

BA Mass Communications, Advertising & Public Relations

Module Descriptions

Communication Management

On this module students will develop knowledge and understanding of managing and supervising groups/teams. Whilst working on a defined project students will demonstrate increased understanding and critical reflection/execution of the management and supervision of small project teams; demonstrate an increased understanding and development of the requisite skills involved in managing projects (this will include management and strategic planning and execution on the project aims and objectives). Students will develop their ability to instigate, monitor and manage communication processes (e.g. organising/chairing meetings, developing admin procedures, managing the project schedule). Students will develop their knowledge and transferable skills related to persuasion and negotiation (how to work with internal and external stakeholders and negotiate appropriate solutions and influence attitudes when faced with issues and/or problems). Students will develop their understanding and application of management theory and leadership skills/styles. Students will develop their understanding and ability to create, develop and maintain a positive organisational/team culture.

Advertising Theory and Practice

This module provides students with a comprehensive introduction to both practice and theory of advertising, or in other words, creating and understanding advertising. Practice will cover themes such as planning adverts, brands, creative briefs, and media plans. In the theory sessions students will explore how various theories from different fields can be used to open insights to advertising and its place in society. Students will develop an advertising campaign working in small groups. Working on their own, students will conduct an analysis of advertising and present this in essay form.

Branding

Drawing upon historical, aesthetic and artistic material this module begins by looking at icons, signs and visual communication within a broad socio-historical context. From this starting point students will be looking at the emergence of branding and advertising as influential in relation to conspicuous consumption and how this has developed within the online/digital arena. Classic brand designs, strategies and notions of differentiation, humans as brands (Obama, Beckham etc.) all lead to a consideration of brands as vessels of meaning and tribalism. Key to this process is how to create and maintain brand loyalty. This module will conclude by looking at active user participation in brand identities (WEB 2.0), successful designs, the role and importance of both narrative and emotion and brands as fixed social entities.

Online Communication

This module will build upon previous modules by drawing upon students' knowledge of communication theory and media studies - but the added twist with this module will be their ability to track these transformations both theoretically and through the creation of digital texts. Key to this module will be in explaining how creative industries have been altered - so students will move from the digital journalist, to PR and blogging and conclude with online advertising (mash-ups). By the end students will be able to apply knowledge, accurately assess and examine validity of the claims made by proponents of the 'digital revolution'. Students will complete three practical assessments linked directly to the three creative industries studied: journalism, advertising and public relations.

Public Relations Theory and Practice

Key concepts, perspectives and issues in the contemporary management of strategic Public Relations will be examined in depth. The module will commence with a brief historical overview, and will move swiftly on to consider the rapid development of the theoretical base of the subject, and the growing recognition of the importance of the function in reputation management. Aspects of different specialisms (including media relations and global public relations) will also be considered. The relationship between journalism, public relations, marketing, and advertising will be evaluated. The rapid development of social networks will figure largely in the module, as will the dictates of 24/7 media liaison. In particular, students will develop the skills necessary to act as a spokesperson on behalf of a client organisation, and to participate ethically and effectively in public discourse on the key communication issues of the day (both national and international). To this end there is a practical and vocational focus built into the module and the student will have the opportunity to develop appropriate and relevant practical skills.

Visual Communication

This module allows students to conceptualise and design visual communication solution for a design brief using creative and practical knowledge and skills across a range of communication genres and media. Students will examine, analyse and evaluate visual and material culture in historic and contemporary contexts and the role of the designer in the conception and development of visual communication as well as how graphic design can be used to implement strategic change in behaviour and cultures. Students will learn the graphic design elements and develop their ability to use the elements in the creative process, media and commerce. They will evaluate design strategy and user experience through consumer testing.