

MA Media Production

**Programme Specification
July 2005**

Updated 4th. April 2007

Introduction

This document describes the University of Lincoln's MA Media Production using the protocols required by the UK National Qualifications Framework as defined in the publication *QAA guidelines for preparing programme specifications* (June 2000).

MA Media Production is a 180M CATS point programme of study offered by the Subject of Media Production as part of the university's postgraduate portfolio.

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1. Basic programme data

Final award	MA
Programme title	Media Production
UCAS code	TBA (full-time variant) TBA (part-time variant)
Awarding body	University of Lincoln
Teaching institution	University of Lincoln
Relevant QAA subject benchmarks	None
Professional/statutory accreditation	None
Date of validation	27 April 2005
Programme start date	September 2005
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Revision 3	

2 Programme aims and objectives

2.1 Educational aims of the programme

2.1.1. The MA Media Production aims to provide students, in a theoretical context, with a comprehensive understanding of media production in one of a variety of media platforms ie, radio, or single or *multicamera production, or screenwriting, or photography, or design or new media.

2.1.2 The MA Media Production aims to develop students' understanding of the uses of media technologies in relation to social context; the political-regulatory contexts shaping media and their public and commercial applications; and the importance of media in the formation of national and other identities.

2.1.3. The MA Media Production aims to provide an educational context in which students develop, to an advanced level, the creative, conceptual, critical, analytical, technical, organisational and research skills appropriate to employment in the media industries.

**Dependent on the numbers of applicants wishing to specialise in this production platform.*

2.2 Subject benchmarks

Not applicable.

2.3 Internal contexts

2.3.1. The MA Media Production is one of a planned suite of post-graduate taught programmes offered in the Faculty of Media and Humanities to correct the current lack of such activity, balancing the work of the Faculty and facilitating the delivery of its mission to offer nationally and internationally recognised innovative teaching, research and professional programmes.

2.3.2 It is intended that the programme will deliver cutting edge media production skills training alongside core academic components that probe the dynamic context of British media production within its national political, regulatory and socio-cultural context.

2.3.3. It will address the need of the Faculty to provide high quality post-graduate opportunities to its burgeoning undergraduate population. Certainly the steadily increasing recruitment for the BA (Hons) Media Production at the University of Lincoln since 2000, suggests a significant pool of applicants may come from the University's undergraduate degree.

2.3.4. The MA Media Production is also aimed at providing opportunities for academic development for those of its BA (Hons) Media Production graduates who have chosen to remain in Lincoln to establish media businesses, as part of the University's incubation scheme, under the auspices of the Higher Education Innovation Fund.

2.3.5. The Department of Media Production has particular strengths and interests, professional, scholarly, academic, in radio, film and television fiction/factual production; screenwriting; photography, design and new media production; radio and television studies; film and cultural theory; sociology of the media; media policy; media ethics; photography and new media theory. The programme will be taught by a core group of Media Production subject staff.

2.4. External contexts

2.4.1.i. The MA Media Production is positioned within an educational area of significant continued growth. The numbers of students studying full-time on media and related bachelor-level courses indicate a still increasing pool of potential applicants for higher-level study:

	**1999	**2000	**2001
Communication Studies	3700	3835	3955
Journalism	2190	2645	3535
Media Studies	9250	10700	12570

TABLE 1

HESA

** HESA figures for these subjects, in the years 2002 – 2004 cannot be compared with the statistics above since subjects were grouped more generally after this date. Those for media subjects were placed in a classification known as mass communications and documentation. However, HESA figures for this group in 2002/3 were 22,600.

2.4.1.ii. Nonetheless, growth in numbers (full-time) on taught media masters degrees for the same period confirms the assumption of a significant pool of potential applicants:

	1999	2000	2001
Communication Studies	400	640	735
Journalism	700	765	870
Media studies	666	845	1045

TABLE 2

HESA

2.4.1.iii. Currently there are 2650 fulltime students registered on media, communication studies and journalism degrees. Taught masters degrees are offered at:

University of Central England	London College of Printing	Salford
Coventry	London Guildhall	Southampton
University of East London	London School of Economics	Stirling
University of Glasgow	Manchester Metropolitan University	Strathclyde
Goldsmiths	Middlesex	Sussex
Leeds Metropolitan	National Film School	Thames Valley
Liverpool John Moores	Royal Holloway	Ulster
		Westminster

TABLE 3

2.4.1.iv. Even so, masters programmes in Media Production are relatively few, there being courses with this title offered at the Universities of Luton, Sunderland, Wales at Lampeter, Birmingham Institute of Arts and Design and at Canterbury Christ Church University College. However, there are no others in the Midlands or South Yorkshire regions, therefore, there is no exact competition.

2.4.2.i. Within the creative industries sector, documentary, factual and fiction programmes have been broadcasting staples since the introduction of radio. They have also enjoyed a sustained and, indeed, growing place within the TV schedules since the mid-1990s. Furthermore, since the survey by the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) of the Creative and Cultural industries in 2001, *Creative Industries: Mapping Document 2001*, it is clear that there are significant and growing opportunities for employment in the UK in the fields of photography and design, especially in relation to delivery by way of new media platforms.

2.4.2.ii. The national context provided by the creative industries sector is that, as a whole, it represents, according to the DCMS, 5% of GDP and employs some 5% of the UK workforce (1.3 million) producing over £112 billion revenues. Potential high quality applicants can also be expected from within the sector which employs over 150,000 in broadcasting and film, 140,000 in publishing and 30,000 in new media. Content development has been identified as a major skills need by a number of the National Training Organisations involved in this area.

2.4.2.iii. It is anticipated that the MA Media Production programme will also appeal to those regionally-based creative industries professionals keen to extend practice-based knowledge of British media production within an advanced theoretical and critical context. A key marketing aspect of the programme will be to signal opportunities for students to blend critical engagement with and evaluation of a range of professional and scholarly literature on media production issues with case study elements.

2.4.2.iv. The regional context of the creative industries is that:

- The sector employs about 85,000 people in the East Midlands. This is 4.3% of the total regional workforce and it is rising.
- Earnings in the creative industries are substantially higher than the regional average and are rapidly rising. Total annual earnings of this group were estimated at about £2bn in 2000, 7.4% of the regional total.
- The creative industries workforce is highly qualified and has a high proportion of self-employed people, as much as 25% in some sectors.
- The creative industries are not growing so fast in the East Midlands as in London, the South East or the East of England.
- However, although overall patterns of growth in the region's creative industries are depressed by the structural decline of some traditional sectors of manufacturing, distribution and exchange, future prosperity will derive increasingly from the area of content origination and in this respect, the East Midlands is showing strong growth of around 7% a year.¹

2.4.2.v. It is worth noting that the programme has appeal to graduates from outside the matrix of 'media studies' who wish to develop new practice and academic skills in preparation for a career in the creative and media industries.

¹ East Midland NTI, Creative Industries Network Needs Analysis Report June 2003

2.4.2.vi. It is also envisaged that, once launched, the MA Media Production will attract a number of overseas students. However, given the Faculty's historic lack of international student recruitment this kind of interest is at present difficult to predict.

3 Programme outcomes

Programme-level learning outcomes are identified below. Refer to *Appendix I - Curriculum* map for details of how outcomes are deployed across the study programme.

3.1 Knowledge and understanding

On the successful completion of the MA in Production, students will have a deep and critical knowledge of:

A.1 the development of the UK media industries and media technologies within their socio-cultural context

A.2 the function, role and structures of the UK media industries within the context of global media production systems

A.3 the ethical context of media production

A.4 media law and regulation as it applies to media production

A.5 professional practices as they apply to media production, distribution and exhibition

A.6 the production of an original media product to a professional standard in a chosen media specialism

3.2 Subject specific skills and attributes

On the successful completion of the MA in Media Production, students will be able to:

B.1 develop, to a professional standard, effective fund-raising strategies and materials for the production of a media product.

B.2 undertake, to professional standard, research for media production in a chosen specialism

B.3 develop, to a professional standard, effective marketing and distribution plans for a media product in a chosen specialism

B.4 develop, to a professional standard, pre-production plans and materials for undertaking media production in a chosen specialism

B.5 undertake, to a professional standard, production of a media product in a chosen specialism

3.3. Cognitive/Intellectual Skills

On the successful completion of the MA in Media Production, students will be able to:

C.1 critically analyse and evaluate media products

C.2 synthesise and analyse a wide range of theoretical perspectives

C.3 demonstrate appropriate research skills for the completion of an in-depth and original dissertation or a media product to a professional standard

3.4. Transferable Skills and Attributes

On the successful completion of the MA Media Production, students will be able to:

D.1 identify personal strengths and weaknesses and appreciate the importance of continued reflection on experience, development and education

D.2 develop a critical stance towards opinion and evidence

D.3 develop computer skills

D.4 develop professional writing and design skills

D.5 develop commercial skills

D.6 develop personal communication skills

D.7 work, learn and pursue objectives in a way, which is both self-motivated and responsive to appropriate supervision

D.8 function effectively in a team, taking on responsibilities and anticipating problems and difficulties.

3.5 NOTE: This means -

3.5.1. Within the creative industry sector, graduates of this programme will be able to, subject to the media-specific practice options taken during the course of study, fulfil the following professional functions:

- Programme/development researcher for radio, film, television, photography, design or new media production;
- Radio or television programme producer/director/sound recordist/editor;

- Writer for documentary, factual or fiction radio;
- Photography, design or new media producer;
- New media content designer/writer;
- Screenwriter.

3.5.2. With appropriate PGDip Ed, the MA will equip graduates for employment as media academics.

4 Teaching, learning and assessment strategies

4.1 Teaching and learning strategy

Teaching and learning strategies adopted within the MA Media Production derive from the University's plan as it applies to the education of creative media professionals while at the same time ensuring the development of a wide range of transferable skills. Teaching and learning is undertaken through lectures, seminars, workshops, screenings, group and personal tutorials, presentations, study visits and group and individual production projects. Students are expected to examine critically (on their own initiative and under supervision) a range of media programmes and products as well as a wide range of texts, magazines, academic journals and sites. They will also be expected to demonstrate a rising level of skills acquisition in a graded series of practice projects.

4.2 Assessment strategy

A range of assessment strategies will be used: project work, essays, case studies, presentations, pitches, portfolios, a dissertation or a final major project (together with a production diary, marketing plan and all other materials relevant to the creation of the work.)

Some project work will involve students working in teams (as, for example, in the case of students undertaking the single camera production specialism). Other project work will involve students working individually (as, for example, in the case of students undertaking the screenwriting, photography, new media or design specialisms.) There will be, however, discretion to allow students in the latter specialisms to work in pairs, depending on the complexity and nature of the project.

Essays, case studies, presentations, pitches and portfolios will be undertaken individually.

During the preparation and planning of project work, students will be given opportunities for formative assessment through discussions about progress and be able to make modifications as the project work develops. On completion, the project will be assessed summatively.

In undertaking essays and dissertation preparation, students will be given opportunities, in group and individual tutorial sessions, to discuss progress before submitting, for summative assessment, the essay or dissertation proposal.

It is envisaged that the project or dissertation prepared in outline in the modules entitled, *Project Pre-Production*, or the option *Dissertation Preparation*, will be developed and completed as the final project or dissertation. These modules allow students to gain feedback through formative assessment opportunities in group and individual tutorials. These modules will then be assessed summatively.

Assessment strategies employed will be similar to those currently in place for the undergraduate media production programme. Essays and portfolios will be assessed by tutors individually and then double marked according to the procedures outlined in the University assessment regulations.

Presentations will be assessed live by two or more staff; a final mark will be allocated after students have submitted the written text of the presentation. Project work will be set and marked by teams of staff who will establish and agree criteria across a range of projects and specialisms.

Appendix II - Assessment map gives an indication of the scheduling and distribution of assessment modes within the programme. Details of unit assessment strategy are included with each unit specification.

Appendix III – Assessment Criteria lays out criteria for assessing student work in the programme.

5 Programme structure

5.1.1. The MA Media Production adopts a linked Postgraduate Certificate, Diploma and Master of Arts scheme, delivered in modular form wherein each of 15 units is rated at 12 CATS (Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme) points. The successful completion of five units (or 60 CATS points) qualifies students for the award of a postgraduate certificate. A further five units earns a postgraduate diploma (120 CATS points). The Degree of Master of Arts requires the successful completion of a final five units for a total of 180 CATS points.

5.1.1.i. Five units (or 60 CATS points) is the expected modular load per semester.

5.1.1.ii. The MA Media Production adopts a three semester (full 12 month) calendar, utilising the summer vacation period as a working semester.

5.1.2. Table 4: Programme Structure:

Certificate level	MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES AND PUBLIC SPHERES <i>{24 points}</i>		MEDIA PRODUCTION I (Radio OR Single OR *Multi Camera Production OR Screenwriting OR Photography OR Design or New Media) <i>{24 points}</i>	CRITICAL APPROACHES TO THE MEDIA <i>{12 points}</i>
	Diploma level		MEDIA PRODUCTION II <i>{24 points}</i>	MEDIA ETHICS, LAW AND REGULATION <i>{12 points}</i>
	MEDIA INDUSTRIES <i>{12 points}</i>	PROJECT PRE-PRODUCTION OR DISSERTATION PREPARATION <i>{12 points}</i>		
Masters level	FINAL PROJECT OR DISSERTATION <i>{60 points}</i>			

5.1.3.i. The structure outlined above is designed to achieve the objectives (outlined in 2.1.above) and the outcomes (outlined in 3 above).

5.1.3.ii The course structure diagram above indicates the 'normal' route through the course, however, units from each level, Certificate and Diploma, can make up the 60CATs needed to attain the Post Graduate Certificate provided that any unit Pre-Requisites are adhered to.

5.1.3.iii. For MEDIA PRODUCTION 1 students will select either radio, or single or *multi camera production or screenwriting or photography or design or new media as a production specialism.

** Dependent on the numbers of applicants wishing to specialise in this production platform*

5.1.3.iv. Students will advance their specialism in the second semester in MEDIA PRODUCTION II.

5.1.3.v. In PROJECT PRE-PRODUCTION students will undertake research and development for their FINAL PROJECT in their chosen specialism.

5.1.3.vi. In DISSERTATION PREPARATION students will undertake research and proposal planning for their DISSERTATION.

5.1.3.vii For the final 60 CATS points, students will have a choice of undertaking a FINAL PROJECT in their media specialism (supported by a 2,000 word critical evaluation) OR a 15,000 DISSERTATION.

5.1.3.viii. MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES AND PUBLIC SPHERES and CRITICAL APPROACHES TO THE MEDIA will be team taught.

5.1.3.ix.. MEDIA INDUSTRIES will rely heavily on visiting industry professionals and study visits.

5.1.3.x MEDIA ETHICS, LAW AND REGULATION will be team taught and will also rely on industry professionals.

5.1.4. NB: THE FOLLOWING UNITS HAVE ALREADY BEEN VALIDATED AS PART OF THE MA DOCUMENTARY/FACTUAL PRODUCTION:

- i. CRITICAL APPROACHES TO THE MEDIA
- ii. MEDIA INDUSTRIES
- iii. MEDIA ETHICS LAW AND REGULATION
- iv. PROJECT PRE-PRODUCTION

6 Regulatory framework

MA Media Production is operated under the policy and regulatory frameworks of the University of Lincoln.

The following sub-sections note the applicable University policy documents and draw attention to any exceptions, peculiarities or conditions that relate particularly to this programme. Many of the policy documents are convenient abstracts of *University Regulations*, published annually by the university.

6.1 Admissions

Taught Postgraduate Awards – Principles and Regulations (University of Lincolnshire & Humberside, September 2001).

1.2 Assessment

Taught Postgraduate Awards – Principles and Regulations (University of Lincolnshire & Humberside, September 2001).

6.3 Progression

Taught Postgraduate Awards – Principles and Regulations (University of Lincolnshire & Humberside, September 2001).

6.4 Placement

There are no formal arrangements for placement within MA Media Production.

6.5 Study abroad

There are no formal arrangements that facilitate foreign study for students of MA Media Production.

6.6 Student support and guidance

Academic Advice and Guidance Network - Student Handbook (University of Lincolnshire & Humberside, September 2001).

6.7 Off-campus delivery

Off-campus Programme Management Manual - UK (University of Lincolnshire & Humberside, December 2000).

At the time of publication of this document MA Media Production is not delivered by any UK franchise partners or associate colleges.

Appendix I - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (√) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	Study unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
Certificate	MEDIA TECHONOLGIES AND PUBLIC SPHERES	√	√	√	√								√	√	√	√	√				√	√	
	MEDIA PRODUCTION I			√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√			√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
	CRITICAL APPROACHES TO THE MEDIA	√	√	√	√								√	√	√	√	√				√	√	
	MEDIA INDUSTRIES	√	√	√	√	√							√	√	√	√				√	√	√	√
	MEDIA ETHICS, LAW & REGULATION		√	√	√	√								√	√	√	√				√	√	
	MEDIA PRODUCTION II			√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			√		√	√	√	√	√	√
	PROJECT PRE-PRODUCTION OR			√	√	√		√	√	√	√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
	DISSERTATION PREPARATION	√	√	√	√									√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√
Masters	FINAL PROJECT OR			√	√	√	√	√		√		√	√		√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√
Masters	DISSERTATION	√	√	√	√								√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√	

Appendix II - Assessment map

This table indicates the modality of unit assessment within MA Media Production. Numbers indicate weighting (as CATS points assessed).

		SEMESTER A Weeks 1 - 14													
Level	Study unit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Certificate	MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES AND PUBLIC SPHERES {24}													Essay 5000 words	
	MEDIA PRODUCTION I {24}					Project									Project
	CRITICAL APPROACHES TO THE MEDIA {12}												Essay 3000 words		
		SEMESTER B Weeks 1 - 14													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	MEDIA INDUSTRIES {12}						Case Study 1500 words					Case Study Presentation			
	MEDIA ETHICS, LAW & REGULATION {12}							Essay 1500 words					Essay 1500 words		
	MEDIA PRODUCTION II {24}													Project	
	PROJECT PRE-PRODUCTION {12} OR					Pitch Portfolio									Project Plan/ Portfolio
	DISSERTATION PREPARATION {12}														Dissertation Plan

		SEMESTER C Weeks 1 - 14													
Level	Study Unit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Masters	FINAL PROJECT {60} OR												Final Project		
Masters	DISSERTATION {60}												Dissertation 15,000 words		

Appendix III Assessment Criteria

MASTERS Assessment Criteria

Set out below is a broad indication of the way in which overall marks are calculated for the unit's assessments.

80 and above: Exceptional Performance at Distinction level, which

- surpasses that associated with the 70-79 level in at least one of the following areas:
 - o originality in conceptual understanding; critical insight; hypotheses; use of methodology, or application of knowledge
 - o subtlety of interpretation
 - o power of critical analysis
 - o critical evaluation of current research
 - o understanding of research methodology and its implications
 - o mastery of a significant body of data

Such work is likely to include work of such a high quality that it either falls comfortably within the level of performance characteristic of a degree at a still higher level, e.g., PhD, or would merit publication in a refereed publishing venue of professional standing. Such work will be exceptionally well written and presented. A dissertation gaining this mark will unambiguously demonstrate the ability to pursue research at doctoral level.

70—79: Superior Performance at Distinction level, which

- surpasses that associated with the 65—69 level in several areas, such as the following
 - o originality in conceptual understanding; critical insight; hypotheses; use of methodology, or application of knowledge
 - o subtlety of interpretation
 - o power of critical analysis
 - o critical evaluation of current research
 - o understanding of research methodology and its implications

- o mastery of a significant body of data

Such work will be written and presented to high academic standards. A dissertation gaining this mark indicates very strong potential for pursuing research at doctoral level.

65—69: Very Good Performance at Pass Level, which may well include superior achievement in areas such as those designated above for the 70—79 level, but which will not be as consistent, as widespread, or as fully demonstrated. Performance at this level

- surpasses the quality of work in the 60—64 range in several areas, such as the following
 - o information deployed (normally going beyond reliance on standard secondary sources)
 - o clarity and coherence of argumentation
 - o critical insight or evaluation
 - o analytical power
 - o control of data

Such work will be written and presented to good academic standards. A dissertation gaining this mark suggests definite possibility of pursuing research at doctoral level.

60—64: Good Performance at Pass Level, which contains some of the qualities of work in the 50—59 range, but surpasses it in terms of at least one of the following

- o information deployed (normally going beyond reliance on standard secondary sources)
- o clarity and coherence of argumentation
- o critical insight or evaluation
- o analytical power
- o control of data

Such work may well have an element of originality. It will be written and presented to good academic standards. A dissertation gaining this mark suggests at least some possibility of pursuing research at doctoral level.

55—59: Satisfactory Performance at Pass Level. This work will

- o demonstrate reasonable grasp of all the principal materials relevant to the subject and link them into an at least partly sustained argument from premises to conclusions
- o have an overall structure which is logical if not fully thought through.
- o display some evidence of analytical or critical ability in the handling of sources and evidence
- o be unlikely to show originality
- o will be written and presented to adequate academic standards, showing no obvious faults.

50—54: Minimally Satisfactory Performance at Pass Level. This work will have similar characteristics to work in the 55-59 category but will be less secure in some key areas, such as

- o conceptual grasp
- o content
- o powers of demonstration
- o capacity to sustain logical argument
- o analytical and critical ability
- o presentation.

40—49: Marginal Failure. This work contains most but not all of the basic materials necessary for a satisfactory treatment of the topic but will be less secure in some key areas, such as

- o key information and content
- o effective, structured, and sustained argument
- o knowledge and deployment of key literature
- o accuracy and consistency in presentation.

Typically, such work:

- o fails to marshal them effectively in terms of overall structure or sustained argument
- o demonstrates some acquaintance with key literature but is unsophisticated in using it
- o is marred by easily rectifiable defects in presentation (e.g. bibliographical incompleteness or inconsistency).

30—39: Failure. This work

- o presents some, but not enough, material relevant to the subject
- o is significantly incomplete or unbalanced in judgement
- o fails to structure the work through argument from premises to conclusions
- o relies too heavily on secondary sources
- o contains partially garbled information, or presents statements of opinion inadequately supported by evidence
- o is scappily presented with inadequate citation.

29 and below: Serious Failure. This work

- o displays minimal knowledge of the subject
- o shows major errors or omissions, or substantially irrelevant material
- o lacks overall structure
- o is characterized by unsupported assertion rather than argumentation
- o lacks critical appraisal of material, verging at worst on plagiarism
- o does not acknowledge its sources
- o is sometimes unintelligible in expression