PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	**MA Investigative Reporting** (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip/PG Cert
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time – 1 year Part-time – 2 years September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMAINVGR_C
HECoS Code	100442 (journalism)
Start date of programme	Autumn 2016
Date of programme approval	Spring 2016
Date of last programme amendment approval	June 2017
Valid for academic entry year	2023-24
Programme Director	Imke Henkel
Date of last revision to document	14/01/2023

Admissions requirements

A second-class honours degree (2:2) or above in any related subject; other qualifications will be considered. Applications are encouraged from those with prior investigative experience in journalism, human rights or other related fields.

Course aims

Investigative reporting is at a crossroads in theory and in practice. Crises of ethics and funding have brought profound changes to the nature of investigative news output, the ways in which it is produced and distributed, and the institutions that invest in it. Yet it remains a pillar of the fourth estate and continues to embody the media's unique contribution to democratic life.

This programme responds to the rapidly developing tools, practices and models associated with investigative reporting, as well as emergent critical theories and concepts in civic communications. Above all, it offers advanced professional training led by experienced and award-winning practitioners.

At present there are only a few UK universities that offer specialist degrees in this area, and programmes tend to be oriented towards conventional careers in journalism. We believe there is an unmet need for a degree that truly reflects the increasingly networked nature of investigative reporting and the growing involvement and opportunities for various organisations, sectors and individuals to participate in public interest journalism.

As such, this programme aims to equip students with cutting edge investigative reporting skills appropriate to a range of professional contexts and institutions within and beyond traditional journalism. But as well as responding to developing trends and theories, it also reflects the constants that underpin investigative ethics, newsgathering and storytelling.

The programme speaks directly to the college mission as a research-led degree that meets the changing career needs of adults. In a climate post digitization, financial crisis, phone hacking and the Leveson Inquiry, it comes at a critical juncture in the history of watchdog reporting.

Course structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time - 1 year					
7	ARMC237S7	Introduction to Investigative Reporting	30	Core	T1
7	ARMC238S7	Introduction to Data Journalism	30	Compulsory	T2
7		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3*
7		Option	30	Option	T1, 2 or 3*
*subject to not more than 60 credits to be taken in any one term					
L7	ARMC047D7	Final Investigative Project	60	Core	T3 & summer

Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	ARMC237S7	Introduction to Investigative Reporting	30	core	T1
7	ARMC238S7	Introduction to Data Journalism	30	compulsory	T2
7	FDME014S7	Option (Digital Journalism)	30	option	T3
Year 2					
7		Option	30	Option	T1 or 2
7	ARMC047D7	Final Investigative Project	60	Core	T3 & summer
Indicative options list					
7	FDME014S7	Digital Journalism	30	option	T3
7	LALW015S7	Data Surveillance	30	option	T1
7	SSPO267S7	Political Communication and Citizen Engagement in a Digital World	30	Option	T1
7	ARMC172S7	Theoretical Perspectives on Media	30	option	T2
7	ARMC266S7	Media, Digitalisation & the City	30	option	T2

*PT structure: either 90 or 60 credits of taught modules in year one and final project plus 30 or 60 credits of taught modules in year two, taking **not more than 30 credits** in any one term.*

Core: *Module must be taken and passed by student*
Compulsory: *Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)*
Option: *Student can choose to take this module*

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

The taught components of the programme will comprise a combination of lectures and seminars with a strong emphasis on peer collaboration and a range of academic and practice-oriented assessments.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through the following types of assessment.

Assessment is 100% coursework components. These will include both theoretical essays and specific assignments in areas such as data analysis, story arching, Freedom of Information

requests, etc. For their dissertation, students will have the opportunity to produce a real-world investigative report and benefit from both academic supervision and professional mentoring.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

On successful completion of the programme, students will have acquired key skills in:

- Conducting investigative research and interviews
- Developing sources
- Producing long-form and in-depth investigative news features
- Engaging in collaborative and multi-platform reporting

In addition, students will have acquired knowledge in theories and concepts related to civic communications, as well as investigative ethics and law. Finally, students will have acquired experience in covering specialist subject areas such as human rights, corruption and corporate malfeasance.

Careers and further study

Graduates can pursue career paths in journalism, the media, or public relations. Possible professions include:

- broadcast/newspaper journalist
- press sub-editor
- publishing copy-editor/proofreader
- public relations officer
- market researcher
- writer.

Jobs gained by some of our BA and MA graduates include:

- Producer, BBC News
- Research Manager, BBC News
- Project Coordinator, Sony Interactive Entertainment ltd
- Marketing Manager, Red Deer
- Broadcast Journalist, LBC, Classic FM, Capital and Heart
- Staff Writer, Field Gibson Media
- Communications Officer, Bristol Water
- Staff Reporter, European Medical Journal
- Executive Producer, Mongolian Media Council
- Business Analyst, GSK
- PR Director, Notable

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on the careers pages of our website.

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its Common Award Scheme Regulations and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services.](#) This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.