

**Kingston  
University**  
London



# Media and Communication MA

■ FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

[www.kingston.ac.uk/pgmediacommunication](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/pgmediacommunication)

## About the course

### Course overview

This MA course in Media and Communication is designed for those who want to gain a sophisticated insight into the role and function of media in contemporary society. The course focuses on the centrality of modern media forms and practices in our daily communication, and examines the ways in which they facilitate and constrain the way we communicate with each other.

### What you will study

The course offers a variety of core and option modules. The compulsory core modules offer you comprehensive grounding in the theoretical and empirical approaches to studying media institutions, texts and communication practices, while the option modules enable you to examine various media industries and communication practices within their historical, economic, political and social contexts. The wide range of option modules means that you can specialise in research areas that interest you within this broad field. You will explore, among other things, how the question of power – whether political, economic or cultural – is inextricable from the analysis of media, and will focus on the ways in which new media technologies have dramatically altered the dissemination and reception of knowledge. You will also look at how mediated language shapes communication.

### Careers

This programme opens up a wide range of potential employment opportunities in the communication and culture industries, in areas such as journalism, broadcasting, information industries, advertising, arts and administration, public relations and media, and, particularly, in management, consultancy, research and administration.



## Special features

- This course provides a sophisticated insight into the role and function of media in contemporary society.
- Option modules allow you to tailor the course to your own interests, and the dissertation gives you the chance to study an area of interest in greater depth and gain valuable research skills.
- Teaching staff are research-active, which keeps your learning at the University cutting-edge and relevant.
- This course is available on a part-time basis to help you fit your studies around other commitments.
- You will have the chance to attend many research seminars and talks with a range of guest speakers, professors and professionals visiting the University.

## Course content

### Core modules

#### Theories of Media and Communication 1

This module is designed to introduce you to the major theoretical and analytical approaches that seek to explain and examine the mass media and communication industries and their effect on society, culture and politics. In doing so, it will explore the historical trajectory of media studies. It will engage you critically and reflectively with key concepts and issues that have been used in these different approaches to understand the effects of media and communication, such as masses, the public sphere or ideology. Contemporary case studies from everyday media will provide you with the opportunity to debate and assess the usability of these concepts.

#### Theories of Media and Communication 2

Following Theories of Media and Communication 1, this module continues to examine the historical trajectory of media studies. In particular, it examines the new debates that have been introduced since the 1990s. Transformation of media and communication technologies, such as digitisation and convergence of different media platforms, as well as the changing social and political context (ie globalisation, relative decline of the nation-states and their control over media systems), have prompted a change in media studies. The focus has been shifting from mass media industries to various studies of media ethnographies that attempt to understand our changing experience of media. A main objective of this module is to assess the content of that change and, through this, to critically reflect upon the emerging theoretical and analytical frameworks in media studies that respond to this change.

#### Media and Communications Research

This core module aims to help you with the different stages of your project: from defining your research hypothesis, to choosing the right methodology for collecting and analysing your data. It will introduce you to the main methods of media research and will equip you with a range of research skills that will enable you to carry out a rigorous, independent and critical research project.

#### Principles of Intercultural Communication

This module will examine the main theoretical concepts, definitions and debates surrounding the interdisciplinary study of intercultural communication. The module engages with the wider issues surrounding the complex notions such as culture, communication, identity and otherness, examining debates around contemporary issues such as aspects of changing behaviour, discrimination, racism, European migration and cultural mix.

#### Dissertation

This module is designed to enable you to demonstrate your ability to undertake a sustained piece of independent research in media and communication at an advanced level. This can either take the form of an original case study or a synthesis of the secondary literature on a substantive topic. The topic of the dissertation can be on any aspect of media and communication, and will be agreed in advance with your supervisors.

### Examples of option modules

#### Questions of Censorship

This module explores the debates on regulation and censorship in various political and cultural contexts. It examines the social factors that have shaped those debates, and considers their implications not only in terms of the consumption of media texts, but also in terms of political power. It takes a theme-based approach, enabling a comparative analysis across cultures through case studies. The implications of new media technologies on censorship and regulation also form a focal point in the analysis of these case studies.

### **Media, Public Policy and International Politics**

This module analyses the relationship between different types of states and media systems, and explores how governments use the media to mobilise public opinion and as early warning systems regarding potential problems of a political, health or security-related nature.

### **Political Communication, Advocacy and Campaigning**

This module looks at government forms of political communication, such as spin, campaigning and censorship; how the media and NGOs, for example, use political communication; and new and/or alternative forms of political communication, such as blogs, citizen journalism and political violence.

### **Culture Jamming and Interactive Advertising**

Culture jamming is the process of subverting or interfering with everyday communications such as advertising. Can you find new ways of using media production tools to explore and assess the value of culture jamming? Alternatively, do you see some value in the innovation of interactive advertising/branding? You will assess the impact of audio, image, narrative, etc in both culture jamming (aka subvertising) and straight advertising.

### **Black Popular Music in Britain 1950 to the Present**

This module will help you research the reception and production of 'Black' popular music in Britain, from 1950 to the present. It will look particularly at the reception, over the decades, of African-American blues, rhythm and blues, soul, funk, hip hop and electronic music. At the same time it will assess the appropriation of African-American and Afro-Caribbean (especially Jamaican) music in British popular music (British blues, blue-eyed soul, white reggae, two-tone and so on) as well as the production of indigenous 'Black' British music (for example, British reggae, lover's rock, hip hop, techno, garage, bhangra, ardkore, drum 'n' bass, RnB, grime, dubstep and so on). The module will look at the subcultures that are associated with the reception of Black music (mods, Northern soul, skinheads, punks and so on) as well as the various British locations that have been marked by the production of Black British music (Birmingham and South London, for example).

### **Diaspora and Ethnic Media**

This module aims to introduce you to the field of ethnic and diaspora media, both in the UK and globally. Through examining several case studies of diverse ethnic and diasporic media outlets, you will gain insight into the recent debate surrounding these media and will be able to assess the role played in connecting diaspora communities. Theoretically, the module will draw on theories of representation, globalisation, public sphere and secularisation versus islamisation of this sphere.

### **Computer-Mediated Communication**

This module will look at computer-mediated communication, ie forms of human-to-human communication afforded by the use of technological media, such as networked computers. We will investigate linguistic, social and cultural aspects of computer-mediated discourse, and apply a range of frameworks and methods to the analysis of online communication. No technical knowledge of computer science or web design is required.

### **National, Global and Cosmopolitanist Media**

This module starts off by exploring the debates around media's role and function in fostering globalisation, particularly examining the global continuum with the 'local' at one end and 'global' at the other. We will be discussing how media sells 'difference' through gastronomy programmes such as Gordon Ramsey's *Great Escape* or Rick Stein's *Odyssey*, and how cosmopolitanism has itself become a commodity. We will discuss how we have witnessed disasters such as 9/11, 7/7 or the tsunami disaster in 2004 unfold in real time, and how such broadcasts might have affected the way we see the world.

### **Creative Media**

This module provides a historical, technological and cultural context to the theory and practice of media art. It applies approaches developed in recent theories in digital culture, media theory and audiovisual arts to the understanding of media art projects as 'events' at the crossroad of critical theory and technoculture. You will have the opportunity to explore the ways in which theorists have attempted to understand digitalisation and its impact on perception, the body and aesthetics, and challenge traditional oppositions such as human/machine, nature/culture, real/virtual. In addition, you will explore these ideas from a practical perspective, combining contextual studies with an understanding of creative practice.

### **Mapping World Cinema**

Using, as case studies, films from the new and internationally influential cinemas emerging from South Asia, South East Asia, the Middle East or Latin America, this module will provide you with an introduction to world cinema. It explores major developments in the film industries of these countries, considering stylistic preferences, generic conventions and thematic concerns in a given nation. The module also focuses on the complex interrelationships and tensions between these cinemas and their European and North American counterparts. Including the diaspora cinemas of some of the world cinemas under review, you will examine the concept of film as a vehicle to negotiate a national and transnational consciousness.

### **Place and Identity in European Cinema(s)**

In this module you will explore the construction of place and identity in contemporary European cinema(s) in relation to postcolonialism, globalisation and the changing identity of Europe. The module will introduce you to representations of migrant, diasporic and transnational identities that have recently been assuming a more prominent position in the cinema; for example, Turkish-German, French cinéma beur and cinéma de banlieue, Black/Asian-British cinema and Eastern European cinema.

### **Empire and its Aftermath**

This module considers how literature, in its broadest definition, responds to and reflects the influence of European colonisation on the construction of national, communal and individual identities. How does literature respond to political discourses? How do individual identities come into conflict with national ideologies? How is Empire imagined in different historical and geographical contexts? How does writing offer the possibility to construct, in both form and content, racial and ethnic identities? What role does literature play in both reinforcing and resisting normative behaviours inscribed by the colonising enterprise and its legacy?

### **Exploring Lifestyle Magazines**

This module examines the development and growth of the lifestyle magazine market from the early women's magazines of the 19th century to celebrity style magazines today. The module explores magazines as media products and cultural artefacts, and in relation to cultures of consumption. It will enable you to gain knowledge and understanding of historical development of lifestyle magazines and engage with critical debates about the role and significance of lifestyle magazines in relation to formations of gender. It will also equip you with a range of methods and procedures to assist your own studies of magazines.

### **Writing Lives, Writing Places**

This module explores two vital and often interrelated aspects of writing: the narration of individual lives and the representation of places. Through an examination of a range of fictional, biographical and autobiographical texts that cross generic, historical and geographical boundaries, the module considers current debates within the study of life writing and literature more broadly.

## Teaching staff

**Dr Steven Bastow** is a principal lecturer and a researcher for the European Research Centre. His specialist subjects and research interests include European ideologies of the 20th century.

**Dr Fan Carter** is a principal lecturer in media and cultural studies. Her specialist subjects and interests include the influence of the media on our day-to-day lives.

**Anita Howarth** is a lecturer in media and cultural studies. Her specialist subjects and interests include political communication, the role of media in public policy, media representations of foreign policy, and media constructions of food scares and environmental scares.

**Dr Marina Lambrou** is principal lecturer in English Language and Communication. Her research interests include narratives of personal experience, discourse analysis of spoken and written texts, language and media, and language and identity.

**Dr Noha Mellor** is reader in media and cultural studies. Her main research interests are Arab journalism, media and diversity, media and gender, as well as the challenging process of making things meaningful in an increasingly mediated world.

**Dr Landé Pratt** is a senior lecturer in media and cultural studies, and a freelance producer/designer in digital media. Landé's research interests include interface design, digital media in architecture and 'smart' design, synaesthetic design, and the business of digital media.

**Prof. Scott Wilson** is professor in the School of Humanities. His research interests include cultural and critical theory. He is the editor of the *Journal for Cultural Research*.

**Dr Aybige Yilmaz** is the course director for the MA in Media and Communication. Her specialist subjects include representation of gender and nationalism in the media, and postcolonial discourses of nation and modernity.

## 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.



## Media and Communication MA

### Entry requirements

Applicants would normally be expected to have a second-class degree or above (or equivalent) in a related subject in the humanities or social sciences, and/or comparable professional or research experience.

All non-UK applicants must meet our English language requirements. For this course it is IELTS of 6.5 overall, with 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.

Applicants may be invited for an interview with the course director or another senior member of the teaching team. International students based overseas can arrange for an interview by email or telephone.

### Attendance/delivery

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. Timetables are subject to change. Please contact the postgraduate admissions office for further details.

### Assessment

There is a variety of assessment methods for this course, including seminar presentations, exams, essays and a dissertation.



## Further information

### Contact details

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

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