Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Programme Specification

1	**Awarding body**	University of London
2	**Teaching Institution**	**Birkbeck College**
3	**Programme Title(s)**	**MA Investigative Reporting**
4	**Programme code**	TMAINVGR_C
5	**UCAS code**	N/A
6	**Home Department**	Department of Film, Media and Cultural Studies
7	**Exit Award(s)**	PG Dip; PG Cert
8	**Duration of Study** (number of years)	1 year FT, 2 years PT
9	**Mode of Study**	FT	X	PT	X	DL	
10	**Level of Award (FHEQ)**	Level: 7
11	**Other teaching depts or institution**	N/A
12	**Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details**	N/A
13	**QAA Benchmark Group**	N/A

14	**Programme Rationale & Aims**

Investigative reporting is at a cross roads 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 will offer 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 will also reflect 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.

15	**Entry Criteria**
	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.

16	**Learning Outcomes**
	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.

17	**Learning, teaching and assessment methods**
	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. 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.

18	**Programme Description**
	Students exiting with a PGCert will take the two core programme modules:

- Investigative Reporting: Theory and Practice (30 credits)
- Journalism by Numbers: Working with Data (30 credits)

The PGDip award consists of the above plus two further options selected from existing courses on the MA Journalism programme. These include:

- Theoretical Perspectives on Media (30 credits)
- Web-based Journalism and Online Media Production (30 credits)
- Advanced Sub-editing and Layout (30 credits)
- Public Relations and Professional Communications (30 credits)

The full MA course consists of the two core and two optional 30 credit modules plus a 60 credit investigative project. Part time students will take the two core modules and one optional module in the first year, and their remaining optional module and investigative project in the second year.

19	**Programme Structure**			

Full Time programme – 1 year

Year 1

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	ARMC237S7	Investigative Reporting: Theory and Practice	30	Core
7	ARMC238S7	Journalism by Numbers: Working with Data	30	Core
7		Option 1	30	Option
7		Option 2	30	Option
7	ARMC236D7	Investigative Project	60	Compulsory

Part Time programme – 2 years

Year 1

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	ARMC237S7	Investigative Reporting: Theory and Practice	30	Core
7	ARMC238S7	Journalism by Numbers: Working with Data	30	Core
7		Option 1	30	Option

Year 2

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7		Option 2	30	Optional
7	ARMC236D7	Investigative Project	60	Compulsory

Indicative options

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	ARMC172S7	Theoretical Perspectives on Media	30	Option
7	FDME014S7	Web-based Journalism and Online Media Production	30	Option
7	ARMC171S7	Advanced Sub-editing and Layout	30	Option
7	ARMC178S&	Public Relations and Professional Communications	30	Option
7	ARMC222S7	Digital Culture	30	Option

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

20	**Regulations**

- ***Admissions***
  This programme adheres to the College Admissions Policy:
  http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/admissions-policy.pdf

- ***Credit Transfer***
  Accredited Prior Learning will be considered in line with the College Policy on Accredited Prior Learning
  http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/documents/accreditation-prior-learning.pdf

- ***Programme Regulations***
  This programme adheres to the College Common Awards Scheme
  http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/policies/regulations

- ***Programme Specific Regulations (or not applicable)*** N/A

21	**Student Attendance Framework – in brief**

The full version of the 'Student Attendance Framework' is available http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/rules/Attendance-Framework.pdf .

Principle

Consistent and regular student attendance in class (or equivalent) promotes and affords student success. Inconsistent and irregular attendance is less likely to result in student success and is consistent with lower marks and degree classifications being achieved and awarded.

Attendance expectation

Birkbeck, University of London expects you to consistently attend all timetabled sessions, including lectures, seminars, group and individual tutorials, learning support sessions, workshops, laboratories, field trips, inductions and demonstrations.

E-Registers

All Birkbeck students are issued with student cards. Students are expected to take them to classes and to assessment venues and to present them to a member of staff if requested. This is for the purpose of identifying Birkbeck students.

22	**Student Support and Guidance**

All Birkbeck students have access to a range of student support services, details can be found on our website here: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities

23	**Methods of Enhancing Quality and Standards**

The College has rigorous procedures in place for the monitoring and enhancing its educational provision. This includes regular monitoring of programmes drawing on feedback from various sources including external examiner's reports, student feedback, student achievement and progression data. In addition, departments are reviewed every four to five years through the internal review process that includes external input.

For more information please see the Academic Standards and Quality website http://www.bbk.ac.uk/registry/about-us/operations-and-quality .

24	**Programme Director**	Dr Justin Schlosberg
25	**Start Date** *(term/year)*	Autumn 2016
26	**Date approved by TQEC**	Spring 2016
27	**Date approved by Academic Board**	Spring 2016
28	**Date(s) updated/amended**	June 2017