



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Programme Specification

A statement of the knowledge, understanding and skills
that underpin a taught programme of study leading to an
award from
The University of Sheffield

1	Programme Title	Journalism Studies
2	Programme Code	JNLU01
3	JACS Code	P500
4	Level of Study	Undergraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons))
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	Level 6
6a	Intermediate Qualification(s)	Not applicable
6b	QAA FHEQ Level	Not applicable
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Sciences
9	Department	Journalism Studies
10	Other Departments providing credit bearing modules for the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	3 years
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	National Council for the Training of Journalists Periodicals Publishers Association
14	Date of production/revision	October 2022

15. Background to the programme and subject area

Journalism is one of the ways that society informs itself and one of the ways in which power might be held to account. Journalists find and provide the information, evidence and arguments that empower people to debate boundaries and disagreements and contribute to social discussion. The expansion, in quantity and influence, of all media forms – print, broadcast and online – over the past decade or so have made undergraduate journalism programmes very popular. Sheffield's programme is distinctive in the quality of its students, its location in a research-led department where research contributes significantly to teaching, and its multi-media, digitally embedded course content. Students have the opportunity to work with print, radio, television, magazine and online media with state of the art, industry standard technology. It is an intensive programme that combines rigorous professional training with perspectives on the role and operation of the media derived from sociology, political science, political psychology, computer science, history, ethics, literature and law. The intention is not only to prepare students for careers in the media, but to provide transferable skills in research, communication, verification, independence of mind and resilience and to give students the ability to articulate their knowledge and to engage critically with their practice. It seeks to extend students beyond media skills toward an intellectually based multi-media fluency to create reflective and responsible media practitioners with high ethical standards who know the difference between fact and opinion and the place of both in good journalism. Students have the opportunity to undertake periods of work placement and may also have the opportunity to spend a year abroad, or a year in industry. The programme is accredited by two journalism accrediting bodies, the National Council for the Training of Journalists and the Professional Publishers Association.

16. Programme aims

The programme of study has been designed to offer comprehensive education and training in journalism, inculcating professional skills alongside scholarly appraisal of the social, political, geographic, legal, ethical and regulatory factors that impact and influence the journalism environment. Professional skills provide a key thread of the programme, comprising incremental teaching of journalistic knowledge and skills. Beginning with simple story-telling techniques, students acquire the cognitive discipline, writing fluency and production expertise to produce compelling, polished narratives in print broadcast, magazine and online media. Simultaneously, students consider contemporary issues affecting and informing journalism. The aim is to give students the ability to interpret as well as report, to project as well as reflect ideas.

In summary, the programme will:

- provide students with a broad understanding of journalism as a subject of academic inquiry and an arena of professional practice;
- provide research-led teaching in journalism which reflects and critiques current scholarly work of relevance to the journalism environment;
- provide students with opportunities to develop specialist knowledge of journalism and the broader media context within which journalism operates;
- develop students' critical knowledge and consideration of theoretical and conceptual issues which are central to journalism;
- develop in students a range of subject specific and generic skills relevant and appropriate to a journalist in print, broadcast, magazine and online;
- foster high ethical and professional standards.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding:

K1	Of the social, political and historical context of journalism as well as contemporary issues in journalism.
K2	Of law, ethics, regulation and codes of practice applicable to journalism.
K3	Of the role of journalism and journalists in society.
K4	Of the structures, roles and social responsibilities of local and national government.
K5	Of professional practices within journalism.
K6	Of journalism in an international context.
K7	Of ways to approach the study of journalism products and processes.

Skills and other attributes:

S1	Core journalism skills including researching, reporting, writing and interviewing combined with the application of professional, legal, ethical and regulatory concepts.
S2	The ability to interrogate and analyse information for its veracity, provenance, authority and credibility.
S3	The technical skills to publish in a variety of media including magazines, newspapers, radio, television and online.
S4	The ability to adapt to various modes of working both independently and collaboratively.
S5	The ability to initiate, develop and execute distinctive and creative work.
S6	Advanced written and verbal communication skills.
S7	Self-reflection, resilience, self-reliance and critical thinking.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

Development of the learning outcomes is promoted through the following teaching and learning methods:

Learning and teaching methods in the department embrace lectures, seminars and workshops to develop conceptual understanding which is then applied and reinforced through live production, where students must engage with society. Reflection on that engagement is brought back into the classroom through seminars. Blended and flipped learning applies throughout the programme so that students also learn through bespoke online resources.

	Lectures	Seminars	Workshops	Online resources	Quizzes	Tutorials / Supervision	Live production
K1	x	x		x			x
K2	x	x		x	x		x
K3	x	x					x
K4	x		x	x	x		
K5	x	x					x
K6	x		x			x	
K7	x	x	x	x			
S1			x	x		x	x
S2	x		x			x	x
S3			x	x			x
S4			x			x	x
S5			x			x	x
S6			x			x	x
S7		x				x	x

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes are provided through the following assessment methods:

	Essays	Written Exams	Project work	Case study	Group work
K1	x	x		x	
K2	x	x	x	x	
K3	x	x	x	x	
K4		x	x		
K5	x		x		x
K6			x	x	x
K7			x	x	
S1			x		x
S2	x				x
S3			x		
S4	x		x	x	x
S5	x	x	x		x

S6	x		x	x	x
S7	x		x		x

19. Reference points

The learning outcomes have been developed to reflect the following points of reference:

QAA Subject Benchmark Statement

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements/honours-degree-subjects>

University Learning and Teaching Strategy 2016-2021

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/staff/learning-teaching/our-approach/strategy2016-21>

Sheffield Graduate Attributes

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/sheffieldgraduate>

Department Strategy and annual plan

Departmental research profiles

Feedback from external examiners

Department of Journalism Studies Advisory Board

National Council for the Training of Journalists Accreditation requirements

Periodicals Publishers Association Accreditation requirements

20. Programme structure and regulations

The programme is structured to combine doing journalism with critical, contextual analysis of its products and processes, codes and conventions. Its underlying philosophy is that there are basic journalism skills common to all publishing platforms and the structure seeks to apply those skills to differing demands of newspapers, magazines, radio, television and online. The structure recognises that journalists need to engage with the world around them and make connections between the 'how' and the 'why' of journalism. Some elements in the programme meet the specific requirements of employers and professional bodies, including law and shorthand, Others build on that foundation to introduce students, for example, to the demands of investigative journalism, feature-writing and documentary production.

At Level 1 all students follow a prescribed programme of study comprising of Essential Journalism 1 (120 credits) which runs throughout autumn and spring semesters, considered a foundation module to link practical skills with academic theory and introduction to study skills. This integrated course is designed for students to see the connections between the academic study and practical application of Journalism.

At Level 2 students will take an academic year long module entitled Live News Production (60 credits), along with Media Law for Journalists (20 credits) in the Autumn semester. In the Spring semester students will choose between Reporting Justice (20 credits) and Introduction to PR for Journalists (20 credits). In addition, students have a degree of freedom to choose 20 credits from a range of optional modules in journalism studies including modules on data-driven journalism and investigative journalism for example. Students can, should they wish, take 20 credits of unrestricted choice from either within, or outside of, the Department of Journalism Studies instead. All students are required to pass the module 'Media Law for Journalists' to proceed to Level 3.

At Level 3, students will take the academic year long module Magazine Journalism (40 credits) and will be able to select 20 credits from either Specialist Reporting or Television and Radio Live Production, both delivered in the Autumn semester. In addition, students have a degree of freedom to choose 20 credits from a range of optional modules in journalism studies including modules on the history of journalism and free speech for example. Students can, should they wish, take 20 credits of unrestricted choice from either within, or outside of, the Department of Journalism Studies instead. Students' studies will culminate in the Final Project (40 credits) which will be delivered throughout level 3.

The programme includes modules derived from the department's research interests, however the department's research interests are represented within the core modules through team teaching, which also allows students to decide which aspects of journalism's relationship to the world they wish to explore in more depth. The

intention is to equip students with an awareness of the importance of the media and an understanding of many fundamental contemporary issues. Students also study principles and ethics intrinsic to journalism in the expectation that they will become accomplished professionals committed to improving standards.

Detailed information about the structure of programmes, regulations concerning assessment and progression and descriptions of individual modules are published in the University Calendar available online at <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/calendar/>.

21. Student development over the course of study

At Level 1 students are introduced to basic journalistic principles and practice. The emphasis in the early stages of the course is on generic editorial and basic technical journalism skills, relevant to all media forms, how to write for the media, how to research, gather, organise and structure information, and then how to present it in an accessible way. Students are introduced to issues that journalists typically face in terms of law, regulation and ethics and they learn about the organisation of national and local government. They are taught the skill of accurate note-taking in shorthand classes. Workshops are structured to represent newsroom activity. The course begins to develop skills of resilience, self-reliance and initiative by allocating students a geographic area of Sheffield and the near region where they are expected to develop contacts and gather stories. They are also introduced to methods of critically analysing news products and processes while a week-long programme of lectures and seminars introduces them to an international perspective. Students will also receive an hour lecture each week on study skills, also embracing self-care and where to access support.

In the second year generic skills are developed and applied more specifically to print, broadcast and online forms. There are opportunities to explore the use of data in journalism, to consider more theoretical approaches to analysing journalism, to explore more deeply the relationship between journalism and politics and to take on their own journalistic investigation. Students learn media law and courts reporting law. They write their stories in the newsroom and receive critical feedback as they develop their skills through production days that simulate professional newsrooms as closely as possible. They are introduced to long form feature writing for magazines and have the opportunity to write for magazines designed and created by Level 3 students.

In the third year students are applying a full range of skills to a greater range of publishing outputs, and are putting them into practice independently. Students are encouraged to develop different writing styles and in groups research, design and produce a magazine brand, commissioning second year students to provide some of the content. They reflect on a range of journalism issues and can choose to undertake either a print, broadcast or online portfolio or a dissertation. Where they choose to present their final project as a piece of journalism, there is a requirement for critical evaluation and analysis of their work.

Throughout the programme students have access to a department wide vibrant series of guest lectures from senior industry figures who engage students with different aspects of journalism. Work experience provides the opportunity to engage in journalism in the workplace and students also have the opportunity to spend a year abroad. The department's specialist newsrooms simulate an environment that is as close as possible to professional newsrooms and facilitates constant formative feedback from peers and lecturers.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available from the University's Online Prospectus at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/courses/>.

Candidates for admission should also demonstrate

- An interest in gaining journalistic skills and knowledge;
- Some evidence of understanding the media, e.g. from work experience.

23. Additional information

There are no additional costs attached to the programme, which also prepares students for a first attempt at external examinations set by the National Council for the Training of Journalists. These costs are met by the department.

This specification represents a concise statement about the main features of the programme and should be considered alongside other sources of information provided by the teaching department(s) and the University. In addition to programme specific information, further information about studying at The University of Sheffield can be accessed via our Student Services web site at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssid>.