

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	Communications and The Arts
Programme:	MA in Advertising & Public Relations, MSc Digital Marketing with Data Analytics
FHEQ Level:	7
Course Title:	Professional Digital Media Skills
Course Code:	APR 7104
Total Hours:	200
Timetabled Hours:	39
Guided Learning Hours:	21 140
Independent Learning Hours:	20 UK CATS credits
Credits:	10 ECTS credits
	4 US credits

Description:

The course is designed to enhance students' professional skills in the use of digital media. Digital media skills will be studied in context, considering rapid evolution in the field, the business environment, and ethical and legal issues. Students will have opportunities to focus on the use of digital media in public relations and/or advertising but will be expected to display an understanding of both of these disciplines.

Prerequisites:

MA Advertising and Public Relations and MSc Digital Marketing with Data Analytics students only

Aims and Objectives:

- Develop a complex, professional understanding of different ways to create content online, for websites, blogs, social media, mobile platforms and other online outlets.
- Develop an individual online media project, which uses digital media tools and services in a creative, innovative and professional way
- Undertake high level R&D work in online media and develop ideas for online media products or social media strategies which could be applied by real world channels, sites and media outlets

- Present online media ideas with increasing professionalism and confidence
- Critically analyse industry multimedia stories, web sites, blogs and online media outlets and apply the knowledge gained from that analysis
- Reflect upon the context in which online communication is conducted and ethical, regulatory, and legal implications

Programme Outcomes:

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

MA APR: A4; B2; B4; C1; C5; D1; D2

MSc DM DATA: A: 1; 3; 4 B: 2; 3; 4 C: 2; 4 D:1; 2

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:

- Analyse critically industry online content on a variety of platforms and use that analysis to develop a high level strategy for practical and conceptual self-reflection
- Produce well-designed and researched online content, effectively targeted and to tight deadlines
- Critically appraise different types of online digital media/social media/influencer marketing and demonstrate an ability to apply this knowledge in practical and conceptual work
- Present complex ideas for online media products and strategies in a professional way, both in person and online, via blogs and other platforms
- Demonstrate appropriate academic skills in research, critical analysis, and written and oral presentation skills.

Indicative Content:

- Analysis of current cutting edge industry sites and services, focusing on innovative content ideas, interactivity, social media, and their use in PR and advertising
- Using research to develop online media product ideas
- Using social media research to develop online community strategies
- Creating different forms of online media content, from text and image-based blogs to multimedia projects
- Online storytelling and personalization strategies
- Social media influencers and social media advocacy

- Ethical, legal and regulatory issues

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:

Teaching will include interactive lectures, supplemented with a range of audiovisual aids, designed further to develop students' knowledge of the key concepts of professional practice. Guest speakers and activities with external organisations will contribute alternative perspectives and experience. Students will develop their critical understanding of these concepts and their practical application through a range of workshops and group and individual exercises undertaken in class and out of class. Their group and individual exercises, simulations and written work will be discussed in feedback sessions which explore responses to issues arising from professional practice. The teaching will be supplemented with individual tutorials designed to address students' personal needs.

Additionally, Guided Learning Hours (asynchronous online activities) will supplement the curriculum with extra learning content. This may include, but not be limited to: flipped classroom activities, recorded lectures, podcasts, vodcasts, quizzes, and online discussions.

Indicative Text(s):

- Chaffey, D. and Smith, P.R. (2023) *Digital marketing excellence: planning, optimizing and integrating online marketing*. London: Routledge.
- Dhar, S. and Thomson, S. (2023) *A marketer's guide to digital advertising transparency, metrics and money*. London: Kogan Page.
- Frame, A. and Brachotte, G. (2018) *Citizen participation and digital communication in a digital world*. London: Routledge.
- Freberg, K. (2021) *Social media for strategic communication: creative strategies and research-based applications*. 2nd edn. London: Sage.
- Ha, L. (2018) *The audience and business of YouTube and online videos*. Lexington, KY: Lexington Books.
- Hanlon, A. (2022) *Digital marketing: strategic planning & integration*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Hanlon, A. and Tuten, T.L. (2022) *The SAGE handbook of digital marketing*. London: SAGE.
- Jordan-Meier, J. (2023) *The four stages of highly effective crisis management: how to manage the media in the digital age*. 2nd edn. London: Routledge.
- Kingsnorth, S. (2022) *Digital marketing strategy: an integrated approach to online marketing*. London: Kogan Page.
- Murthy, D. (2018) *Twitter: social communication in the Twitter age*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Polity.

Journals

- *Campaign* (the advertising industry's trade magazine). Available at: <http://www.campaignlive.co.uk/news>
- *Ad Age*. Available at: <http://adage.com/>
- *The Drum*. Available at: <http://www.thedrum.com>
- *Marketing Week*. Available at: <http://www.marketingweek.com/>
- *Media Week*. Available at: <http://www.mediaweek.co.uk/>
- *Ad Week*. Available at: <http://www.adweek.com>

Websites

- Adbusters. Available at: <https://adbusters.org> (Accessed: November 2025).
- Advertising Association. Available at: <https://www.adassoc.org.uk> (Accessed: November 2025). The site of the UK Advertising Association, which represents advertisers, media owners and agencies.
- Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA). Available at: <https://www.ipa.co.uk> (Accessed: November 2025). The IPA site, representing all UK agencies.
- World Advertising Research Center (WARC). Available at: <https://www.warc.com> (Accessed: November 2025).
- TED: ideas worth spreading. Available at: <https://www.ted.com> (Accessed: November 2025).
- Wired (n.d.) The long tail. Available at: <https://www.wired.com/wired/archive/12.10/tail.html>
- (Accessed: November 2025).
- Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. Available at: <https://www.canneslions.com> (Accessed: November 2025).
- DataReportal. Available at: <https://www.datareportal.com> (Accessed: November 2025).

See syllabus for complete reading list. Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus.

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Revision 1 – annual update	May 2023	
Total Hours Updated	April 2024	