development Committee and Quality Management Sub-Committee also have student representation. This allows students to be involved in higher-level plans for teaching and learning. There is a parallel structure at university level on which students are represented by sabbatical officers who are the elected leaders of the Students' Union. The University's student representation and feedback policy can be found [here](#).

*Undergraduate programmes only:* Final-year students are also invited to complete a National Student Survey (NSS) which asks a standard set of questions across the whole country. The results of this are discussed at Programme Studies Boards and at Faculty Academic Experience Committee to identify good practice which can be shared and problems which need to be addressed. We rely heavily on student input to interpret the results of the NSS and ensure that we make the most appropriate changes.

We encourage students to contact staff either face to face or via email if that have any questions or problems. We are also very keen that our student representatives take a full role in feeding back on the programme. A strong partnership between staff and students is important to us and we will actively seek student feedback when considering developments to modules or the programme.

## SECTION G QUALITY MANAGEMENT

### 46. National subject benchmarks

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education publishes benchmark statements which give guidance as to the skills and knowledge which graduates in various subjects and in certain types of degree are expected to have. These can be found [here](#).

Are there any benchmark statements for this programme?	<b>Yes</b>	
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The subject benchmark(s) for this programme is/are: Media

The QAA also publishes a Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) which defines the generic skills and abilities expected of students who have achieved awards at a given level and with which our programmes align. The FHEQ can be found [here](#).

### 47. How are the quality and standards of the programme assured?

The programme is managed and quality assured through the University's standard processes. Programmes are overseen by Module and Programme Studies Boards which include student representatives. Each year each module leader provides a brief report on the delivery of the module, identifying strengths and areas for development, and the programme team reviews the programme as a whole. The purpose of this is to ensure that the programme is coherent and up-to-date, with suitable progression from one Stage to another, and a good fit (alignment) between what is taught and how students learn and are assessed - the learning outcomes, content and types of teaching, learning and assessment. Student achievement, including progress between Stages of the programme and degree classification, is kept under review. The programme review report is sent to the Faculty Quality Management Sub-Committee which in turn reports issues to the University's Quality Management Sub-Committee (QMSC) and Academic Experience Committee (AEC).

External examiners are appointed to oversee and advise on the assessment of the programme. They ensure that the standards of the programme are comparable with those of similar programmes elsewhere in the UK and are also involved in the assessment process to make sure that it is fair. They are invited to comment on proposed developments to the programme. Their reports are sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) as well as to the Faculty so that issues of concern can be addressed.

All programmes are reviewed by the University on a six-yearly cycle to identify good practice and areas for enhancement. Programmes are revalidated through this review process. These reviews include at least one academic specialist in the subject area concerned from another UK university. The University is subject to external review by the Quality Assurance Agency for

Higher Education on a six-year cycle. Their review reports for Sunderland can be found [here](#).

Further information about our quality processes can be found [here](#).

## **PART B - PROGRAMME REGULATION/S**

**Name of programme:** Mass Communications

**Title of final award:** **BA with Honours**

**Interim awards<sup>1</sup>:** Certificate in Media, Culture and Communication; Diploma in Media, Culture and Communication; Ordinary degree; BA Honours in in Media, Culture and Communication. The BA Honours in is awarded to students who gain a degree under the University's progression regulations but do not meet the additional progression requirements specified below to meet PSRB requirements.

**Accreditation:** N/A

**University Regulation** (please state the relevant University Regulation): *N/A*

**Regulations apply to students commencing their studies from** (please state the date / intake that these regulations will apply to students for each Stage): *N/A*

<b>Regulations apply to students</b>	<b>Date the regulations apply</b>	<b>Intakes affected</b>
Stage 1	2013-14	2013-14
Stage 2	2014-15	2014-15
Stage 3	2015-16	2015-16
Stage 4	?	

### **Stage 1**

**Core modules:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
MAC101	Introduction To Media & Cultural Studies	20
MED122	Introduction To Digital Media Cultures	20
MAC170	Introduction to Film Studies	20

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<sup>1</sup> Same as main award unless agreed otherwise at validation – eg to meet PSRB requirements

### **Optional Modules – up to 60 credits**

Students may choose any stage 1, 2 or 3 modules from within the media practice areas subject to the approval of the Programme Leader and relevant Module Leaders, providing they have the relevant pre-requisite credits or that they can demonstrate evidence of skills appropriate to the module learning outcomes.

#### **Elective Module**

n/a

#### **Progression Regulations**

*There are no programme-specific progression regulations<sup>2</sup>*

### **Stage 2**

#### **Core modules**

Code	Title	Credits
MAC201	Media Studies 1	20
MAC202	Cultural Theory & Popular Culture 1	20
MED217	Academic Research Skills	20

### **Optional Modules – up to 60 credits**

Students may choose any stage 1, 2 or 3 modules from within the media practice areas subject to the approval of the Programme Leader and relevant Module Leaders, providing they have the relevant pre-requisite credits or that they can demonstrate evidence of skills appropriate to the module learning outcomes.

#### **Elective Module**

n/a

#### **Progression Regulations**

*There are no programme-specific progression regulations<sup>3</sup>*

### **Stage 3**

#### **Core modules**

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<sup>2</sup> This will be the norm – university regulations apply

<sup>3</sup> This will be the norm – university regulations apply

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Credits</b>
MAC301	Media Studies 2	20
MAC390	Dissertation & Research Methods	40

### **Optional Modules – up to 60 credits**

Students may choose any stage 1, 2 or 3 modules from within the media practice areas subject to the approval of the Programme Leader and relevant Module Leaders, providing they have the relevant pre-requisite credits or that they can demonstrate evidence of skills appropriate to the module learning outcomes.

### **Elective Module**

n/a

### **Progression Regulations**

*There are no programme-specific progression regulations<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> This will be the norm – university regulations apply