

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	Communications and The Arts
Programme:	MA Communication for Social Change
FHEQ Level:	7
Course Title:	MA Dissertation
Course Code:	COM 7500
Total Hours:	400
Timetabled Hours:	0
Supervised Learning Hours:	0
Independent Learning Hours:	400
Credits:	
	40 UK CATS credits
	20 ECTS credits
	8 US credits

Course Description:

For students working independently on their Master's thesis. The dissertation 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. The course is comprised of independent research and writing, overseen by thesis supervisor, resulting in production of a 10-12,000 word thesis. Collaborative and supportive dialogue with the supervisor and fellow 'junior research colleagues' will involve advice on the research and writing process, suggestions for resources and research directions, and comments on draft chapters of the thesis.

Prerequisites:

MA Communication for Social Change students only

Aims and Objectives:

- For the student to work with the supervisor, as their mentor, through the research, writing and production of an MA level thesis of 10-12,000 words
- For the student to undertake independent/autonomous research on a topic which makes a valuable contribution to the field

- To develop skills and experience which can be applied in the work placements or further graduate work

Programme Outcomes:

A1, A2, A3, B1, B3, B4, C2, C5, D3, D4

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

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

- Deploy sophisticated analysis using relevant conceptual frameworks, demonstrating critical thinking
- Design and conduct successful and original research, including application of appropriate methodologies for locating, assessing and interpreting primary sources
- Show excellent writing skills including logical and structured narratives and arguments supported by relevant primary and secondary evidence
- Demonstrate critical self-reflection through a sustained research project

Indicative Content:

- production of a 10-12,000 word thesis, suitably illustrated, evidencing:
- intensive autonomous study of a topic agreed with a supervisor
- primary research making a valuable contribution to the field
- a coherent argument
- appropriate, critical use of secondary sources
- footnotes and a bibliography complying with the Chicago Manual Style
- satisfactory presentation and scholarly apparatus

Assessment:

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

Teaching Methodology:

Autonomous research and research supervision.

The course will require independent research overseen by a thesis supervisor, tutorial

opportunities including working with specialist faculty for more specific academic guidance, including comments on draft materials, and faculty and peer review feedback.

Indicative Text(s):

- Joyner, R. L. *Writing the winning thesis or dissertation: a step-by-step guide*. (Corwin 2018).
- Nygaard, L.P. *Writing Your Master’s Thesis: From A to Zen* (SAGE, 2017).
- Turabian, K.L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, These, and Dissertations* (Ninth Edition) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018).
- Wallace, M., Wray, A. *Critical reading and writing for postgraduates*. Fourth ed. (SAGE 2021).

Journals

Web Sites

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
First edition	January 2024	