Programme Specification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme award and title:</th>
<th>MSc/Diploma/Certificate in Public Relations by on-line learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCQF Level:</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCQF Credit Value:</td>
<td>180</td>
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**Educational aims of the programme:**
Concise (e.g. a few sentences), general statement of aims and broad purposes of the programme
- The MSc in Public Relations (online) comprises a taught programme of seven compulsory modules followed by a dissertation. All modules are based within the Department of Film, Media & Journalism. The online programme aims to help students, mainly PR professionals, develop a critical appreciation of the role of public relations in contemporary society and to develop key analytical, management and communication skills. The programme is based on the burgeoning academic theory that either underpins public relations in a functional way or critiques its social role. The file of public relations has interdisciplinary roots and draws on sociology, philosophy, psychology, management and organisation studies, communications and media studies.

**Intended programme learning outcomes:**
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) of what the student will know, understand and be able to do as a result of their learning, expressed in the categories below. Please consider the contribution made to the student’s personal development planning (PDP) and future employability.

**Knowledge and understanding**
- Public relations principles, practices and techniques and their intersection with other management disciplines;
- Mass communications, key psychological theories and frameworks as applicable to public relations practice;
- Quantitative and qualitative social science research paradigms, both in terms of their significance for the professionalisation of the occupation and at the technical level in terms of their application in evaluating public relations work;
- The rise of the political, economic, social and technological forces which have facilitated the historical emergence and growth of public relations;
- The systemic processes linking organisational concerns and rhetorical strategies with broader national and international transformations;
- Critical appreciation of the role of public relations in society and particularly its relationship with media and other elites;
- The main paradigms in the public relations discipline and their relationship to source disciplines;
- The concept of culture as applied to both societies and organisations;
- The rhetorical paradigm in public relations, together with an ability to apply it to the analysis of specific texts.

**Subject-specific skills and other attributes**
- Subject-specific skills and other attributes engage critically with their field and be fluent with the contributory disciplines; in particular they should understand the key paradigms and their links with other social sciences;
- understand the emergence of the public relations occupation and the broader political, economic, social and technological forces which created the conditions for development and have shaped and continue
to shape the practice;
analyse external and internal organisational environments with a view to identifying the potential role for
communication that can contribute to change and the progress of organisational goals;
develop their ability to formulate rigorous argument based on sound analysis utilising a variety of
sources and empirical data;
develop intellectual independence and self-reflexivity in their own research and in the critical analysis of
cases.
Generic skills (e.g. information skills, communication skills, critical, analytical and problem solving
abilities) and other attributes
apply a range of business, organisation and communication analytical skills to a variety of cases and
organisational contexts;
apply quantitative and qualitative research skills to public relations planning and evaluation and for
public opinion and market research purposes;
research issues which affect an organisation including environmental/systems analysis, stakeholder and
public analysis, internal communication audits (culture and climate studies as per International
Communication Association);
work independently on a wide variety of concurrent self-directed applied short and longer term projects;
develop creative solutions to practical problems and case studies, based on their knowledge of sources,
thoretical approaches and, in some cases, their own original research;
tackle a variety of traditional and non-traditional theoretical problems.

Learning, teaching and assessment strategies:
Outline (e.g. one or two paragraphs) on overall approach taken to develop and assess learning
outcomes, including any distinctive features
Appropriate teaching methods and learning strategies have been developed to achieve the learning
outcomes of the Public Relations (Online) programme. All taught modules involve a programme of
course materials (structured lecture notes) designed to facilitate comprehension of the foundations of
the subject area. In addition, embedded hyperlinks to related materials, weekly tasks and online
discussion forums are intended to improve students’ understanding of each subject area and to develop
more general conceptual and personal transferable skills. These teaching strategies are combined in
such a way as to provide a rich and varied experience. Assessment procedures are regularly reviewed
and revised in relation to student output. Students learn to be flexible in their approach to learning and
self-development since they cannot simply apply routines from undergraduate level work

Residential Schools

Residential schools are held in Stirling, normally at the end of May. As well as being used for
examinations, the main aims of residentialials are to provide support in study and examination skills,
review and expand on the material studied, use the opportunity of face-to-face teaching to run
workshops and case studies, and encourage networking. Students must attend at least one
residential school during their course of study.

Professional/statutory body
accreditation or recognition:
Further details:

Entry requirements: http://www.external.stir.ac.uk/postgrad/index.php

Programme structure: http://www.calendar.stir.ac.uk/

Relevant Subject Benchmark statement (if applicable): http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/default.asp

Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework: http://www.scqf.org.uk/the_framework.asp

Introduction/revision date: