

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES INCLUDING LTPC

Academic School/Department: **Communications, Arts and Social Sciences**

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

Level: **7**

Course Title: **Public Relations Practice**

Course Code: **APR 7101**

Course Leader:

Student Engagement Hours: **200**

Lectures: 12

Tutorials: 12

Workshops & practical sessions: 36

Independent/Guided Learning: 140

Semester: **AUTUMN**

Credits: **20 UK CATS credits**

10 ECTS credits

4 US credits

Course description

This course explores the fundamental principles and tools involved in the professional practice of public relations, with a particular focus on media relations and third party

endorsement, although other PR specialisms are also covered. It introduces students to differences in key sectors in the practice of public relations including government and industry, politics and public sector, third and voluntary sectors, and reputational management for organisations and individuals. It offers a thorough critical overview of the typical practice of public relations across sectors, including their interrelationship, and enables and encourages students to apply practical tools with confidence. It relates the practice of public relations to international events and contemporary issues.

Pre-requisites: MA Advertising and Public Relations students only

Aims and objectives

- To explore critically key aspects of the practice of public relations.
- To develop insight and critical understanding into the role of the media in the practice of public relations and develop appropriate skills for media relations.
- To develop and review professional skills in the research techniques, critical analysis, creative work and written and oral presentation skills used in public relations practice.
- To develop a sophisticated understanding of the role of creativity, teamwork, group commitment and cooperation in professional public relations practice.
- To consider the role of media relations and other forms of PR activity in public, private and third sector organisations, and to understand the functions involved in managing the communications needs of both organisations and individuals in brand, reputation, marketing and media relations functions.
- To take into account, and distinguish PR from, advertising practice, which students study simultaneously.

Programme Outcomes

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

- C. Demonstrate a deep, systematic and innovative ability to adapt and apply the practice of PR to multiple contexts

- D. Design and undertake substantial investigations addressing significant areas of practice in PR, 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

Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of key aspects of the practice of public relations.
- Show an understanding into the role of the media in the practice of public relations and display appropriate skills for media relations work.
- Display professional skills in the research techniques, critical analysis, creative work and written and oral presentation skills used in public relations practice.
- Demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the role of creativity, teamwork, group commitment and cooperation in professional public relations practice.
- Show a comprehensive understanding of the role of media relations and other forms of PR activity in public, private and third sector organisations, and to understand the functions involved in managing the communications needs of both organisations and individuals in brand, reputation, marketing and media relations functions.
- Demonstrate an ability to distinguish PR from advertising practice.

Indicative Content:

- Different roles of public relations in varying contexts – including the private, public and not-for-profit sectors
- Interrelationship of public relations and journalism
- Relationship of public relations professionals to other management functions
- Current practices and developments in public relations across all platforms, including the role of PR in relation to new media
- Legal, ethical and regulatory concerns
- Public relations tools including creative thinking, press pitching and briefing and use of social media

- Written skills including press releases, articles, blogs and email
- Visual tools including publicity materials, photo opportunities
- Events such as press conferences and presentations

Assessment:

The course is assessed according to the assessment norms of the university at level 7:

FHEQ level	Richmond/UK Level	Normal Number of Items (including final exam)	Total Assessment
LEVEL 7	R7000/UK MA	2-3	5,000 – 7,000 words

Teaching Methodology:

Teaching will include interactive lectures, supplemented with a range of audiovisual aids, designed to introduce students to 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 presentations 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.

Bibliography

Henslowe, P, *Public Relations – A Practical Guide to the Basics* (Kogan Page, 2003)

Kitchen, P, *Public Relations and Practice* (Thomson Learning, 1997)

Morris, T. and Goldsworthy, S. *PR Today: The Authoritative Guide to Public Relations*, (Palgrave, 2012).

Theaker, A, *Public Relations Handbook* (Routledge, 2011)