



UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Programme Title:	Sports PR (joint honours)
Awarding Body:	Staffordshire University
Final Awards:	BA(Hons)Sports PR & Journalism
Intermediate Awards:	Diploma in Higher Education Certificate in Higher Education
Teaching Institution:	Staffordshire University
Mode of Study	Full-time (three years) Part-time (up to six years)
UCAS Codes:	PP25
QAA Subject Benchmarks:	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (2008)
JACS Code:	P500
Professional/Statutory Body	Chartered Institute of Public Relations
Date of Production:	October 2009
Date of Revision:	March 2012

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EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME

- To provide a coherent, rigorous, challenging and exciting experience for students to be able to emerge with the confidence, knowledge, understanding, skills and credentials to work effectively and satisfyingly in sports PR or progress to postgraduate study.
- To incorporate the standards of the UK's leading professional PR body, the CIPR (Chartered Institute of Public Relations), in its syllabus for the Advanced Certificate in Public Relations.
- To combine theoretical and practical elements as a constant dialogue focusing on real-world sports PR and measure progress and achievement through assessment of academic and vocational performance.
- To blend traditional core communication skills with the knowledge and techniques necessary to capitalise on the multi-media mix of modern PR operations.
- To offer windows of insight and opportunity through guest lecturers from the sports PR industry, visits to sports PR operations, work placements and real-world project briefs designed by sports PR professionals.
- To inspire students to see their studies as a part of a life-long learning experience and to recognise the value of their communications expertise, transferable knowledge and skills essential to a huge range of enterprises, businesses and organisations.

What is distinctive about this programme?

- The massive experience of the delivery team in the sports media world.
- A hands-on, real-world focus throughout maintained by specialist lecturers for every aspect of the programme, work placements and real-world project briefs set by PR professionals.
- An outstanding track record of graduates working in sports PR with major professional sports organisations.
- A schedule of study which is fully accredited by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) and incorporates its full Advanced Certificate in Public Relations syllabus.
- The course is the only Sports PR course of its kind in the UK and the only one accredited by the CIPR.

The Staffordshire Graduate – Sports PR & Journalism

The BA / BSc degree in Sports PR and Journalism aims to produce graduates who are reflective and critical learners, with a global perspective, and who are prepared for the world of work.

- Across all levels of the degrees and across all Sports PR & Journalism modules, we aim to provide our graduates with **discipline expertise**. We instill a critical knowledge of the discipline that is underpinned by the experience, research and scholarship of the academic staff and which strives to reflect the key issues that affect the world in which we live.
- As part of our commitment to ensuring that Sports PR & Journalism graduates demonstrate **professionalism**, we aim to produce graduates who are equipped to enter the world of work and are **enterprising** or **entrepreneurial** by nature. We use tutorial modules, practical work, field work, dissertations (or work-place projects) and professional practice, to develop and refine the transferable skills (and the confidence and proficiencies that such skills endow) that create graduates with the abilities that employers seek. PR practitioners and journalists who are enterprising are not only innovative in how they think and conduct their work, but are creative in seeking solutions based on the knowledge and skills that the curricula impart.
- In order to capitalize on the knowledge and understanding that the degrees aim to develop, **effective communication** and an ability to work in teams and with diverse stakeholders, are seen as essential attributes of our graduates. The development of communication, **presentation** and **team working** skills lie at the heart of the Sports PR and Journalism degree and are nurtured from first principles to a high level of proficiency in many of the thematic modules and, especially, through tutorial programmes, field work and the work placement or professional practice modules.
- Employers also value **independence of thought** and a **creative** ability to find solutions. The degree in Sports PR & Journalism enables students to take ownership of their learning – whether individually or in groups – and encourages independence of thought and **problem-solving** across a spectrum of activities: in the conduct of a research dissertation or a work-place project; in student-led investigative field projects; in critical reading and writing in thematic modules; or in tutorial discussions and presentations.
- These are essential attributes of the **critical, reflective** and **life-long learners** that Staffordshire graduates are expected to become. Throughout the three years of the degree, students are encouraged to develop their understanding through critical reflection; to question different views and perspectives and to use both their generic and specialist skills (including **digital technologies**) to recognize and resolve problems.
- Increasingly those problems are set in a global context and globalisation and **global citizenship** are central to the way that journalists look at the world. The majority of the thematic modules that structure these awards explore understandings of how global systems work; how those systems impact upon individuals; and how graduate PR practitioners and journalists can work professionally to manage global issues.

PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

What will this programme teach me to do? At the end of your studies you should be able to:

Knowledge & Understanding Demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the practical and theoretical aspects of professional PR. QAASBS 4.1-5, 5.2-5, 6.1, 8.1-2 Demonstrated an in-depth critical perspective and acknowledgement of well-established theories associated with the organisation, management, demand and supply of professional sports. QAASBS 5.3, 6.1, 8.2
Learning Demonstrate a fluency with the matrix of considerations in modern PR. QAASBS 4.1-5, 5.2-5, 6.1, 8.1-2
Enquiry Demonstrate readiness to explore the appropriateness of the range of practical and theoretical tools in research, planning and production. QAASBS 4.1-5, 5.2-6, 6.1, 8.1-2
Analysis Demonstrate ability to think creatively while maintaining focus on outcomes and resources. QAASBS 4.1-5, 5.2-5, 6.1, 8.1-2 Demonstrated ability to critically analyse how economic and business research contributes to the study and practice of professional sports. QAASBS 5.3, 6.1, 8.2
Problem Solving Demonstrate resolve, discipline and a can-do attitude in refining actions and products. QAASBS 4.1, 4.3-4, 5.2-5, 6.1, 8.1-2
Communication Demonstrate an ability to communicate logically, thoroughly and professionally in required modes and formats, working independently and with others. QAASBS 4.1, 4.3-5, 5.2-6, 6.1, 8.1-2 Demonstrated ability to communicate relevant concepts and theories to specialist and non-specialist audiences. QAASBS 4.1-5, 5.2-6, 6.1, 8.1-2
Application Demonstrate a sophisticated use of appropriate skills, techniques and knowledge. QAASBS 4.1-5, 5.2-5, 6.1, 8.1-2 Demonstrated how to apply relevant concepts and theories from economics and business to the study of professional sports. QAASBS 5.3, 6.1, 8.2
Reflection Demonstrate an ability to critically interrogate performance, recognise and address shortcomings and build on strengths. QAASBS 4.1-5, 5.2-6, 6.1, 8.1-2

These learning outcomes have been informed by the QAA subject benchmarking statement for honours degree courses in communication, media, film and cultural studies (2008). Web link to the full QAA document: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/benchmark/statements/CMF08.pdf>

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE, MODULES AND CREDITS

Award: Sports PR

Route: Joint

Potential award = Cert HE (120 credits passed with at least 90 at L4)

L E V E L	Teaching Block 1	CORE AM75324-4 PR Practices	CORE AM75055-4 The British Press	CORE AM75067-4 Law for Journalists1	CORE AM75488-4 Reporting & Writing	CORE AM75437-4 Journalism in Practice 1
	Teaching Block 2		(15)		(15)	
4		(30)	CORE AM75158-4 Thinking Journalism	(15)		(30)

(To progress to Level 5 at least 90 credits at Level 4 must be passed)

Potential award = Dip HE (240 credits passed with at least 90 at each of L4 and L5)

L E V E L	Teaching Block 1	CORE AM75473-5 Professional Sports Writing	CORE AM75081-5 Work Placement	CORE AM75417-5 PR Operations	CORE AM75439-5 Journalism in Practice 2	CORE AM75442-5 Production Journalism 1
	Teaching Block 2			(15)		(15)
5		(30)	(15)		(30)	OPTION (can be taken in either semester) (15)

(To progress to Level 6 at least 210 credits of must be passed including a minimum of 90 credits at Level 5)

Potential award = Honours Degree (360 credits passed with at least 90 at each of L4, L5 and L6)

L E V E L	Teaching Block 1	CORE AM75326-6 Pro PR	OPTION (can be taken in either semester)	CORE AM75075-6 Journalism Project	CORE AM75196-6 Career Development	OPTION (can be taken in either semester)
	Teaching Block 2		(15)			(15)
6		(30)	CORE BSB00158-6 Managing Events Communication	(15)		(15)

SPORTS PR Options

Route: Joint

LEVEL 5 (Choose ONE option in either Semester One or Two)					
Teaching Block 1		Cats	Teaching Block 2		Cats
AM75197-5	Screening Journalism	15	AM75057-5	Editing and Production 2	15
AM75344-5	Law for Journalists 2	15	AM75059-5	Magazine Writing and Business Practice	15
AM75388-5	Entrepreneurial Journalism	15	AM75060-5	Magazine Design, Development & Production	15
			AM75388-5	Entrepreneurial Journalism	15
AM75080-4	Shorthand 1 Serial across both semesters (with assessment deadline in teaching block 2)				15

LEVEL 6 (Choose TWO options in any Semester combination)					
Teaching Block 1		Cats	Teaching Block 2		Cats
AM00214-6	Understanding Photojournalism	15	AM00214-6	Understanding Photojournalism	15
AM25148-6	Conflict & Journalism	15	AM25504-6	The War on Terror Explained	15
AM75198-6	Screening Journalism (Not with AM75197-5)	15	AM75064-6	The Political Columnist: Origin, Development and Practice	15
			AM75077-6	The Philosophy of Journalism	15
			AM75364-6	Editing & Production 2 (Not with AM75057-5)	15
HES93118-6	Football Culture	15	HES93121-6	Celebrity Culture	15
			LWB20010-6	Sport, The Individual and The Law	15
			LWU10084-6	The Commercial Regulation of Sport	15
AM75162-5	Shorthand 2 - Serial across both semesters (with assessment deadline in teaching block 2). Student MUST have taken Shorthand 1 and have 60wpm minimum to begin this module.				15
AM75163-6	Shorthand 3 - Serial across both semesters (with assessment deadline in teaching block 2). Student MUST have taken Shorthand 1 and have 80wpm minimum to take this module. Cannot be taken with Shorthand 2.				15

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT AND ASSESSED?

Teaching and Learning

Teaching methods are carefully selected and employed to provide students with: appropriate means to engage successfully with the syllabus of each module; to draw out the fullest possible range of appropriate methods by which students can learn across the award.

Lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, visits to PR operations, use of Blackboard, the web and library resources, work placements, meeting project briefs, directed and self-directed research combine to provide every student with opportunities to learn and demonstrate their learning in different ways.

The emphasis throughout is on student engagement, a continuous dialogue with texts, techniques, tutors, guest lecturers and PR professionals. For example, Q&A will be a feature of every lecture, seminar and workshop, discussion encouraged, enquiry championed, revision, reflection and refinement embedded as regular practice leading to best-practice habits.

Independent learning is important on all modules, as it enables students to develop their subject and key skills and to prepare for written and oral communication. Independent learning is promoted through the feedback given to students, which takes several forms including small group and one-to-one discussions on both formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment is crucial in guiding students towards the appropriate standards; on a number of modules, including *News and Sports Journalism in Practice* and *Professional Sportswriting*, regular in-class assignments are set by tutors with strict deadlines. These aid assessment of the progress of students during workshop sessions in their practical modules. Students are given regular written feedback on the work they produce. Portfolios of work (including photojournalism and newspaper page layouts), which are largely independently produced, allow tutors to assess student progress towards appropriate professional standards. Writing regular news and feature stories during their core *Journalism in Practice* and *Professional Sports Writing* sessions and workshops test the student's progress towards the appropriate professional standards necessary to make the most of their work placement.

In the past five years, the world of media has been totally changed by the advance of web-based journalism. Most modules have been adapted to encompass the demands put on modern journalists to produce online material, both written and broadcast. But the burgeoning demands of the internet have been reflected by the introduction of many web-based journalism elements in both *Journalism in Practice*, *Journalism in Practice 2* and *Professional Sportswriting*. An award-specific option – *Advanced Web-based Journalism* – is also offered, where students concentrate specifically on how to write for the web and website production. Students are encouraged to submit their work to the departmental website *StaffsLive* which is published under tutor supervision and available to view by an outside audience.

The student's placement within the *Work Placement* module offers them the chance to use the skills they have developed in a professional sports public relations and journalism environment. The Level 4 modules in *Essential Law and Ethics* and *Journalism in Practice* have embedded within them the

professional training a student requires as preparation for a placement in a sports PR environment.

Modules looking at the journalism in context to society (*The British Press and Thinking Journalism*) give them the knowledge of current debates in journalistic practice and the historical and intellectual background of sports journalism.

The practice of public relations and its place in the media world is studied in depth at all three levels – successively in *PR Practices*, *PR Operations* and *Pro PR*.

All Sports PR and Journalism students receive formal and informal guidance from a personal tutor and other department tutors as part of the wide *Career Development* module which includes the production of a *curriculum vitae* and a digital profile via the development of a personal website.

Assessment

The wide range of knowledge, skills and techniques demanded for modern PR requires a sophisticated set of assessments (both formative and summative) to measure practical and cognitive performance. This will include written, audio and audio-visual material for print, websites and other digital media, reports, presentations, research logs and dossiers, a portfolio of performance in placements, class tests, timed exercises and projects.

Assessment methods include academic essays, researching and writing news stories, unseen examinations, writing features, group oral and written seminar assessments, computer produced demonstrations of technical ability, presentations, assignments/report and individual portfolios.

Individual modules may also be weighted by combinations of these different assessment methods; for example, an editor's report, a student portfolio of published work (where appropriate) and written reflection by individual students on their experiences of work placement in a sports PR environment.

Academic essays allow tutors to gauge the student's ability to independently research and then analyse, assess and present that information in a coherent and detached (i.e., academic) manner. Writing news and feature stories for formal assessment tests the student's progress towards the appropriate professional standards. Unseen examinations help prepare students for their unseen NCTJ Law examinations (if they wish to take this route). Group oral seminar assessments encourage students to work collaboratively with their colleagues and develop their communication skills. Group working allows tutors to assess student progress towards appropriate professional standards. The editor's report on the student's work placement assesses their performance as a journalist in a sports PR business.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Entry Requirements (including IELTS score)

What qualifications would I need to join this programme?

The standard admissions criteria for the programme are in line with the University's general requirements: the equivalent of a minimum of 2 'A' Levels or AVCs, or BTEC National Diploma. For mature students, an Access to HE qualification is also typically accepted. The new Diploma qualification will also be considered as part of the admission process.

Students may be considered for Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning on the basis of credit achieved in prior study; work based training, substantial employment or other experiential learning. This will be considered in accordance with the AP(E)L Handbook. Evaluation is delegated to the Faculty which is required to assess each application according to the specified procedure. Information about the availability of AP(E)L can be found at:

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/images/apel_policy_tcm68-12703.pdf

The specific entry requirements for Sports PR are normally:

260 points for a three A-level (A2) candidate, which can include up to 40 points from an AS subject not taken as full A-level (A2) or level three Key Skills. Details of points equivalents for BTEC and other vocational programmes can be found in the prospectus (in print or online at www.staffs.ac.uk).

Candidates whose first language is not English will need: an IELTS test score of 7.5 or higher; or GCSE English at grade C or higher; or an equivalent to GCSE grade C or higher in an English examination equivalent to GCSE; or satisfy the admissions tutor that the use of English is of a sufficiently high standard through a written test and interview.

Applications from mature students are welcome even if they do not have the normal entry qualifications but are able to demonstrate that they would be able to contend with the rigours of higher education. The qualities such applicants have to offer could be considered through relevant prior experience in employment, self-employment or a voluntary capacity, evidence of producing materials or operating in a relevant field and the support of a suitably qualified referee. Such applicants might be interviewed and might be required to produce some written work to help make an accurate assessment of suitability.

Such students might also be considered for APEL, Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning, as stated above.

Disability Statement

Staffordshire University operates a policy of inclusive teaching and learning to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to fulfil their educational potential. Details about how to apply to have your needs assessed can be found at:

http://www.staffs.ac.uk/courses_and_study/disabled_students/index.jsp

AWARD SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Careful planning will be required for the successful completion of work placement and the professional PR project brief.

Students must ensure that they can afford the travel and living costs, particularly for placements, and that accommodation is convenient for travel to and from the locations where they will be based.

Students will be supervised in their work placement choices and cost and access considerations will be discussed, issues resolved and placements arranged accordingly.

A financial contribution will also be required for whole-class visits to sports events and professional PR operations – typically this will be coach fare of less than £10.

Further information about the award can be found in the relevant Student Handbook and on the University Website. This includes information about optional modules, learning outcomes at levels below honours, student support, and academic regulations.

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