

Introduction

Welcome to your new year of study in the School of Media, Music and Performance. This handbook is designed to act as a guide and give you the basic information you need about the School and your programme. Please keep it, read it, and refer to it.

The School is one of the largest providers of practice-based education in the field in the UK, with 2000 undergraduate students, more than 200 postgraduate students, and over 180 permanent and visiting staff. The School has excellent contacts with a broad range of creative and cultural organisations, including the BBC.

The School offers a diverse range of programmes across the fields of Media, Music and Performance including, for example, Television and Radio, Media Technology, Media and Performance, Animation, Computer and Video Games, Popular and Band Music, Contemporary Theatre Practice, and Dance, from Diploma level to taught MA. Developments for options of study through the links with MediaCity UK are currently being explored. The School has a growing number of research postgraduates on M.Phil. and PhD programmes.

Our teaching and learning activities are equally diverse, and as a student you will engage in many different forms of study. At different times, you will probably be asked to work alone and in a team, attend lectures, seminars and workshops, you may go on location, be involved in rehearsals and performances, or be involved in work placements.

We operate a system of module tutors and Programme Directors who are there to support you in your studies. You will find their names in this handbook. You should also take note of the range of other support services provided by the University, all of them designed to make your time with us as productive and enjoyable as possible

However, our main overriding aim is to provide the opportunity for you to become skilled, creative and critically aware people, capable of using your subject-specific learning and the broad range of key skills you acquire during your Programme into the careers that you choose after graduation.

We wish you every success in achieving this aim.

Professor John Mundy

Head of School
School of Media, Music and Performance
The University of Salford
Adelphi House
The Crescent
Salford
Greater Manchester
M3 6EN

Programme Introduction

The overall aims of the programme are:

- To provide a programme of critical and theoretical study directly related to the academic and practical requirements of media studies
- To produce post-graduates equipped to play leading roles in facilitating various communities' engagement with social media.
- To develop students' technique and ability to develop social reporting skills
- To enable students to profitably exploit a variety of networks to develop projects
- To produce post-graduates capable of critically evaluating the role social media plays as part of the tools and processes of a participatory economy
- To explore the role of social media in a variety of socio-cultural spheres
- To provide a stimulating environment which motivates student to realise their potential through their studies and throughout their future careers
- To develop critically aware media-practitioners able to place their work in its social political and economic context

The structure of the programme is detailed below:

Semester 1	Defining the Digital (15 Credits)	Research (15 Credits)	Skills Workshops (30 Credits)	Community Project (30 Credits)
Semester 2	Creative Networking (15 Credits)	Engaging the Community (15 Credits)		
Summer	Individual Social Media Project (60 Credits)			

Rationale

This programme is designed for creative social entrepreneurs, people who want to make a change to themselves and communities, deploying media for social good. Students will leave this course equipped to work in a variety of institutions engaging with social media. This includes the traditional broadcasters who are gradually entering the field as well as new community and third sector organisations who need social media to work for them and their clients.

Programme Facilities

Ben Light

Professor of Digital Media
Programme Leader – MA Social Media
Room AH 309, Adelphi House
Tel: 0161-295 5443
b.light@salford.ac.uk

The **Programme Administrator** for the programme is **Jess Waywell** available in the Adelphi Building Office, Peru St.

Assignments should always be submitted to Jess Waywell and a receipt received.

You should also contact Jess when there are administrative issues e.g. relating to mitigating circumstances, previous results and Interruption / extension of Study requests.

Tel: 0161- 295 6216
J.Waywell@salford.ac.uk

Postgraduate Office is based on the 2nd floor of Humphrey Booth House.

Paul Farrall - Acting Assistant Registrar, Postgraduate Student Administration

Tel: 0161-295 5090

Within the range of programmes and disciplines taught at the University there is a wealth of facilities available to support students.

Issues relating to school facilities should be directed to:

Mrs Ameera McQueen
Facilities Manager
Adelphi Building
Room AC103
0161 295 6366
a.mcqueen@salford.ac.uk

Attendance

Attendance on the programme is not an option but a key requirement. Experience has shown that poor attendance is linked directly with poor quality work and consequent failure of modules. Furthermore, poor attendance in group work severely affects other students.

If students are unable to attend University due to illness or similar, they have a responsibility to inform their programme leader/tutor who will in turn inform appropriate subject teaching staff. Absence is to be covered with a doctor's note or similar. (This is particularly important where a period of absence is likely to have a significant impact on assessable work)
See also section on Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC)

Staff

The staff on the programme include not only full-time staff from within the School of Media, Music & Performance, but also a range of part time lecturers who bring their own perspective and expertise to the programme.

Academic Staff Roles

The full-time academic staff (in general called the lecturers, on a particular programme or module) are here to teach and do research, and to carry out the administration of your programme and the modules. Their time is split between these areas of work.

Broadly, the different levels of academic staff (Professor, Reader, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer) reflect levels of seniority in the university career structure; the title 'Dr' usually signifies a PhD (the highest research degree).

There are also roles which relate to administration and management. For example: X might be a Senior Lecturer, Programme Leader, and also a Level (Year) Tutor. Here's a list of some of the staff roles which relate to teaching and learning:

Programme Leader: Ben Light

The Programme Leader is responsible for the day-to-day running of a degree programme. If, for example, you're unclear about what modules you should be attending, or your timetable, or your assessed coursework requirements, you should ask your Programme Leader.

Module Co-ordinator: the lecturer responsible for the running of a particular module, usually the principal lecturer for that module. If you're unclear about some aspects of a module, the co-ordinator is available for advice.

The School also employs a number of excellent part-time tutors. They are usually experienced specialists who are professionally active in the media industry or as performers, composers or instrumentalists. Although they not in the School so regularly, you can contact them by email, or leave a note for them via the School Office.

A full list of academic and support staff is available on the School's website www.smmp.salford.ac.uk.

Communication between Staff and Students

Electronically:

Email is the most effective method of communication between students and staff. Please make sure you check your university email once a day. Developments are underway that will mean your results are emailed to your University email address after Exam Boards have taken place so it is of utmost importance that you get used to using your webmail account early on in your programme of study. Also **Blackboard** is a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This will have notices and all details regarding modules, deadlines and any additional information that lecturers may want to post i.e. lecture notes etc.

Use of Social Media Sites

MA Social Media

Constant developments in social media sites (eg Facebook) mean that these offer valuable communication opportunities for staff and students. These should be viewed as complementary to the student webmail system, and not as alternatives.

The University's ICT Acceptable Use Policy <http://www.ils.salford.ac.uk/policies/ictaup.pdf> states that Users of University equipment "may not use the University ICT facilities to cause the good name and reputation of the University or any part of it to be damaged or undermined by carrying out inappropriate, criminal or any other activity that conflicts with University policy and regulations".

Students should be aware that any student found guilty of misconduct will be subject to disciplinary measures. Under the Student Disciplinary procedure misconduct includes indecent, disorderly, threatening, intimidating or offensive behaviour or language; sexual, racial or other harassment whether occurring on University premises or elsewhere including in the virtual environment of social networking websites.

Additionally, students are reminded that unsuitable or derogatory references to fellow students or staff posted on the internet may contravene certain laws of libel and slander, and are discouraged from entering into any activity that may put themselves at risk in this way.

Noticeboards:

Given the nature of the MA Social Media programme, there will not be a physical notice board. All notices will be posted to the VLE, once a note has been posted it is assumed you have seen it, so please check the VLE regularly.

Programme Tutorials:

Your programme leader will hold regular group meetings. This is an opportunity for staff and students to exchange information, particularly on matters of general programme concern.

Studying Modules

Recent years have seen the development of many modular programmes throughout Higher Education. While modular programmes may appear complicated, the basic idea is very simple. This section summarises those aspects of the programme structure which are most relevant to students.

Programme Structure

With effect from 2009/10 the University is changing the way it describes the levels of qualification and modules in line with other national changes. The table below shows these changes:

Previous level descriptors	Used prior to 2009/10	To be used 2009/10 onwards
Foundation	0	3
Certificate	1	4
Diplom	2	5
Honours	3	6

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Masters	M	7
Doctoral	D	8

Size

Modules are distinguished by size as defined by Credit value. At postgraduate level (Level 7), modules have credit values of 15, 30 or 60 credits.

It should be noted that projects may span more than one module, and conversely more than one project may take place within a module. However ALL modules will have work assessed within them. Students should understand the significance of credits since this is central to the University's assessment procedures.

Shape

On the MA Social Media, you will experience two module shapes: short and fat, involving a concentrated period of study over a semester, and long, thin modules which run over two semesters.

Type

All modules on the MA Social Media are compulsory, there are no options.

Assessment

Each module has specific work requirements consisting of one or more pieces of assessed work (design project, research report, seminar presentation, exercise, etc.). These will be clearly identified on the module assignment brief, which all students are given at the beginning of each module. Every assignment you are given will have been checked (verified) by a second member of staff. Some will also have been verified by the external examiner for your programme.

Submitting work

Each piece of work will also have a deadline (and identified location) for submission. It is very important that you meet these deadlines, otherwise penalties will be applied (see below) which could result in you failing the module and, possibly, the programme. All work must be handed in with a completed assignment submission receipt and a declaration with regard to plagiarism. You should keep your portion of the receipt as evidence that the work was handed in on time. School Office Staff will not accept work without a completed receipt and a completed plagiarism declaration.

Submission dates will be found in your module handbooks (which will be located on the VLE).

Assignments must be submitted to the School Office before 4.00 pm on the day of submission.

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Assignments can be submitted up to 2 weeks before the submission date, but they must still be submitted to the School Office in Adelphi Building before 4.00 pm on any day.

Assignments will not be accepted under any circumstances after 4.00 pm on any day.

Students taking modules owned by other Schools should check opening times and submission times of other School Offices as they may differ. For MA Social Media students, this point relates to the Engaging Communities Module to be offered in Semester 2.

If you hand in your work late, the following penalties will be applied:

Up to and including 7 days late	a deduction of 10 marks
Eight days and up to 14 days late	a further deduction of 10 marks
More than fourteen days late	Work will not be accepted and a Non-Submission mark will be recorded*

* If work up to 14 days late would otherwise pass, then the mark for the work is reduced to no lower than the pass mark. If the initial mark for work submitted up to 14 days late is below the pass mark, then no penalty is deducted.

Plagiarism

The University takes academic misconduct offences very seriously and all suspected cases will be subject to investigation.

Plagiarism, which is one of the categories of academic misconduct, is the act of passing off another person's work as your own, whether this is intentional or not. The most common types of plagiarism include (but are not restricted to):

- Copying another individual's work, with or without their consent/knowledge, and presenting this as one's own work.
- Quoting or summarizing the work of another author without acknowledgement and appropriate referencing.

Other categories of academic misconduct are:

- Buying or commissioning a piece of work from another individual and presenting this as one's own work.
- Collusion
- Falsifying experimental or other investigative results
- Taking unauthorised material (including electronic devices) into an examination; copying from or communicating with another person during an examination

As a student of the University, you should ensure that you know and understand what is meant by plagiarism and the requirements of your own School for referencing and citation. Your academic tutors will provide you with detailed advice and training about good academic practice (*i.e.* how to avoid plagiarism) at the start of the academic year and during modules. In addition, you can seek further guidance about what constitutes good academic practice from your module tutors and the following resources:

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- www.edu.salford.ac.uk/studyskills (for more information about referencing);
- <http://www.als.salford.ac.uk/plagiarism/plagiarism.doc> and [http://vle.salford.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id= 258_1](http://vle.salford.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=258_1) (for further information about plagiarism and how to avoid it in your work).

You are also recommended to make use of the University's SafeAssign tool (accessed via Blackboard from your programme spaces area) to check your assignments for any referencing/plagiarism issues prior to submission.

When submitting each assignment, you will be required to complete a declaration confirming that the work submitted is your own, with all sources duly acknowledged.

Anyone suspected of plagiarism will have his/her assessed written work run through the plagiarism detection software: Turnitin.

If you are found guilty of plagiarism, the University will take appropriate disciplinary action, which may result in expulsion from the University. The Policy on the Conduct of Assessed Work (Academic Good Conduct) is available on the University policy and procedures website at http://www.salford.ac.uk/policies_procedures/.

Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC) – Illness and Incapacity

1. What are personal mitigating circumstances?

It is recognised that during your programme of study you will have to cope with a range of illnesses and experiences which are part of the normal course of events in life. In many cases these circumstances will have little or no noticeable effect on your academic performance. However there may be serious circumstances of a medical or personal nature, which affect you for a significant period of time during your programme of study and/or during the examination period, which are beyond your control and which have a recognisable effect on your performance.

2. What are serious personal mitigating circumstances?

The University does not define those circumstances which are serious and which are not. However the following are examples of circumstances which will probably not be taken into account:

Circumstances over which a student has some control through prior planning (e.g. moving house, getting married, computer problems)

Circumstances experienced by all or most students (e.g. financial difficulties)

Minor illnesses of a short-term nature;

Circumstances which have already been appropriately provided for by special assessment arrangements;

3. What is the personal mitigating circumstances procedure?

The procedure, which has been approved by the University for all students, gives you the opportunity to inform the University of serious medical or personal circumstances which you believe have affected your academic performance in an adverse way before the meeting of the Board of Examiners. You will find the procedure in your programme handbook or on the University website (www.salford.ac.uk/policies_procedures)

4. How do I inform the University?

You must complete a Personal Mitigating Circumstances form (PMC) which you can obtain from:

Your School Office

The Assessments Office in Humphrey Booth House (Room 208)

The University website

Student Life Advisors in University House

It is your responsibility to complete and submit the form yourself to your School Office. In exceptional circumstances you may nominate another person to submit the form on your behalf if you are unable to because of physical or mental incapacity. Staff cannot initiate PMCs or make oral representations on your behalf. Your PMC will be considered at a meeting of a PMC Review Panel which will report to the Board of Examiners. This process is explained further in paragraph 9 below.

You must indicate clearly on your PMC form each assignment which is covered by your PMC and you must make sure that all relevant dates are given.

5. What documentary evidence must I provide?

You must submit any relevant documentary evidence which supports your case, particularly if you have missed an assessment. It is your responsibility to decide on the evidence to be used and collate and submit the evidence.

The nature of the documentary evidence will vary according to the circumstances. If, for example, you have been ill with the flu for a period of 10 days, we will expect a doctor's note which says you were incapacitated between the two relevant dates. If, on the other hand, you have suffered the loss of a close relative and you feel your work has been affected, we will need confirmation of how this affected your performance, e.g. your emotional condition, your ability to work effectively, etc. This would probably be a letter from your doctor or counsellor, etc. It is important that you provide details of how any circumstances such as these affected you, rather than confirmation of any actual event. If you are in any doubt, please see your personal tutor or lecturer.

6. When should I submit a PMC?

You must submit the PMC form by the submission date for assessments and before the date of tests or examinations and, in any event, before the meeting of the PMC Review Panel. Dates of the PMC Review Panel meetings will be published in your School.

7. What must I do if I am ill on the day of an examination?

There will be occasions when you are not fit to attend on the day of an exam, test or other form of assessment. In such cases you must:

- notify the School Office of your absence;
- seek medical attention on the day and documentary evidence of incapacity where possible;
- submit a PMC form at the earliest opportunity.
- If you are taken ill during an assessment you should:
- notify the Senior Invigilator or academic tutor in charge so that a report can be made; seek medical attention on the day and documentary evidence of incapacity where possible;
- submit a PMC form at the earliest opportunity

8. What must I do if I cannot hand in assignments on the due date or I have been ill during the assignment?

You cannot request an extension to the deadline for assignments. The University has approved a policy for graduated penalties for late submission of work which you will find in your programme handbook or on the University website.

However if a PMC case is the reason for the delay in submitting the assignment you should do the following:

Either submit the assignment by the due date and submit with it a PMC form providing details of the circumstances which may have affected the standard of performance of your assignment;

Or submit a PMC form by the due date explaining the circumstances which have led to the late submission; submit the assignment as soon after the due date as possible.

The PMC Review Panel will determine the validity of your PMC.

9. What happens to my PMC?

It will be considered by a PMC Review Panel. The Panel will comprise a minimum of 3 members, of which at least 2 are academic members of staff. The Chair of the Panel will be independent of the Chair of the Board of Examiners.

The PMC Review Panel will meet before the meeting of the Board of Examiners. It will consider all the PMCs together with supporting documentary evidence. The Panel is empowered by the Board of Examiners to determine the validity of each case. The Panel will report to the Board of Examiners one of the following decisions in each case:

Reject PMC

Accept PMC - effect not applicable

Accept PMC - effect applicable

10. How does the Panel take account of PMCs?

The Panel will take into account:

is there evidence to support the case being made?

Timing - does the period affected by the PMC correspond with the date of the assessment?
How long did you have to complete the assessment (i.e. date when assessment set and deadline for submission)? Did you have time to complete the assessment if the PMC is disregarded?

severity of circumstances

nature of circumstances

The Panel, therefore, may accept the validity of your PMC but consider that it is not applicable to the assessments in question because of timing, for example.

The Panel will take great care to keep your information confidential.

11. What action can the Board of Examiners take?

The Board of Examiners cannot estimate your potential to obtain higher marks. Therefore it cannot change marks or set aside marks.

It can decide whether your circumstances are sufficiently serious to warrant you being given another opportunity to demonstrate your skills and competence at a time when you are fit to do so.

Boards of Examiners can take various actions in cases where the PMC Panel has determined that a PMC has been accepted and effect applicable. These are as follows:

- i) In all cases of late submission of assessment for designated component(s) remove penalties.
- ii) If the module has been failed:

Either permit the student to be assessed again according to the regulations but as though for the first time for the designated components;

Or offer compensation according to the regulations and let the module mark stand, with the option of being assessed again as though for the first time for designated components.

- iii) If the module has been passed:

Let the module mark stand, with the option of being assessed again as though for the first time for designated components.

If you repeat an assessment as though for the first time the full value of the mark(s) obtained, whether higher or lower than your original mark, will be counted and any previous mark(s) obtained discounted.

If you decide to let your module mark stand the University will record PMC against the module mark on your transcript.

12. Where can I get more guidance?

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If you think that you need more help in understanding the procedure and submitting a PMC you should contact the Assessments Office or the Student Assistance Office, both located in Humphrey Booth House.

If you are suddenly incapacitated on the day an assignment is due in, you should seek medical attention immediately (preferably on that day) and also obtain documentary evidence of your incapacity. You should submit a PMC form at the earliest opportunity.

It is extremely important that, if you experience circumstances you feel have affected your performance on a module, you follow the above procedure.

Please note: if you need to submit a PMC for work on a module undertaken under the regulations of another School, you will need to fill in a PMC and submit it to that School.

Marking work

Learning outcomes

All your assignments are marked in relation to the learning outcomes of the module – which are shown on your module assignment brief. The learning outcomes are statements of what you should be able to do on completion of the module – in other words what you have learnt. Staff will assess how far your assignment has gone in meeting learning outcomes. They will do this by using assessment criteria and grade descriptors.

Grade Descriptors

When judging how well you have done in the assessment criteria, staff use a standard scale otherwise known as grade descriptors. This enables those assessing your work to mark consistently and fairly. It also enables us to give you consistent feedback about your performance – see below.

Provisional marks

During the year you will usually be given a provisional mark for each piece of assessed work and for the module as a whole. We shall do this within four working weeks of you handing in the work.

Range of marks		Range of marks	
90% - 100%	Outstanding	40% - 49%	Adequate
80% - 89%	Excellent	30% - 39%	Unsatisfactory
70% - 79%	Very Good	20% - 29%	Poor
60% - 69%	Good	10% - 19%	Very poor
50% - 59%	Fair	1% - 9%	Extremely poor