

# Communication Studies

*This programme is no longer recruiting.*

<b>Final award</b>	BA (Hons)
<b>Intermediate awards available</b>	Cert HE, Dip HE
<b>UCAS code</b>	P900 - Level 1 entry (3 Year full time route)
<b>Details of professional body accreditation</b>	N/A
<b>Relevant QAA Benchmark statements</b>	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies, Sociology
<b>Date specification last up-dated</b>	August 2014

## Profile

### The summary - UCAS programme profile

#### BANNER BOX:

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#### ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

The minimum requirements for entry for Level 1 entry is 240 UCAS tariff points from:

A/AS level (Including 2 A2 passes), GNVQ, AVCE, Scottish Highers, International Baccalaureate, European Baccalaureate, BTEC / SCOTEC Diploma, Relevant Access Course or successful completion of the Level 0. Other qualifications, including overseas, may be considered.

We also welcome applicants from mature students who do not have formal qualifications but may have relevant experience. Students applying to this programme will be expected to demonstrate a specific interest in this area of study and should have a commitment to engaging with the subject. Applicants may be invited for interview.

If you have the potential, commitment and enthusiasm to study for a degree but are unable to meet the entry requirements for your chosen degree programme you can apply for the Extended Degree programme route. An Extended Degree includes a Level 0 year, making the period of study 4 years or 5 years if the Extended Degree programme is taken on a part-time basis. The programme provides a supportive learning space for students to experience academic studies at university and helps develop confidence and academic skills in preparation for Levels 1-3. The programme is also highly rated by students who successfully complete the programme. Successful completion of the programme guarantees entry to a range of Single Honours programmes or a Combined Programme of study within the School of Arts and Digital Industries.

More details of the Extended Degree programme can be found [here](#)

At UEL we are committed to working together to build a learning community founded on equality of opportunity - a learning community which celebrates the rich diversity of our student and staff populations. Discriminatory behaviour has no place in our community and will not be tolerated. Within a spirit of respecting difference, our equality and diversity policies promise fair treatment and equality of opportunity for all. In pursuing this aim, we want people applying for a place at UEL to feel valued and know that the process and experience will be transparent and fair and no one will be refused access on the grounds of any protected characteristic stated in the Equality Act 2010

## **Overseas Qualifications**

The number of overseas qualifications which are accepted for entry are too numerous to list, but you can get advice from the British Council or our admissions unit on 020 8223 2835. You must be able to understand and express yourself in both written and spoken English and some evidence e.g. For level 1 entry a TOEFL score of 550 or an IELTS score of 6.0 (no skill level below 5).

## **ABOUT THE PROGRAMME**

### **What is Communication Studies?**

Communication studies is a broad field of enquiry that investigates communication as a social activity. Communication studies draws on cultural and media studies but also other disciplines including sociology, politics, information technology, psychology, history and linguistics. Communication Studies may be studied as a major, joint or minor component of a Combined Honours Degree.

### **Communication Studies at UEL**

The communication and cultural industries are the fastest growing sectors of advanced economies and influential agents of economic, social and cultural change. BA Hons Communication Studies enables students to explore the communications revolution and understand the new communications environment. Participating in this new environment increasingly requires creative and practical skills as well as analytical and theoretical abilities. This programme enables students to demonstrate that they have a combination of skills derived from the study of communication as theory, practice and technology.

The degree brings together practice and theory across a broad field of communications research. On the practice side, the programme focuses on developing key skills in communications, media practice and research skills (academic and applied) for the global information age. On the theoretical side, it focuses on relationships between the organisation of communications and media industries and the study of public communication. It also examines the implications of changes in communications systems and the institutional, economic, technological, political, social and other forces that influence communications. Located within the historical evolution of communication and media studies, the programme combines social science perspectives with cultural theories.

### **Distinctive attributes of the programme**

- The programme integrates theory and practice of communications

- It combines both specialised skills using communication technologies with broader vocational communication skills
- It fosters critical understanding of the nature and significance of changes affecting public, mediated communications
- It offers students a choice of creative and practice-based modules
- It combines social science and cultural perspectives and draws on new approaches to studying communication.
- It has a strong international and comparative media focus
- The degree is designed to offer a range of attractive and valuable combinations with other programmes

### **Programme structure**

The degree can be taken over three or four years of full time study. The three year programme is taught at the Dockland Campus of the University of East London. Students who do not fulfil the admission requirements can undertake a four year programme by entering at our level zero Foundation programme. The programme can be taken in a full time or a part time mode of study.

### **Learning environment**

While the students attend traditional lectures, they also meet in seminars and practical based workshops, in which the content of the lectures as well as the result of their independent learning and research is debated and practiced. Lectures are also given by invited speakers and visiting scholars. Some programmes use web-based material and mode of delivery.

### **Assessment**

Most of our modules are assessed on coursework only. There are no examinations on core modules, however some modules include class tests and students may have examinations in optional modules taken as part of their degree. Full-time students are expected to pass six 20 credit modules a year, completing 360 credits for the award of an honours degree. First level marks do not count towards the final degree classification. The first year is a diagnostic year, involving formative assessment, that enables the student to develop and improve study skills and build a knowledge base on which higher levels are built. We encourage students to achieve high standards in the first year so they can then go on to maximise their potential in the second and third year, and obtain the best possible degree.

An honour's degree classification is based on an average of the student's second and third level module grades with the third level grades given twice the weight of the second level. Five level 2 module results are added to two times five level three results (5 + 10) and the total is divided by 15 to produce an aggregate mark.

### **Work experience/placement opportunities**

Students take Working in the Cultural Industries as a core module. This module prepares students for tailored workplace experience/placement in the creative and media sectors or in the field of communications. Students are encouraged to gain relevant work experience and placements during the programme and assistance and advice is available throughout their

studies. There is an exchange programme that enables students to study at the University of Roskilde for one semester.

### **Project work**

Students on the Single Honours and Major programme complete a large independent research-based dissertation over the whole of their last year of study. This project, worth 40 credits, combines the students' knowledge and understanding of theoretical and practical aspects of media and communications. Students take a taught research methods module which involves lectures, seminars and individual support. Each student is assigned a supervisor who will help them on a one-to-one basis. The project gives the students the opportunity to develop and research their own ideas and interests and leave the university with a showpiece of work for potential employers. Students also undertake individual and group project work on other modules including *Public Relations and Promotion* and video production modules.

### **Added value**

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## **IS THIS THE PROGRAMME FOR ME?**

### **If you are interested in...**

- The relationship between the media and society
- Communication theory and processes
- Understanding media and power
- Technology and social change
- Television and virtual environments
- Electronic publishing and website design
- Video and audio technologies
- Print and photo journalism
- Public relations and marketing communications
- New media forms
- Globalisation of communication
- Language, power and social exclusion
- Identity and communication
- Multiculturalism and Citizenship
- Economic, social and regulatory issues of converging media

### **If you enjoy...**

- Intellectual challenge
- hands-on creative engagement with media technologies
- developing both broad and specialised communication skills
- working independently and in a group
- learning about ICTs and media technologies
- exploring social interaction through messages and texts
- evaluating and analysing issues and relationships within the media, communications and creative industries

## **If you want...**

- an open and flexible choice of modules
- to know how to create content for print or the web, audio/video production, computer graphics
- to know how to research the Internet
- discuss issues and relate them to your knowledge and understanding of your every day life
- to learn together, discuss your ideas and meet new friends
- to spend three years in a culture of research, knowledge and inquiry
- the opportunity of a Foundation programme

## **Your future career**

- in the media, new media or associated areas including broadcasting, journalism, publishing
- advertising, marketing, public relations, market research, charities and voluntary organisations
- range of jobs (research, teaching, administration, policy) involving critical, research and content production skills
- range of jobs involving competent use of media production technologies (webpage design, video production etc.)
- range of jobs requiring communication skills

## **How we support you**

We provide students with a range of written material:

- Handbook which will give advice, help, structures of all our degrees, overview of UEL and School regulations, and all modules on offer, including content, recommended reading and module aims and objectives.
- Communication Studies degree handbook which provides specialist information on the structure of the programme and its component modules and routes.
- Individual Module Handbooks which contain detail program of the Module lectures, seminars and workshops, Module assessment, full reading list, marking schema.

## **Bonus factors**

We have industrial links with our Multimedia Production Centre, The Thames Gateway and local companies. The campus is positioned in the new commercial and financial development of London Docklands. The campus is also within easy reach of London's specialist media libraries, exhibitions and media production companies. Communication Studies at UEL benefits from an Erasmus exchange programme with Roskilde University, Denmark. The exchange agreement allows for second year students to attend classes, taught in English, at Roskilde in their second semester. Given the close proximity of Roskilde to Copenhagen, students can expect to be stimulated both intellectually and by the social life that a thriving European city offers. Classes available occupy the same theoretical ground as those covered at UEL as well as many other communication, cultural and media studies undergraduate programmes.

# Outcomes

## Programme aims and learning outcomes

### What is this programme designed to achieve?

This programme is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- develop a critical awareness of the relationship between technological, political, economic and socio-cultural change in the media and communications sectors and their implications for media structures, products and audiences.
- develop an understanding of processes of communication and relationships between production, consumption, regulation, representation and identity
- gain the confidence to use the analytical, practical and research skills associated with media and communications technologies in a range of organisational settings.
- Develop the skills to communicate effectively orally, in writing and using a variety of information and communication technologies
- Understand ethical, legal and professional responsibilities of, and constraints on, media and communications professionals
- Understand and apply different research traditions and approaches.

### What will you learn?

#### Knowledge

- examine the economic, technical, political and social factors which shape or influence the development of communication technologies;
- examine the historical and contemporary development of communication structures and regulatory frameworks
- understand ethical, legal and professional responsibilities of media professionals
- develop skills in operating a range of media technologies and critically evaluate their use

#### Thinking skills

- use theoretical concepts and perspectives to explain the development of communication structures, products and audiences
- gather, analyse and comment critically on ideas and approaches associated with the media using both traditional and modern sources
- analyse economic, social and technical factors which shape the development and implementation of new communication technologies

#### Subject-Based Practical skills

- discuss the range of ways in which technologies affect and have affected societies, the economy and cultures;
- analyse and offer solutions to commercial and regulatory problems associated with new media technologies
- design and produce practical projects to a specific brief

- learn to use professional-level application software with a minimum of direct instruction

### **Skills for life and work (general skills)**

- critically evaluate the experience of developing a project report
- understand and utilise different research approaches
- work and research independently
- work in a group and solve problems associated with group activities
- create and deliver presentations
- write media content and academic papers
- use computers and application software effectively
- ability to communicate effectively
- Problem solving
- Working within time and resource constraints

## **Structure**

### **The programme structure**

#### **Introduction**

All programmes are credit-rated to help you to understand the amount and level of study that is needed.

One credit is equal to 10 hours of directed study time (this includes everything you do e.g. lecture, seminar and private study).

Credits are assigned to one of 5 levels:

- 0 - equivalent in standard to GCE 'A' level and is intended to prepare students for year one of an undergraduate degree programme
- 1 - equivalent in standard to the first year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 2 - equivalent in standard to the second year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- 3 - equivalent in standard to the third year of a full-time undergraduate degree programme
- M - equivalent in standard to a Masters degree

#### **Credit rating**

The overall credit-rating of this programme is 360 credits.

#### **Typical duration**

The typical duration of this programme is three years full-time or five years part-time. It is possible to move from full-time to part-time study and vice-versa to accommodate any

external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Many of our students make use of this flexibility and this may impact on the overall duration of their study period.

### **How the teaching year is divided**

The teaching year begins in September and ends in June, but some programmes also allow students to join at the start of Semester B, in February. A typical full-time student will study the equivalent of 120 credits over the year. A typical part-time student will study for one day and one evening per week and will complete 60-80 credits.

### **What you will study when**

This programme is part of a modular degree scheme. A student registered in a full-time attendance mode will take six 20 credit modules per year. An honours degree student will complete six modules at level one, six at level 2 and six at level 3.

It is possible to bring together modules from one field with modules from another to produce a combined programme. Subjects are offered in a variety of combinations:

- Single - 120 credits at levels one, two and three
- Major - 80 credits at levels one, two and three
- Joint - 60 credits at levels one, two and three
- Minor - 40 credits at levels one, two and three

Modules are defined as:

- Core Must be taken
- Option Select from a range of identified module within the field
- University Wide Option Select from a wide range of university wide options

The following are the core and optional requirements for the single and major routes for this programme

### **Level 1 entry**

<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	
			<b>SINGLE</b>	<b>MAJOR</b>
1	Understanding Communication	20	Core	Core
1	Media, Technology and Social Change	20	Core	Core
1	Media and Communications Study Skills	20	Core	Core
1	Identity, Difference & Race	20	Core	Core
1	Digital Graphics and Visual Culture	20	Option	Option
1	Introduction to ICTs	20	Option	Option
1	Introduction to Web Page Design	20	Option	Option
1	Media & Gender	20	Option	Option
1	MediaLab1	20	Option	Option

1	Media Meanings	20	Option	Option
1	Introduction to Film Studies	20	Option	Option
1	The Writer's Voice	20	Option	Option
2	Communication and the Public Sphere	20	Core	Core
2	Working in the Cultural Industries	20	Core	Core
2	Understanding News and the Newspaper Industry	20	Core	Core
2	Story and Myth	20	Option	Option
2	Journalism and Page Design	20	Option	Option
2	Youth Cultures	20	Option	Option
2	Media Audiences	20	Option	Option
2	Audio and video: technology and cultural form	20	Option	Option
2	Race and Representation	20	Option	Option
2	Sound Systems	20	Option	Option
2	Media Lab 2	20	Option	Option
3	Communication Project (Double Module)	40	Core	Core
3	Communication and the Public Sphere: Communication, Citizenship & Culture	20	Core	Core
3	International Communication: the political economy of mass media	20	Option	Option
3	Imagining the Novel	20	Option	Option
3	Public Relations & Promotion	20	Option	Option
3	Exploring Working Class Culture	20	Option	Option
3	News Reporting	20	Option	Option
3	Magazine Media	20	Option	Option
3	Media Law, Ethics & Regulation	20	Option	Option
3	Digital Video Production	20	Option	Option
3	Innovation and Regulation of ICTs	20	Option	Option
3	Globalisation & the Mass Media	20	Option	Option
3	Television and Cultural Change	20	Option	Option
3	Media Lab 3	20	Option	Option
3	Popular Music: theory and practice	20	Option	Option

### **Requirements for gaining an award**

In order to gain an honours degree you will need to obtain 360 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain an ordinary degree you will need to obtain a minimum of 300 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher

- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher
- A minimum of 60 credits at level three or higher

In order to gain a Diploma of Higher Education you will need to obtain at least 240 credits including a minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher and 120 credits at level two or higher

In order to gain a Certificate of Higher Education you will need to obtain 120 credits at level one or higher.

In order to gain a Foundation Degree you will need to obtain a minimum of 240 credits including:

- A minimum of 120 credits at level one or higher
- A minimum of 120 credits at level two or higher

(A foundation degree is linked to a named Honours degree onto which a student may progress after successful completion of the Foundation degree.)

### **Degree Classification**

Where a student is eligible for an Honours degree, and has gained a minimum of 240 UEL credits at level 2 or level 3 on the programme, including a minimum of 120 UEL credits at level 3, the award classification is determined by calculating:

$$\frac{\text{The arithmetic mean of the best 100 credits at level 3}}{\times 2/3} + \frac{\text{The arithmetic mean of the next best 100 credits at levels 2 and/or 3}}{\times 1/3}$$

and applying the mark obtained as a percentage, with all decimal points rounded up to the nearest whole number, to the following classification

- 70% - 100% First Class Honours
- 60% - 69% Second Class Honours, First Division
- 50% - 59% Second Class Honours, Second Division
- 40% - 49% Third Class Honours
- 0% - 39% Not passed

## **Assessment**

### **Teaching, learning and assessment**

#### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Knowledge is developed through**

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Workshops

- Tutorials
- Demonstrations
- Reading and research for assignments and projects

### **Thinking skills are developed through**

- Discussions in seminars and groups and individual tutorials
- Reading and research for assignment and projects
- Application of critical evaluation to variety of issues

### **Practical skills are developed through**

- Workshop activities and exercises
- Continual independent practice and use of technologies
- Assignment work with a practical element
- Individual projects

### **Skills for life and work (general skills) are developed through**

- Individual and group presentations
- Information Technology workshops
- Researching and writing of essays and projects
- Presentation of written assignment work
- Solving problems through real life scenarios

### **Assessment**

#### **Knowledge is assessed by**

- Interim tests and final examinations
- Essay based coursework
- Critical engagement with and analysis of practice
- Knowledge used in presentation

#### **Thinking skills are assessed by**

- Interim tests and final examinations with essay type questions
- Ability to evaluate scenarios
- Application of knowledge and theories in essay based coursework
- Analysis of issues in essay based coursework, exams and presentations
- Coursework with critical analysis of practical elements

#### **Practical skills are assessed by**

- Assignments demonstrating the ability to use software and hardware to produce an end product (graphics, database, CDROM, computer program, web page, video etc)
- Assignments demonstration the ability to work to a specific brief
- Demonstrating a competency in workshops

#### **Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by**

- Quality of written work in assignments
- Strict assignment deadlines
- Group assignments
- On-line assessment of group collaboration
- Quality, appropriateness and clarity of presentations

## Quality

### How we assure the quality of this programme

#### Before this programme started

Before the programme started, the following was checked:

- there would be enough qualified staff to teach the programme;
- adequate resources would be in place;
- the overall aims and objectives were appropriate;
- the content of the programme met national benchmark requirements;
- the programme met any professional/statutory body requirements;
- the proposal met other internal quality criteria covering a range of issues such as admissions policy, teaching, learning and assessment strategy and student support mechanisms.

This is done through a process of programme approval which involves consulting academic experts including some subject specialists from other institutions.

#### How we monitor the quality of this programme

The quality of this programme is monitored each year through evaluating:

- external examiner reports (considering quality and standards);
- statistical information (considering issues such as the pass rate);
- student feedback.

Drawing on this and other information programme teams undertake the annual Review and Enhancement Process which is co-ordinated at School level and includes student participation. The process is monitored by the University's Quality Standing Committee.

Once every six years an in-depth review of the whole field is undertaken by a panel that includes at least two external subject specialists. The panel considers documents, looks at student work, speaks to current and former students and speaks to staff before drawing its conclusions. The result is a report highlighting good practice and identifying areas where action is needed.

#### The role of the programme committee

This programme has a programme committee comprising all relevant teaching staff, student representatives and others who make a contribution towards the effective operation of the programme (e.g. library/technician staff). The committee has responsibilities for the quality

of the programme. It provides input into the operation of the Review and Enhancement Process and proposes changes to improve quality. The programme committee plays a critical role in the University's quality assurance procedures.

### **The role of external examiners**

The standard of this programme is monitored by at least one external examiner. External examiners have two primary responsibilities:

- To ensure the standard of the programme;
- To ensure that justice is done to individual students.

External examiners fulfil these responsibilities in a variety of ways including:

- Approving exam papers/assignments;
- Attending assessment boards;
- Reviewing samples of student work and moderating marks;
- Ensuring that regulations are followed;
- Providing feedback through an annual report that enables us to make improvements for the future.

### **Listening to the views of students**

The following methods for gaining student feedback are used on this programme:

- Module evaluations
- Student representation on programme committees (meeting 2 times year)
- Personal Tutors
- Student Enquiry Desk

Students are notified of the action taken through:

- Circulating the minutes of the programme committees
- School Website
- Providing details on the programme noticeboards
- Providing information at Student Enquiry Desk

### **Listening to the views of others**

The following methods are used for gaining the views of other interested parties:

- Questionnaires to former students
- Placements Co-ordinator (MS204)

## **Further Information**

### **Alternative locations for studying this programme**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Which elements?</b>	<b>Taught by UEL staff</b>	<b>Taught by local staff</b>	<b>Method of Delivery</b>
Newham 6th Form College	Year 0	Yes	Yes	Full-time

### **Where you can find further information**

Further information about this programme is available from:

- The UEL web site ( <http://www.uel.ac.uk>)
- The student handbook (*available at Student Enquiry Desk*)
- Module study guides (*available at Student Enquiry Desk*)
- UEL Manual of General Regulations <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- UEL Quality Manual <http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/>
- Regulations for the Academic Framework <http://www.uel.ac.uk/academicframework/>
- Visit our gallery of student work  
here: <http://www.uel.ac.uk/adi/showcase/studentwork/>