

## **COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**Academic School / Department:** Communications & The Arts

**Programme:** MA in Public Relations and Journalism

**FHEQ Level:** 7

**Course Title:** Extended Professional Research Project

**Course Code:** PRJ 7550

**Total Hours:** 200

Timetabled Hours: 39

Guided Learning Hours: 21

Independent Learning Hours: 140

**Credits:** 20 UK CATS credits

10 ECTS credits

4 US credits

### **Course Description:**

For students working independently on their Masters professional research project. An extended project equivalent to a 15,000- word thesis is offered as an alternative to the internship. The professional research project encourages students to study intensively a topic agreed with a supervisor, and so develop skills and experience which can be applied in work placements or further graduate work. Students apply their knowledge from across the autumn and spring semesters to researching a topic on public relations and journalism, which may relate to their work experience. This course is comprised of intensive and regular meetings on a one- to-one (by appointment) basis with a project supervisor to discuss the progress of research, development and writing.

### **Prerequisites:**

MA Public Relations and Journalism students only.

### **Aims and Objectives:**

- For the supervisor to guide the student, as a junior research colleague, through the research, writing and production of an MA level professional research project of 15,000-words (or the equivalent of)
- For the student to undertake independent/autonomous research on a professional topic which makes a valuable contribution to the field
- To develop professional skills and experience which can be applied in work

placements or further graduate work

**Programme Outcomes:**

By the end of this course successful students will be able to A, B, D, F, G, H:

- A. Demonstrate a deep and systematic understanding of key issues, themes and debates in PR and Journalism, while reflecting on their relationship to empirical evidence and to other relevant disciplines.
- B. Show critical and innovative responses to theories, methodologies and practices in PR and Journalism and their impact on the how the knowledge base is interpreted.
- D. Design and undertake substantial investigations addressing significant areas of practice in PR and Journalism, using selected and appropriate advanced approaches.
- F. Evidence the ability to exercise initiative in organising, pursuing and reflecting upon both supervised and self-directed individual and/or team projects, while accepting full accountability for outcomes.
- G. Show the ability to gather, organise and deploy complex and abstract ideas and diverse information in complex and specialised contexts, while reflecting upon and improving the skills required for effective written and oral communication
- H. Demonstrate the ability for innovative and autonomous learning, normative and ethical reflection, self-evaluation and engagement with disciplinary benchmarks.

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate professional research skills including the application of appropriate methodologies for locating, assessing and interpreting primary sources
- Show professional writing skills
- Display a critical and practical awareness of the ways in which PR and Journalism can be used to meet specific objectives
- Demonstrate a sophisticated critical awareness of ways of evaluating what can be achieved through the use of PR and Journalism

**Indicative Content:**

- Production of a professional research project equivalent to a 15,000-word Masters
- A report, containing professional materials suitably and evidencing:
  - intensive autonomous study of a topic agreed with a supervisor
  - primary professional work making a valuable contribution to the field
  - a coherent argument
  - appropriate, critical use of secondary sources
  - critical self-reflection

**Assessment:**

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and are located at <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

**Teaching Methodology:**

Guided independent study. Initial classes would provide briefing and enable students to commence their own project work. They would thereafter discuss progress in tutorials.

***Indicative Text(s):***

- Rountree, K. *Writing by Degrees: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses and Research Papers*. (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1996).
- Turabian, K.L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Sixth Edition) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996[1937]).

See syllabus for complete reading list

**Change Log for this CSD:**

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Changed word limit to 15,000 words.		
Revision – annual update	May 2023	
Total hours updated	April 2024	