

**Kingston
University**
London



Journalism PgDip/MA and MFA

■ **FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

www.kingston.ac.uk/pgjournalism www.kingston.ac.uk/pgjournalismmfa

About the Journalism PgDip/MA

Course overview

Journalism is one of the most absorbing and satisfying careers on offer today. With competition for sought-after journalism jobs fiercer than ever, growing numbers of employers are demanding a postgraduate journalism qualification as evidence of commitment and ability. Our NCTJ-accredited postgraduate programme in journalism is designed to equip you with the practical and critical skills you need to succeed in this intensely competitive industry, as well as offering you an industry-recognised qualification.

Professional accreditation

Kingston is one of only two universities in London that offers an NCTJ-accredited postgraduate journalism course.

The nine-month postgraduate diploma in journalism is accredited by the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), whose qualifications are a passport to a wide range of journalism jobs. You will take the NCTJ's exams as part of the course.

What you will study

The postgraduate diploma runs over two semesters, from September to May. You will study four modules in each semester.

The diploma is an intensive, practical course covering all the core skills you will need, including news and feature writing, online journalism, shorthand, media law, and producing a regular newspaper website. Once you have achieved your diploma, you can continue on to complete your masters degree, researching and writing a dissertation or carrying out an equivalent work-based practical project.

Work placement

Your work placement will give you the chance to apply your skills in a real newsroom and make important industry contacts. Current Kingston journalism students have taken full advantage of the University's London location to work at national daily and Sunday newspapers, and on high-profile glossy magazines.

Where you do your work placement is up to you. Kingston is just 25 minutes from central London, home to all the country's national daily newspapers, big circulation magazines and cutting-edge online news operations. MA students have undertaken work placements with a wide variety of local, regional and national newspapers, magazines and online media – ranging from the *Financial Times*, *Independent on Sunday* and *Daily Express* to *Time Out* and BBC Online. Students have also undertaken successful and stimulating jobs outside the UK; for example, at *7 Days*, a Dubai daily newspaper; Agence France Presse, the French news agency in Paris; Seychelles Broadcasting; and *United Daily News*, Taiwan.

Top-quality teaching and facilities

All our tutors are practising journalists with a wide range of experience in newspapers, magazines and online. Kingston also runs a stimulating programme of guest speakers, inviting top journalists to meet journalism students on a regular basis. Past speakers have included *Guardian* feature writers, Simon Hattenstone and Decca Aitkenhead; Gill Hudson, editor of *Reader's Digest* and former editor of *Radio Times*; campaigning journalist John Pilger; Simon Kanter, editorial director of Haymarket Publishing; and Jon Snow of Channel 4 News.

The Journalism department has a dedicated newsroom, fully equipped with industry-standard PCs, web design uploading and layout software, phone lines, digital TV and PA newsfeed. You will work on RiverOnline, the web version of Kingston's campus newspaper, *The River*, which won Publication of the Year in the Guardian Student Media Awards 2010, and has been nominated for the award again this year (2011). Working in both print and online media will give you valuable experience in the convergent, multimedia skills for which employers are increasingly looking.

Careers

Graduates of Kingston's Journalism MA have gone on to work for the Telegraph Media Group, BBC Breakfast News, *Time Out*, and various newspapers, ranging from the Luton and Dunstable *Herald & Post* to the *Phuket Post* in Thailand. Recent graduates are working as subeditors at *Times Online*, Channel 4 News, and the *Daily Express*; as reporters on trade magazines and local newspapers; as online editorial staff; and as researchers.

Course content

The exact breakdown and content of modules is subject to occasional revision based on industry and academic scrutiny – examples are below.

Journalism Practices reflects on the wide range of attributes required of journalists, and examines the practical and ethical issues they face. Attention will be paid to everything from the day-to-day mechanics of journalism and the 'culture' and jargon of newsrooms, to the ethical and legal constraints within which magazines operate.

News Writing teaches you how to be a good newsreporter, equipping you with the ability to write clear, concise and accurate stories to tight deadlines for newspapers, magazines and websites.

The News Business examines the history of newspapers and journalism, how newspaper culture is changing, and how traditional print media is handling the challenge of online news.

Journalism and the Law – How far can you go before you risk being on the receiving end of a libel writ? This module teaches you core media law skills that are vital for any working journalist. In addition to the laws of libel and defamation, it covers contempt of court, privacy, confidentiality, copyright and breach of confidence.

Journalists and Government covers the function and role of local and central government; the relationship between elected politicians and voters; the UK's position in global politics and its relationship with pan-national organisations like the EU, Nato and the UN; and the changing nature of funding of key services like the NHS.

Hands-On Journalism enables you to work in groups to produce a print newspaper and website, learning first-hand the skills of reporting, editing, layout, web design and how to upload copy and images using content management systems. You will take it in turns to act as editor and supporting staff, commissioning and editing articles. You will also undertake a work placement on a periodical of your choice.

Shorthand classes help you to gain your NCTJ preliminary certificate.

Dissertation – If you continue on to do your MA, you will work on your dissertation or project from May to September.

Special features

- As well as acquiring practical skills, this course will engage you in discussion and debate about the state and future of journalism and the industry, and the legal, political and ethical context in which journalists operate.
- This course will put you in a strong position to get your first journalism job.
- The course is run in conjunction with the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), and the syllabus follows the requirements of the NCTJ certificate.
- On successful completion of the course, you will achieve both a Kingston University postgraduate qualification and an industry-recognised NCTJ qualification.

Teaching staff

Sara McConnell (director of the MA Journalism) is a former personal finance correspondent and deputy personal finance editor of *The Times*. She is now an award-winning freelance journalist writing for a range of newspapers and websites, including the *Evening Standard*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Observer*, *The Daily Mail*, the *Guardian*, *Times Online* and *Guardian Unlimited*. She has also worked for *Times Online* editing the site's student and education pages.

Brian Cathcart (professor of journalism) – in a journalism career of more than 30 years working for Reuters, the *New Statesman* and the *Independent* papers, among others, Brian has been a foreign correspondent, a subeditor, a columnist, a deputy editor, a feature writer, a blogger and a freelance contributor. He is also the author of several books, including *The Case of Stephen Lawrence* (1999); *Jill Dando, Her life and Death* (2001); and *The Fly in the Cathedral* (2004). In recent years, Brian has been advisor to the House of Commons media select committee and was one of the founders of the Hacked Off campaign, pressing for exposure of the facts about the phone hacking scandal and for the lessons for the press to be learned.

Beth Brewster (director of studies in journalism) has been a features and deputy editor both on magazines and newspapers. She has had features published in national and international magazines, including *The Sunday Times*, *The Observer*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The New York Times*, *Traveller*, *World*, *Expressions*, *Vanity Fair* and *The Arts Review*. She is the author of *Victorian Paintings: A British Gallery Guide* (Channel 4 publications), and has had a play, *The Timekeeper*, produced by BBC Television.

James Morrison (senior lecturer) is a former arts and media correspondent of the *Independent on Sunday* (where he was shortlisted for a British Press Award) and has also worked at the *Daily Mail* and the national news agency, the Press Association. He has been course leader of four NCTJ diplomas, works as a media trainer for the Periodical Publishers' Association and the British Council, and is a member of the NCTJ's public affairs exam board. He continues to write for a variety of newspapers and magazines, including the *Guardian* and the *Independent*, and is the author of the set text for the NCTJ local and central government modules, *Essential Public Affairs for Journalists* (Oxford University Press).

Dan Townend, a veteran of the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express* news desks, knows the very sharp end of tabloid journalism and has been involved in covering some of the biggest events of the past decade. He was also associate editor of *The Sportsman* and has worked as a reporter and news editor for two of the country's biggest news agencies. Like many on the department's staff, he continues to freelance (when he has time) for a range of national newspapers, magazines and websites, and he is also the author of *Sports Spread Betting: An Insider's Guide*. Dan lectures media law on the Journalism MA.

Lucy Smy edited or wrote for almost every section of the *Financial Times* in her 14 years on the paper. She started work at the *FT* as a night subeditor while studying part-time during the day for her masters. She then moved to the world desk, first subediting and designing pages, then becoming a news editor. She has reported from Germany, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. She finally moved to the 'engine room' of the paper as a companies news reporter. Lucy, who runs the online news operation RiverOnline and teaches business journalism, was at the *FT* when it began the successful and pioneering process of converging its print and online operations.

Maurice Walsh is the author of *The News from Ireland: Foreign Correspondents and the Irish Revolution*, which was a TLS 'Book of the Year' choice for 2008. An award-winning documentary maker, he has reported for the BBC from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the United States and Europe. His essays, reviews and reportage have appeared in *Granta*, the *London Review of Books*, the *Dublin Review*, the *New Statesman*, and many other newspapers in the UK, Ireland and the US. He was Alistair Horne Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford in 2010/11, and Knight Wallace Fellow at the University of Michigan in 2001.



About the Journalism MFA

Course overview

This course – the first of its kind in the UK – combines academic study and research with journalistic training to an advanced level.

The first phase of the MFA is designed to equip you with the personal and professional skills needed to progress to a senior level in this intensely competitive industry. For more information, please see the section on the left about the Journalism MA programme.

The second phase will provide you with an opportunity to work on a book-length manuscript of non-fiction or a portfolio of reportage within a supportive community of resident journalists and guest professionals. It will also give you the opportunity to enhance your chances of a career as a university lecturer by completing our Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

All staff members teaching on this course are practising journalists with a wide range of journalistic and publishing experience and contacts in newspapers, publishing (print and online) and magazines.

You may apply for the two-year MFA or for direct entry to the second year of the course, which will follow completion of an MA in Journalism or Magazine Journalism (either at Kingston University or elsewhere in the UK or abroad).

What you will study

The MFA is split into two stages: Stage 1 is an MA in Journalism or Magazine Journalism; and Stage 2 is the MFA.

At Stage 1 you will complete an MA in Journalism – please see the Journalism MA section (left) for more information.

Stage 2 (the MFA) is assessed by a 40,000-word dissertation and a professional practice 'log'. You will benefit from one-to-one supervision from an experienced journalist, backed by self-directed research, non-assessed seminars and workshops, and a vibrant extracurricular programme featuring guest journalists, non-fiction writers and masterclasses, all enhanced by similar programmes associated with our MFA in Creative Writing and MA in Publishing.

Course content

Please note that this list of modules is indicative and not intended to be definitive. For more information on the modules offered, please refer to the course webpage.

Core modules

Advanced Writing Project will provide you with one-to-one supervision over a substantial period of time to produce an extended piece or collection of pieces of journalism to publishable quality. The module is assessed through an advanced piece of journalism of approximately 40,000 words that may take the form of a single sustained piece of writing or a collection of related pieces plus a 4,500 word portfolio of critical reports on assigned texts.

Practical Journalism Project enables you to carry out research while undertaking an internship within a media organisation or carrying out journalistic activities such as pitching and writing freelance articles. You will work independently to conceive, plan and implement a work-related project achievable within a set timeframe.

Multi-Media Reporting is designed to build up your newswriting skills, develop your ability to write news for both print and online media and work as a multiskilled reporter. During the module you will work on finding stories, researching, identifying sources, interviewing and producing clearly written, accurate and lively copy.

Hands-On Journalism – see Journalism PgDip/MA modules for details.

Journalism and the Law – see Journalism PgDip/MA modules for details.

Journalism Practices – see Journalism PgDip/MA modules for details.

The News Business – see Journalism PgDip/MA modules for details.

Journalists and Government – see Journalism PgDip/MA modules for details.

Shorthand – see Journalism PgDip/MA modules for details.

Option modules

Dissertation (Journalism) – the aim of this module is to accumulate experience and refine research techniques and methodologies that may be applied to a variety of news story types and news themes. You will be encouraged to participate in this, though it will not be a requirement.

Business Journalism will develop your skills in the researching and writing of City, economics, business and consumer finance news and features for the specialist and national press. You will learn how to interpret statistics, balance sheets and accounts, and use these to dig behind the façade to uncover real stories about corporate wrongdoing and misuse of private and public funds.

Arts and Entertainment Journalism looks in depth at the wider arena of arts journalism. It examines the importance of interviews, profiles, reviews and listings, the role of broadsheet arts supplements, and the growth of specialist publications focusing on fine art, literature, film and music.

Sports Journalism will introduce you to the basics of sports journalism. This is largely a practical course aimed at helping you to develop your writing and reporting skills to produce professional sports articles, including match reports, comment and sports news stories.

Research areas

Research areas can be determined by individual students but may include:

- investigative journalism, involving inductive first-hand research and/or undercover reporting;
- 'new journalism' and/or travel or life writing, involving experiential research and critical reflection; and
- primary and secondary research for a biography, book or another extended piece of journalism.

Special features

- All our tutors are practising journalists with a wide range of experience in newspapers, magazines and online.
- You will benefit from one-to-one supervision from an experienced journalist and lecturer, backed by self-directed research and seminars.
- The course includes a compulsory work placement with a professional journalism organisation.
- You will have the opportunity to study for a Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education alongside your journalism studies.

Student success stories

Jody Houton (Journalism MA graduate, 2009 – now editor of the *Phuket Post* in Thailand)

“Since finishing my MA in journalism at Kingston, I have managed to find a full-time job and, most importantly, feel confident in my role.”

“The individual modules and courses were well designed to encapsulate the changing face of journalism, from working and producing content for online purposes, to writing and designing pages for print. Learning shorthand has also been an invaluable skill to acquire.”

“As part of the course, every student will learn the elements of law as it applies to journalists, and also learn about local and central government.”

“The course is set up to prepare you to enter the field of journalism, and help will be provided to gain work experience and put you in touch with valuable contacts. The tutors were acclaimed journalists and very approachable, I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Kingston University.”

Felicity Baker (Journalism MA graduate, 2009 – live broadcast assistant, BBC Breakfast News)

“I started work as a broadcast assistant for BBC Breakfast News in May 2009. I had no broadcast experience before I took the job, so I walked into Television Centre on my first day with no idea what to expect. I work mainly in planning, which involves deciding what stories we’ll cover on the show, organising the technicalities of filming, choosing guests to come into the studio, writing the briefs and autocues for the presenters, organising transport, editing clips for the next morning’s show; the list goes on! The best moment so far was when I was the producer on an interview our presenter Charlie Stayt did with Penelope Cruz.”

“I definitely would not have got this job without doing the Kingston MA Journalism course. I referred to the work I did on RiverOnline in every answer during my BBC interview, because it’s such a great way to show what you can achieve under pressure and when working as part of a team. The Hands-On module also taught me the importance of checking every detail over and over again, because there’s no room for mistakes once you’re working. The Law and Government modules have also helped me, and I use what I learnt on them without even realising it most of the time, particularly when thinking of potential guests to bring on the show and knowing if we can legally cover stories without any risk of repercussions.”

Jamal Osman (Journalism BA graduate, 2009 – producer and Africa correspondent, Channel 4 News)

“At the end my first year, I started contributing to my local newspapers, the Wandsworth Guardian and South London Press. After freelancing for various newspapers in different countries in my second year, I started working with Channel 4 News.”

“My job involves everything about television newsmaking: developing stories, researching, filming, interviewing, producing, etc. The first story that I worked on was in the Ogaden region of eastern Ethiopia, and was shortlisted for an Amnesty International Award and is up for another one. Since I did that programme, I have produced six investigative pieces, which take a few weeks each to complete. I usually travel to dangerous places to meet characters who are extraordinary in their own right. For example, I interviewed pirates in the Village of Eyl in Somalia; Hassan Turki, who is on the US ‘terror list’; and individuals in Kenya who supply children to paedophiles from the West.”

Student feedback

Patrick Smith (Journalism MA graduate, 2008 – now junior content editor for Telegraph Media Group)

“Launching Kingston University’s online newspaper RiverOnline undoubtedly gave me a tremendous platform from which to develop as a journalist in the 21st century. It was brilliant for me and it taught me the skills I use day-to-day.”

“During my course I was fortunate enough to get work experience with several media organisations such as The Daily Telegraph. After finishing two successful spells of work experience there, I was offered a full-time position on the TV desk. I now regularly write about TV, sport, music and film. Having grasped a good understanding of media law from my seminars at Kingston, I am also confident when subbing some of the Telegraph’s more controversial writers.”

“The tutors at Kingston were always zestful in their approach and supportive (from my initial application sent from my travels in Vietnam to finally providing me with the reference for the Telegraph). Most importantly, they always treated us more like colleagues, and for that I am hugely grateful.”



Journalism PgDip/MA

Entry requirements

- A good honours degree (2:1 or above), or equivalent, in an essay-writing subject, demonstrating high standards of literacy
- Evidence of substantial and demonstrable professional commitment to journalism

International students

All non-UK applicants must meet our English language requirements. For this course it is IELTS of 6.5 overall with 7.5 in Writing and special conditions for students who require a Tier 4 student visa. Please make sure you read our full guidance about English language requirements on the course webpage, which includes details of other qualifications we'll consider.

Duration

The course is run over two levels and in conjunction with the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ). Completion of the first level (nine months) will result in the award of a postgraduate diploma in journalism. If you go on to successfully complete a dissertation, you will be awarded an MA in journalism after one year. Part-time MA students will study over a period of two years.

Attendance/delivery

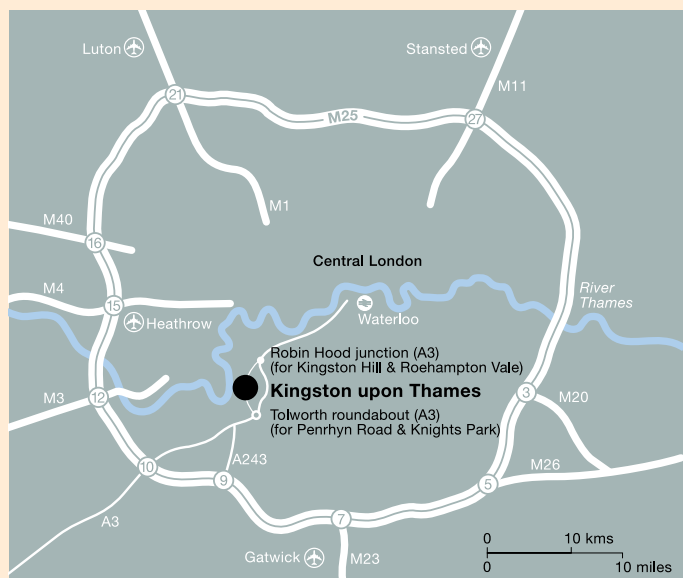
Full-time students will be expected to attend 22 hours of classes per week, and part-time students will attend 11 hours of classes per week.

Assessment

Assessment will be both practical and academic. You will be required to submit a portfolio of news and features and demonstrate practical journalism skills such as layout and subediting. Your work placement will be assessed by a portfolio and a piece of reflective writing. As well as completing assignments leading to a Kingston University postgraduate diploma or MA, you will also take the external examinations set by the NCTJ, leading to the award of the NCTJ Preliminary Certificate.

Location

Located beside the River Thames, Kingston University is within the London travel-pass zone. Easily accessible from surrounding areas such as Surrey and Middlesex, its local train stations (Kingston; Surbiton) are also only 25 minutes from London Waterloo.



Journalism MFA

Entry requirements

Stage 1

Applicants will need:

- a good honours degree (2:1 or above) or equivalent in an essay-writing subject, demonstrating high standards of literacy; or
- evidence of substantial and demonstrable professional commitment to journalism.

Stage 2

Applicants will need:

- to have completed Stage 1 of the MFA; or
- an MA in Journalism or Magazine Journalism; or
- sufficient experience of professional journalism.

International students

All non-UK applicants must meet our English language requirements. For this course it is IELTS of 6.5 overall with 7.5 in Writing and special conditions for students who require a Tier 4 student visa. Please make sure you read our full guidance about English language requirements on the course webpage, which includes details of other qualifications we'll consider.

Duration

- Two years full time or four years part time, following completion of a suitable first degree
- One year full time or two years part time, following completion of the MA in journalism or an equivalent masters-level qualification

Attendance/delivery

Full-time students will be expected to attend University one or two days per week, while part-time students will attend for one day/evening per week. The study commitment varies depending on which course you take, but may include evening, weekend or day-release sessions and can vary from semester to semester.

Assessment

A 40,000-word advanced dissertation project, taking the form of an original piece of journalistic writing



Further information

Contact details

Please contact the Faculty's Admissions Office with any further queries.

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