

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	Global Journalism
2	Programme Code	JNLT33
3	JACS Code	P500
4	Level of Study	Postgraduate
5a	Final Qualification	Master of Arts (MA)
5b	QAA FHEQ Level	Masters
6	Intermediate Qualification(s)	Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip) Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert)
7	Teaching Institution (if not Sheffield)	Not applicable
8	Faculty	Social Sciences
9	Department	Journalism Studies
10	Other Department(s) involved in teaching the programme	None
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	1 year
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	None
14	Date of production/revision	July 2020, April 2021, January 2022, December 2022, September 2024

15. Background to the programme and subject area

News and journalism are global. Journalists, however, experience their professional activity in various ways across the changing world and it is the key debate within a comparative global perspective that students who want to work in the media industry, think tanks or NGOs need to engage with and be able to reflect upon.

In this vein, MA Global Journalism combines theoretical and practical concerns with regard to the principles of a free press and its relationship to political and civil institutions. It examines, compares and contrasts the diverse forms of regulation and restrictions – both legitimate and illegitimate – surrounding the practice of journalism around the world. It provides students with hands-on practical experience in writing for various media platforms and communicating news in the contemporary global environment. However, the MA Global Journalism primarily has an academic focus and is **not** accredited as a postgraduate training programme for students who wish to work in the journalism profession. Teaching in the classroom is supplemented by a variety of events and field trips (see below for detail).

The word 'global' in Global Journalism is to be understood in two ways: first, geographically and second, as all-encompassing, meaning that it engages with pertinent, invariant issues that define the nature of journalism across time and space and in variable ways. It is this two-fold understanding of the term 'global' that provides the rationale for the programme curriculum.

16. Programme aims

- Students will develop their ability to reflect critically upon the current news environment in a comparative perspective.
- Students will acquire an in-depth understanding of the challenges and threats to journalism values and practices across the world.
- Students will gain insights into the real-life experiences of journalists across the world.

- Students will become knowledgeable of the methodological approaches to carry out research.
- Students will gain basic practical journalistic skills experience, including news writing and planning interviews.

17. Programme learning outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding:-

On completion of the Masters' students will have acquired an enhanced knowledge and understanding of:

K1	The current news environment in a comparative global perspective.
K2	The global news environment from political, legal, historical and sociological perspectives.
K3	The relationship between the news and civil society.
K4	The challenges and threats to media freedom across the world and their impact upon journalists' daily professional activities.
K5	The different news formats in which stories can be written.
K6	Key research methods of both quantitative and qualitative nature.
K7	The use of social media, statistics and other digital skills in journalistic activity.

Skills and Other Attributes

On completion of the Masters' students will have acquired the ability to:

S1	Devise and carry out an individual piece of research in the format of a research portfolio.
S2	Produce journalistic pieces.
S3	Work independently and in groups (specific group work training provided).
S4	Produce academic work in a variety of formats such as essays, reflective writing, case studies, critical comments, research proposals, seminar presentations etc.
S5	Apply basic practical journalism skills.
S6	Work according to specific marking criteria and assess their own work in relation to these.

For the award of **Postgraduate Diploma** and **Postgraduate Certificate** students will have acquired that combination of K1- K6 and S1-S6 commensurate with the core and approved units successfully completed (equivalent to 120 or 60 credits respectively).

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

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

The programme uses a wide range of teaching and learning methods that happen in the classroom and include lectures, seminars, workshops, one-to-one tutorials and academic skills training via Department Language Programme (DLP) sessions. The teaching within this environment is supported by the use of learning technologies, various classroom assessment techniques, digital tools and social media. The teaching and learning methods in this programme extend to a conference for students and a wide range of guest lectures. These aim to provide students, where possible, with insights into the 'real' daily professional life of journalists (and those who work with journalists), contribute to the comparative global perspective students are meant to acquire and insights into the representation of journalism in the fictional and factual media.

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

A variety of assessment methods will be used to allow students to achieve the learning outcomes. These include essays, reflective writing, digital media tasks, media pitch production, critical comments, research portfolio work, and seminar presentations. It is via these that students are formally assessed. Constructive/formative feedback is offered via email, surgeries and one-to-one sessions.

19. Reference points

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

Subject Benchmark Statements

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2024)

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/qualifications-frameworks#>

University Vision

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

University [Vision and Strategic Plan](#) 2020-27, including the [Education Pillar](#)

Department aims and objectives

Department Learning and Teaching Strategy

Faculty of Social Sciences Learning and Teaching Strategy

<https://sites.google.com/a/sheffield.ac.uk/fss-landt/strategies-and-policies/faculty-level?pli=1>

External examiners' reports

20. Programme structure and regulations

All MA Global Journalism students will take six core modules and a dissertation module.

Semester 1 comprises three core modules weighted at 15 credits each; and Semester 2 comprises two core modules weighted at 15 credits each with a further 2 x 15 credit optional modules being chosen.

Additionally, a 75-credit 'research portfolio' module will run throughout the academic year.

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

21. Student development over the course of study

The programme is designed using a programme level approach. The conceptual, methodological, theoretical and practical groundwork starts in semester one, introducing key areas of knowledge and allowing students to learn broadly.

This continues in semester two with more specialised knowledge developed in the remaining core and optional modules.

Finally, the research portfolio provides the learning scaffold for the students and investigates research approaches, understanding of research and its dissemination. It culminates in a research portfolio which should show strong analytical skills and knowledge, expressed in the ability to conceptualise, devise and execute a complex and rigorous piece of research.

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

Detailed information regarding admission to the programme is available at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/prospective/>

23. Additional information

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>.