

**Kingston
University**
London



Journalism BA(Hons)

single/joint honours

■ FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

www.kingston.ac.uk/journalism



Journalism BA(Hons)

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A Journalism degree course at Kingston University might be just right for you. However, before applying, you should make sure that you have a clear view of two things:

- what journalism really is; and
- what is involved in studying it at Kingston.

The profession

Journalism is a rapidly evolving profession that plays an important part in the workings of society and democracy. The 70,000 journalists in Britain today include music critics and war correspondents, print sub-editors and webpage designers, football reporters and property specialists, local news reporters and online content editors – and a growing body of ‘multimedia’ journalists expected to be able to alternate between two or more of these roles on any given working day. These people contribute to a remarkable range of publications:

- An ever-growing range of online news and comment sites, from *Youthnet* and *spiked-online* to *openDemocracy.net* and the *Huffington Post* – not to mention the increasingly interactive online operations of the BBC, the Telegraph group, the *Guardian* and other publications that used to be considered ‘traditional’ media
- National, regional and local newspapers, from *The Sunday Times* to the *Yeovil Express*
- Magazines as varied as *Nursing Times*, *The Spectator*, *Heat*, and *Homes and Gardens*
- Broadcast journalism outlets, including the BBC, ITN and Sky

In addition, a growing number of other professions – such as public relations, advertising, campaigning, marketing and publishing – rely on people with journalistic skills.



Why study journalism at Kingston University?

- You can study journalism either on its own as a full field, or in conjunction with another subject as a major, minor or half field (see details of possible combinations overleaf).
- The lecturers have substantial experience at high levels in the industry, and most of them continue to work as journalists (see overleaf).
- You will learn real, practical techniques: how to research, write and edit articles, and how to upload and tailor content to the web.
- You will build up a portfolio of work, gain first-hand experience through working on a campus publication, and undertake a two-week work placement.
- You can choose to study abroad for a semester, either at Kingston's partner universities in the United States or in Europe through the Erasmus scheme.

Jobs in journalism

The profession of journalism does not have a generally accepted formal structure for training and careers. Most new entrants, before they secure salaried positions, must accumulate experience informally through work placements and internships (usually unpaid), freelance contributions and short-term contracts. Although having a journalism degree is a distinct advantage, editors rate experience, enthusiasm and proven capability just as much as formal qualifications.

While the range and diversity of organisations looking for people with journalistic skills is increasing, the media itself has been undergoing major structural changes in recent years, with the result that an always competitive market has become even more so. Where the standard entry-level journalism job would once have been a trainee reporting post on a local newspaper, fewer of these opportunities are now available. Graduates keen to pursue a journalistic career are just as likely to start out on a business-to-business magazine or writing web copy or press releases for a commercial company or charity.

Recent graduates of our BA in Journalism have found jobs as a producer with Channel 4 News, an assistant editor of a martial arts magazine, a reporter on a website that covers the gambling industry in depth, and a writer at *OK!* magazine.

Our programme

You will learn, among other things, how to:

- identify news and feature subjects;
- carry out primary (first-hand) research and conduct interviews;
- write stories, features and reviews for the web and print;
- upload written copy, pictures, videos and podcasts using content management systems; and
- write headlines and captions, and present copy and images on a page.

At the same time, you will explore the academic side of the profession, covering the fundamental principles and theories underpinning modern journalistic practice, the history of the profession and its antecedents, the legal and ethical framework within which journalists operate, and recent and current controversies concerning the profession. Broadcast journalism is not central to the course, but filming and editing are taught in the core second-year module, Video Journalism.

Please note: if your ambition is to have a presenting career in television or radio, this Kingston course is probably not for you.

Teaching and learning

The course is delivered through lectures, seminars and workshops. You will participate in practical exercises, group work, discussion, essay writing, individual research and extensive reading. Besides reading recommended texts, you will be expected to familiarise yourself with current writing on issues in journalism. You will also need to read at least one serious newspaper every day, in term and out – a quick skim through *Metro* on your way home will not be sufficient! The course incorporates real-life reporting work, and final-year students produce the campus newspaper *The River* – Publication of the Year in the Guardian Student Media Awards 2010. In addition, Kingston guarantees every student a two-week work placement at a professional journalistic organisation, although you are strongly encouraged to find your own wherever possible.

“Our emphasis on teaching subjects relevant to the world today, and producing graduates able to make a positive contribution to that world, makes the educational experience on offer in our Faculty at Kingston unique among universities in the United Kingdom.”

Professor Martin McQuillan
Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

What you will study

Examples of the modules currently offered are shown below. The number of modules taken each year and the choices available will vary depending on whether you study Journalism as a full field (single honours) or as a major, half or minor field (joint honours). The precise module list varies from year to year as the course structure is reviewed and refined.

Year 1

First-year modules offer the opportunity to learn how to write news stories, features and reviews, develop research and interview skills, tackle some journalism history and theory, study British politics, and improve foreign language skills (a growing requirement on many national newspapers). A full-field student in Year 1 will study the following modules:

- **Multimedia News Writing 1**
- **Introduction to Journalism** (introducing the practical conventions and contexts of written journalism)
- **Journalism in Context** (an introduction to the main debates in the industry and current and historical commentary in journalism studies)
- **UK Government and Politics**
- **Media Institutions** (exploring continuity and change in traditional and new media institutions) OR **Journalism, Technology and the Future**, **English in Action** OR a modern language module.

Half-field students take **Multimedia News Writing 1** and **Journalism in Context**.

Year 2

In Year 2, all students will continue with **Multi-media News Writing 2**, taught through lectures and workshops. You will learn what news is, how to identify a story from a mass of information, and how to write, edit, and display it on a newspaper page, using industry standard software such as Adobe InDesign and Photoshop. You will also be taught how to adapt news copy to the rolling 24-hour deadlines and tighter word counts demanded by the web, and how to sub-edit and upload your own copy, source your own pictures, and write your own headlines. Stress is placed on clear, accurate, and concise use of English, and you will become familiar with writing against the clock and using quotation and attribution appropriately. As these modules progress, an increasing amount of the work is based on the real world, with you finding, writing and submitting real news stories.

All students in Year 2 will also take **Law for Journalists** and **Video Journalism** in which they will learn how to turn engaging factual stories into online video using high-definition cameras and industry-standard Adobe Premiere editing software.

Full field students can choose to do a journalism research project, study a language or take **Diverse Britain: Media, Culture and Ethnicity**.

Year 2 students will also be able to choose from the following option modules:

- **Shorthand**
- **Magazine Journalism**
- **History of British Journalism**
- **Current Issues in Journalism**
- **Visions of Crime and Deviance** (a critical introduction to the field of crime and the media)

Year 3

Practical Journalism, delivered in two modules in Year 3, gives you the opportunity to deploy your skills in practice, under supervision, as you work with your peers to write, edit, design, produce and distribute the campus newspaper *The River* as well as *The River Online*. You will develop your technique by testing it against other students and against the judgement of real readers across the University.

Practical Journalism 2 also incorporates a two-week work placement in an organisation engaged in journalism. You will be supervised and assessed in place, and must submit reflective reviews of the experience.

Journalism Ethics is also a core module in Year 3.

Alongside these core modules are several other options to develop skills and knowledge:

- **Journalism Dissertation**
- **Special Study: The Truth Seekers – Investigative Journalism from Pulitzer to Palast**
- **Special Study: Journalism and War**
- **Special Study: Exploring 19th Century Newspapers**
- **Business Journalism**
- **Sports Journalism**
- **Arts and Entertainment Journalism**
- **Politics and Media Management**
- **International Journalism** (exploring how the global news agenda is set, and why some international stories are covered and others ignored)
- **Journalism and Diversity** (focusing on how to communicate with an audience who have different backgrounds, attitudes and cultures from one's own)
- **Media Audiences** (examining key theoretical approaches and methodologies for studying audiences)
- **Kingston Language Scheme**
- **Britain's Role in the World**
- **International Journalism**
- **Politics and Media Management**
- **Journalism and Diversity**
- **Sports Journalism, Business Journalism, and Arts and Entertainment Journalism**

Important note: In full-field journalism, all students are given the option of studying a modern language in Year 1. This is a double-weighted module, reflecting the increasing value placed on linguistic ability by employers in journalism – particularly national newspapers offering graduate traineeship schemes. Arabic, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese and Mandarin Chinese are available. Students may learn as beginners or develop language skills already acquired.



Want to know more?
www.kingston.ac.uk/journalism

Are you cut out for journalism?

If you're thinking of studying journalism but aren't sure whether it is the right career for you, here are a few things to consider.

- Journalists tend to be people who instinctively want to know what is going on in the world, so they follow news bulletins on television and radio and they **read newspapers** and magazines. That way they stay informed – not only about celebrity gossip, but also politics, the economy, social trends, sport and the arts.
- Journalists are **curious**: they want to understand what is happening and to hear the latest news and gossip: they keep their eyes open for change.
- Journalists are **communicators**: when they know or learn something, they like to pass it on to others.
- Good journalists want to communicate clearly and well. They care about how they use the language, about finding the **right words** and about using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Does this sound like you?

- Do you read a newspaper (online or in print) every day?
- Are you curious?
- Do you ask questions?
- Do you enjoy passing on news and gossip?
- Do you take care over your writing?

If you can answer yes to most of those questions, you may have the makings of a journalist.

Centre for Academic Skills and Employability (CASE)

CASE offers students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences one-to-one help with their studies. We help both undergraduate and postgraduate students with:

- researching and presenting;
- structuring and editing traditional academic writing;
- structuring and editing multimedia texts; and
- referencing.

CASE provides a range of resources to enhance employability, including help with writing CVs, application forms and preparing you for interviews. Results show that students who use the centre are significantly more likely to complete their degree. As they are better equipped to act on feedback, they also tend to do better in their studies.

Journalism staff

Beth Brewster, director of studies, has been a feature writer and editor on various magazines and newspapers. Her credits include the *Observer*, the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Sunday Times* and the *Sunday Mirror*, where she launched *The Sunday Mirror Magazine*. She is also the author of a book on Victorian art and wrote an award-winning BBC TV drama.

Brian Cathcart, professor of journalism, was a Reuters correspondent, a founding staff member of *The Independent* and deputy editor of the *Independent on Sunday* before turning his hand to books, notably the award-winning *The Case of Stephen Lawrence*.

Sara McConnell is an award-winning author and journalist, specialising in property and personal finance. She writes for *The Times* and *The Times Online*, the *London Evening Standard* and the *Guardian*. Her most recent book is *Moving In – Buying, Selling and Renting Your Home*. Sara, who is working on a PhD on newsroom culture in the digital age, is director of our MA Journalism course.

Mary Braid, senior lecturer, entered journalism in her native Scotland before joining the *Independent* as a reporter. She went on to become a staff feature writer and Africa correspondent. Since going freelance, she has written for a range of titles from the *Observer* to *Marie Claire* magazine. Besides her teaching, she writes weekly on employment issues for *The Sunday Times*.

James Morrison, senior lecturer, is a former arts and media correspondent of *The Independent on Sunday* and has also worked at the *Daily Mail* and

the Press Association and as a freelance writer for the *Guardian*, the *Daily Telegraph* and various magazines. He has led several National Council for the Training of Journalists diploma courses and he also works as a media trainer for the Periodical Publishers' Association and the British Council.

Dan Townend, a veteran of the news desks on both the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* (where he continues to work when not lecturing), knows the sharp end of tabloid journalism. He has also worked as an associate editor on *The Sportsman* and been employed by two of the country's biggest news agencies. Dan is a senior lecturer in journalism.

Lucy Smy edited or wrote for almost every section of the *Financial Times* in her 14 years on the paper. She started out as a night sub-editor, before moving onto the world desk, and went on to report from Germany, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Lucy was companies reporter at the FT as it began successfully integrating its print and online operations.

Maurice Walsh is an award-winning journalist who has reported for the BBC from Africa, Asia and Latin America. His work has appeared in *Granta*, the *New Statesman* and the *London Review of Books*. He is the author of *The News from Ireland: Foreign Correspondents and the Irish Revolution* based on his PhD at Goldsmiths University. Maurice has been awarded fellowships at the University of Michigan and Oxford University.

Maria Ahmed, an English graduate from Oxford University, worked in frontline social care and as an outreach worker with the homeless

before training as a journalist. She started her journalistic career as a reporter at *The Big Issue*, before moving to *The Times* and, in due course, becoming news editor of *Eastern Eye*, Britain's leading newspaper for South Asians. Since 2004 she has been news editor of *Community Care*, the trade weekly for social care professionals.

Adam Westbrook runs video .fu, an online video production company which provides material for NGOs, think-tanks and publishers. He has produced online films for the Green Alliance, the VJ Movement and TheMediaBriefing and many others. He also works as a trainer and consultant, advising companies such as GMG Radio and the KM Group on their social media strategy. His ebook, *Next Generation Journalist: 10 new ways to make money in journalism* is available at adamwestbrook.co.uk

Clare Lovell worked for Reuters for 30 years – she was bureau chief in Lisbon and also reported from Brussels and Rome. She still works for Reuters as a sports reporter and she has also been a freelancer for the *Observer*, *The Economist*, the *New Statesman*, and *The Times Educational Supplement*.

Michelle Hather is an acclaimed magazine editor who began her career as a local newspaper reporter, with the *Blackpool Evening Gazette* and *Liverpool Daily Post* leading to sub-editing shifts on the *Observer*, *Independent*, and *Sunday People*. She later rose through the ranks at National Magazine Company to become editor of *Best* – in which capacity she has twice been nominated as Editor of the Year and once as Editor's Editor by the British Society of Magazine Editors.

Entry requirements

Typical offer

- Single honours: 340 points (AAB)
- Joint honours: 340 points (AAB) or equivalent
- Units: to include three A-levels or equivalent at a minimum of ABB
- Subjects: At least one A-level should be in English or another essay subject. General Studies only accepted when one of four A-levels or equivalent.
- Key Skills: points not accepted in tariff
- Plus GCSE: Mathematics (grade A–C required) and English Literature (grade A–B required)

Further requirements for combinations

Please see the course webpage for details.

International students

All non-UK applicants must meet our English language requirements. For this course it is IELTS of 6.5 overall with 6.5 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 our course webpage, which includes details of other qualifications we'll consider.

Other entry routes

- Access course
- International applicants and mature applicants with relevant qualifications are welcomed.

Joint honours combinations

Journalism is offered as a single honours degree or as a major, half or minor field in combination with one of the following subjects:

- Creative Writing
- Economics (Applied)
- English Language & Communication
- English Literature
- Film Studies
- French
- History
- History of Art, Design & Film
- Human Rights
- International Relations
- Media & Cultural Studies
- Politics
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Spanish

UCAS codes

For UCAS codes, please see the course webpage.

Open days

Several open days are held each year. Please contact the admissions office or visit the University website for more details.

www.kingston.ac.uk/opendays

Contact details

Course enquiries

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