**Module Descriptor**

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| **Title** | Media and the Law | | |
| **Session** | 2026/27 | **Status** | Approved |
| **Code** | LAWW09030 | **SCQF Level** | 9 |
| **Credit Points** | 20 | **ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)** | 10 |
| **School** | **Business and Creative Industries** | | |
| **Module Co-ordinator** | N Burgess | | |

**Summary of Module**


This module will provide students with the opportunity for students to learn in depth and understanding of the issues surrounding the law and the Media in the UK.

Media and the Law module will be delivered over 12 weeks giving students the opportunity to gain a thorough of the legal principles and concepts which have an impact upon the activities of the media industry. This will facilitate the students critical understanding of the media and the regulatory structures which impinge upon it.

The topics which will be covered include:

The role and function of regulatory bodies including the Independent Press Standards Organisation, Ofcom and the Advertising Standards Authority.

The application of the law contempt of court, defamation in relation to both print and broadcast media; rights and responsibilities of court reporters in reporting both civil and criminal cases.

Media reporting restrictions concerning cases involving children, custody cases, matrimonial cases, cases relating to sexual offences.

The jurisdiction and procedures of Children's Hearings, Fatal Accident Inquiries and Tribunals and Inquiries and the media reporting restrictions which apply to them.

Protection of state secrets – an examination of Official Secrets legislation and DA-Notices and the implications for the media in contravening such legislation.

The impact of data protection legislation on the ability of the media to gather information.

Copyright issues affecting the media

Freedom of Information

Breach of confidence, privacy and the impact on media reporting.

- To discuss and assess ownership and liability within the media industry.

- To Critically analyse the impact which external agencies and judicial bodies have in enforcing regulatory mechanisms.

- To evidence the ability to conduct critical legal evaluation and analysis within the area of media law. To analyse the substantive legal issues concerning the control and distribution of published material.

| Module Delivery Method | On-Campus[1] ☐ | Hybrid[2] ☒ | Online[3] ☐ | Work -Based Learning[4] ☐ |
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| **Campuses for Module Delivery** | ☐ Ayr<br>☐ Dumfries | ☐ Lanarkshire<br>☐ London<br>☒ Paisley | ☐ Online / Distance Learning<br>☐ Other (specify) | |

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| **Terms for Module Delivery** | Term 1 | ☐ | Term 2 | ☒ | Term 3 | ☐ |
| **Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term** | Term 1 – Term 2 | ☐ | Term 2 – Term 3 | ☐ | Term 3 – Term 1 | ☐ |

| **Learning Outcomes** | |
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| **L1** | Outline, explain and analyse the law of contempt of court in relation to specific circumstances |
| **L2** | Outline, explain and analyse the law of defamation in relation to specific circumstances |
| **L3** | Outline and explain the impact of the various areas of law that place reporting restrictions on the media |
| **L4** | Outline and explain the impact on the media of the laws of copyright, data protection, freedom of information and breach of confidence |
| **L5** | |

| **Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills** | |
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| **SCQF Headings** | **During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:** |
| **Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)** | **SCQF 9**<br>Demonstrate and/or work with:<br>An understanding of the scope and defining features of media law, and an integrated knowledge of its main areas and boundaries.<br>A critical understanding of a range of the principles, principal theories, concepts and terminology of media law.<br>Knowledge of one or more specialisms that is informed by forefront developments. |

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

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| **Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding** | **SCQF 9**<br>Apply knowledge, skills and understanding:<br>In using a range of the principal professional skills, techniques, practices and/or materials associated with media law.<br>In using a few skills, techniques, practices and/or materials that are specialised and/or advanced.<br>In practising routine methods of enquiry and/or research.<br>To practise in a range of professional level contexts that include a degree of unpredictability. |
| **Generic Cognitive skills** | **SCQF 9**<br>Undertake critical analysis, evaluation and/or synthesis of ideas, concepts, information and issues in media law.<br>Identify and analyse routine professional problems and issues.<br>Draw on a range of sources in making judgements. |
| **Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills** | **SCQF 9**<br>Use a wide range of routine skills and some advanced and specialised skills in support of established practices in media law, for example:<br>Present or convey, formally and informally, information on standard/mainstream topics in media to a range of audiences.<br>Use a range of ICT applications to support and enhance work. |
| **Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others** | **SCQF 9**<br>Exercise autonomy and initiative in some activities at a professional level in media law.<br>Practise in ways that show awareness of own and others' roles and responsibilities. |

| **Prerequisites** | **Module Code** | **Module Title** |
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| | **Other** | |
| **Co-requisites** | **Module Code** | **Module Title** |

| **Learning and Teaching** | |
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| In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours. | |
| **Learning Activities**<br>During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below: | **Student Learning Hours**<br>(Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities) |
| Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity | 24 |
| Independent Study | 176 |

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| Please select | |
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| **TOTAL** | 200 |

| **Indicative Resources** |
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| **The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:**<br>Sian Harrison and Mark Hanna, McNae's Essential Law for Journalists (latest edn)<br>Ursula Smartt, Media and Entertainment Law (latest edn) |
| **(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)** |

| **Attendance and Engagement Requirements** |
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| **In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.**<br>**For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:**<br>Students are required to attend scheduled teaching sessions and engage with the Virtual Learning Environment. |

| **Equality and Diversity** |
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| **The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.** |
| **(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)** |

**Supplemental Information**

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| **Divisional Programme Board** | **Accounting, Finance & Law** |
| **Overall Assessment Results** | ☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded** |
| **Module Eligible for Compensation** | ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**<br>**If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.** |
| **School Assessment Board** | Accounting Finance Law |
| **Moderator** | Clive Mitchell |
| **External Examiner** | KA Cannon |
| **Accreditation Details** | |

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| **Module Appears in CPD catalogue** | ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** |
| **Changes / Version Number** | |

| **Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)** |
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| **Assessment 1** |
| An assignment worth 80% of the final mark covering the law of contempt of court (and associated reporting restrictions) and the law of defamation (and associated actions). |
| **Assessment 2** |
| An online class test worth 20% of the final mark covering areas including, but not limited to, reporting restrictions, official secrets legislation, copyright, data protection, freedom of information, and breach of confidence issues. |
| **Assessment 3** |
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| (N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed.<br>(ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.) |

| **Component 1** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Assessment Type** | **LO1** | **LO2** | **LO3** | **LO4** | **LO5** | **Weighting of Assessment Element (%)** | **Timetabled Contact Hours** |
| Coursework | ☒ | ☒ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | 80 | |

| **Component 2** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Assessment Type** | **LO1** | **LO2** | **LO3** | **LO4** | **LO5** | **Weighting of Assessment Element (%)** | **Timetabled Contact Hours** |
| Class Test | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☒ | ☐ | 20 | 1 |

| **Component 3** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Assessment Type** | **LO1** | **LO2** | **LO3** | **LO4** | **LO5** | **Weighting of Assessment Element (%)** | **Timetabled Contact Hours** |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| **Combined total for all components** | | | | | | 100% | hours |

**Change Control**

| **What** | **When** | **Who** |
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