



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	Broadcast Journalism
2	Programme Code	IJCT025
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 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	Not applicable
11	Mode(s) of Attendance	Full-time
12	Duration of the Programme	1 year (MA), nine months (PG Dip)
13	Accrediting Professional or Statutory Body	Broadcast Journalism Training Council
14	Date of production/revision	August 2013, March 2018, March 2026

15. Background to the programme and subject area

The expansion of radio, television and online news and the high profile of the media have led to a growing need for journalists with a sophisticated understanding of the technical and editorial challenges entailed in helping people interpret and navigate the world around them. The best journalists are inquiring, sceptical, rigorous, original and, sometimes, humble and maintain high standards of integrity, honesty, accuracy and fairness. The MA and Postgraduate Diploma in Broadcast Journalism, delivered in a department actively engaged in research into the practice and products of journalism, seek to fuse the practice of journalism with the study of journalism in a way which breaks down artificial barriers and gives students opportunities to both question and understand the ways in which broadcast news works and its role in society. The course is committed to giving students the underpinning knowledge and understanding they need of the industry, its regulation, its codes and conventions. Students will be encouraged to develop a critical understanding of the world around them through the study of law and politics, and how they affect journalists' work. They will also study ethics and journalism. The course is taught by experienced broadcast journalists and media academics in an environment which simulates as closely as possible the pressures and practices of a professional newsroom. The course has close links with industry, is accredited by the Broadcast Journalism Training Council, and working journalists visit regularly. Students are expected to use Sheffield as their news area and work on real stories, with a proper regard for legal and ethical concerns. Students undertake a work placement as part of the course.

For more information visit <http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/journalism>

16. Programme aims

Consistent with the general aims of the Department, the programme aims to:

- Equip students with the skills, knowledge and understanding required to work successfully in broadcast news.
- Encourage students to reflect critically on media issues.
- Give students a critical understanding of the role of the broadcast journalist in society.

- To foster high ethical and professional standards.

17. Programme learning outcomes

For the award of Postgraduate Certificate, students will have acquired some (60 credits) of the following:

Knowledge and understanding:

K1 Of ethics, codes of practice and broadcast regulation.

K2 Of newsgathering and newsroom processes.

K3 Of the role of the broadcast journalist in society.

Skills and other attributes:

S1 Core journalism skills including researching, reporting and interviewing.

S2 Relevant broadcast skills including use of recording and editing equipment, writing for broadcast, interviewing for broadcast and organising and planning for broadcast.

S3 The ability to meet deadlines.

S4 Organising and structuring information.

For the award of Postgraduate Diploma, students will have acquired the following:

Knowledge and understanding:

K1 Of media law and the courts.

K2 Of political institutions, their structure and organisation.

K3 Of ethics, codes of practice and broadcast regulation.

K4 Of the role of the journalist in society.

K5 Of the critical appraisal of contemporary media issues.

K6 Of the relationship between academic media research and the practice of journalism.

K7 Of newsgathering and newsroom processes.

Skills and other attributes:

S1 Core journalism skills including researching, reporting, organising and structuring information, interviewing.

S2 Relevant broadcast skills, including use of recording and editing equipment, writing for broadcast, interviewing for broadcast, organising and planning for broadcast.

S3 The ability to work independently and as a member of a team.

S4 The ability to meet deadlines.

S5 The ability to organise and structure information.

In addition to the above, for the award of MA students will have acquired the following:

Knowledge and understanding:

K1 Of devising, researching and independently executing a major piece of journalism expressed in either radio or television.

K2 The ability to reflect critically on their own journalism.

Skills and other attributes:

S1 The creative and imaginative use of recording and editing techniques in either radio or television.

S2	The ability to relate academic research to the broadcast news production process and its products.
S3	The ability to solve problems that arise in a complex production process.

18. Teaching, learning and assessment

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

A programme of technical workshops guides students through radio and television production techniques while lectures and workshops develop their journalism ability. Workshops are structured to represent newsroom activity and designed to simulate the professional environment as closely as possible. Senior industry speakers regularly give guest lectures. Students are expected to produce journalistic products (scripts, radio and television reports) for evaluation by themselves and their tutors. This process builds towards a series of newdays where broadcast quality radio and television programmes and bulletins are produced, along with online multimedia articles following professional codes and conventions and where students must work as a team, taking on various roles, as well as making an individual contribution. Several of these newdays are led by working journalists from outside the Department. Running alongside are lectures and seminars covering law, politics, ethics and regulation which feature discussion of real case studies. Students also have the opportunity to visit key institutions, such as the Houses of Parliament and major broadcasting organisations and at local level attend court hearings and council meetings. The work placement, organised with help from the Broadcast Journalism Training Council, provides an opportunity for students to apply and measure the development of their skills in a professional environment. Although it is not assessed, the work placement can inform and feed into assessed project work.

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

All learning outcomes are assessed using a variety of means. For the Diploma, knowledge and understanding is typically assessed by a combination of essays and an examination accounting for a third of the course. K7 together with S1-S5 are assessed through journalistic products, exercises and assignments created in a variety of situations which test the students' skills and attributes. For the MA, K1, S1, S3 are assessed by journalistic products, while K2 and S2 are assessed through an extended essay requiring synthesis of knowledge and practical skills

19. Reference points

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

Subject Benchmark Statements

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statements.aspx>

Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (2008)

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/The-framework-for-higher-education-qualifications-in-England-Wales-and-Northern-Ireland.aspx>

University Strategic Plan

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/strategicplan>

Learning and Teaching Strategy (2016-21)

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/staff/learning-teaching/our-approach/strategy2016-21>

Department aims and objectives

Department Learning and Teaching Strategy

Broadcast Journalism Training Council Guidelines

Employers

20. Programme structure and regulations

The programme structure assumes no prior knowledge or experience of journalism and is based on the principle that students must learn how to 'do' broadcast journalism as well as analyse and critically reflect upon its products and processes. A key element is that students are expected to apply knowledge gained in theoretical modules in practical situations and be able to demonstrate how each informs the other. The programme is structured to ensure it meets the requirements of the professional accrediting body and maximises the students' chances of a career in broadcast journalism.

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/regs>.

21. Student development over the course of study

The early weeks of the programme involve developing basic journalism and technical skills with carefully chosen tutor-monitored exercises to develop confidence and competence in newsgathering and production. Lectures lay out key concepts and begin to push students towards making informal links between theory and practice. By the end of the first semester students will be initiating their own stories and producing consecutive hourly radio bulletins or a short television news programme under tutor supervision. In semester two students are expected to take more responsibility for their learning by generating ideas and researching material for more complex types of journalism, such as features and a variety of programme types. They will be able to apply technical skills to broadcast news in increasingly imaginative and creative ways and will have developed the habit of critical reflection through peer and tutor review of their work. Students who pass the second semester may exit with the award of Postgraduate Diploma. Those continuing for the final third of the programme will be expected to work with greater autonomy by devising, researching and executing a substantial piece of original journalism expressed in either radio or television. This will entail strong conceptualisation, problem solving abilities and the need to evaluate large amounts of information. Students will also be able to make meaningful connections between journalism theory and practice

22. Criteria for admission to the programme

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

Applicants must demonstrate the aptitude and potential for a career in broadcast journalism through an application form and submission of a pre-recorded radio bulletin. All home and overseas applicants are interviewed. Overseas applicants must demonstrate evidence of English language competence as defined by the Department and on the website below.

23. Additional information

None

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>.