Undergraduate Programme Specification

Session	2026/27	**Last Modified**	2024
Named Award Title	BA (Hons) Journalism/BA (Hons) Journalism (Sport) Single		
Award Title for Each Award	BA (Hons) Journalism/BA (Hons) Journalism (Sport) BA Journalism/BA Journalism (Sport)		
Date of Approval	28.05.2025		
Details of Cohort Applies to	Students in cohort beginning September 2025		
Awarding Institution	University of the West of Scotland	**Teaching Institution(s)**	University of the West of Scotland
Language of Instruction & Examination		English	
Award Accredited by		University of the West of Scotland	
Maximum Period of Registration			
Duration of Study			
Full-time	2 years	**Part-time**	4 years
Placement (compulsory)	Work related learning as part of core module - 10 days in total.		
Mode of Study	☒ Full-time ☐ Part-time		
Campus	☒ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)
School	**Business and Creative Industries**		
Divisional Programme Board	**Arts Media**		
Programme Leader	Dr Margaret Hughes		

Admissions Criteria Candidates must be able to satisfy the general admission requirements of the University of the West of Scotland as specified in Chapter 2 of the University Regulatory Framework together with the following programme requirements:
SQA National Qualifications:

An appropriate HNC/HND award with the level of entry and/or credit awarded being subject to the content of the HN programme

Or GCE

Or SQA National Qualifications / Edexcel Foundation

Other Required Qualifications/Experience

Applicants may also be considered with other academic, vocational or professional qualifications deemed to be equivalent.

All applicants for BA (Hons) Journalism/(Sport) will be invited for interview with the programme leader and members of the teaching team. The purpose of the interview is to establish the applicant's educational standard, suitability for and capacity to benefit from the programme.

Applicants seeking entry to BA (Hons) Journalism/(Sport) at Level 9 onwards and from a previous programme of study, will be dealt with by scrutiny of results, receipt of a report on performance in their previous studies and by an interview with the programme leader and/or one other member of the teaching team.

Further desirable skills pre-application

General Overview

General Overview

All students will join the BA (H) Journalism degree programme, with students who wish to specialise in the field of sports journalism being given the opportunity at the end of level 8 to join the pathway that will enable them to develop their knowledge and skills in this area and to exit with the award of BA (H) Journalism/Sport.

The programme will produce graduates who are ready for the world of work in the dynamic, competitive, multi-platform world of journalism.

In reality this means developing a curriculum that reflects what the actual experience of the rapidly changing newsrooms will be and the skills required to operate successfully in these environments at a practical and intellectual level. This is allied with the need to achieve those 'graduate' skills that will enable the students/graduates to explore, analyse and critique Journalism in a forensic way to more fully understand why the news/ethics/managerial decisions being made in the newsroom are being made. The students will also develop a very firm grasp of the role of Journalism in the social, economic, civic and democratic life of our societies.

As such, the UWS Journalism programme will seek to be responsive to this need to produce graduates who have the ability to master the technical skills required by the news media, but also have the intellectual skills to critique, analyse and interpret the news. The curriculum explores the world of news and journalism from both UK and international perspectives. As the news media has become more global in its presentation and, indeed, in its business model, the need for students to have an understanding and knowledge of the global nature of news and the opportunities it provides is key.

Therefore, the curriculum will be the bridge across which we provide the graduates who met the professional requirements of the industry as well as meeting the academic standards of a university graduate.

Learning and teaching on the programme is focussed around the development of skills and knowledge that reflects both the demands of the university, the expectations of what makes a graduate and the preparedness and skillset expected by the news media.
We will also seek to support students to explore opportunities to develop their own academic careers by providing opportunities, either within the subject area or more broadly in the School and University, to provide pathways into postgraduate programmes. Students typically will be well positioned to continue to study Journalism and related fields at Masters and other PG levels.
The design of the curriculum will seek to meet these expectations.
The programme is unique in the Scottish HEI sector, offering as it does the opportunity for students to specialise in sports journalism. The re-designed programme builds on the success of the BA (H) Journalism and BA (H) Sports Journalism who have performed well in terms of recruitment, student employment and NSS.

Please note there will be no L7 + L8 intake for September 2024.
Levels 9 & 10 will offer the pathway choice for students.
BA (H) Journalism pathway
Those who opt for the Journalism path will continue to build on what has been offered in earlier years with opportunities to undertake work placement, produce portfolio- based work in news, features, specialist magazine journalism across a range of digital and online formats. Critical thinking skills will be developed in modules that explore the wider role of journalism – we will explore how we can work more collaboratively with colleagues across the School to develop modules that deepen students ability to analyse and critique, these could encompass exploring issues around crime & the news media, the sociology of mass culture, psychology of news, mediation of political news etc.
Developing research methods will be a key part of the structure and the skills developed here will be most widely used in the final year dissertation module. The final year will also see students producing a substantial piece of portfolio-based work as part of the journalism portfolio that will enable them to showcase their work to a professional standard, as well as allow some of them to shape their work into specialist fields if this is appropriate. Enhancing their employability skills will be the focus of the entrepreneurship module that students in both pathways will undertake.
BA (H) Journalism (Sport) pathway
Students who opt for the BA (H) Journalism (Sport) pathway will undertake some of the same modules as the Journalism pathway students, eg, research methods, newsroom practice, creative portfolios. However, the focus of their final two years will be in meeting the requirements of sports journalism, as well as their own aspirations. Modules will explore sports news production in a range of sports programmes, with news, features, commentary and live reporting being key (much of this will be focused around our involvement with a range of sports organisations & clubs).
Students will develop critical thinking skills in modules that will explore the role of sport in the media, in society and look at governance and policy issues that impact sport both nationally and globally tapping into the expertise which exists both within MCS and other Schools in the university.
In level 10, and in common with the Journalism pathway, students will complete the Creative Research project module that will seem them produce substantial piece of journalistic output and academic research. The Professional Practice module will enable students to produce work to a professional standard allowing them to showcase their skills and, if appropriate, specialist areas of expertise developed during their undergraduate careers. Enhancing their employability skills will be the focus of the new Media Relations: Practice & management module that students in both pathways will be able to undertake, this will provide the students with the knowledge and skillset in the field of public realtions, press office, communications role, thereby enhancing their employability.

Students will have the opportunity to prepare themselves more readily for the competitive world of work by undertaking practice in presenting themselves to potential future employers and in ensuring that they are aware of the need to preapre themselves as future employees and entrepreneurs.
All students will also have the opportunity to undertake modules from across a range of other programmes within the School, most notably L10 modules in the BA (H) Broadcast Production programmes and will be given details of these in student handbooks and through induction processes etc.
The learning, teaching and assessment strategies adopted by the teaching team will focus on a sustainable approach to producing assessments that will prepare the students for the workplace, while at the same time progressive nature of assessment will be developing good critical thinking and analytical skills that support learners and build confidence.
The programme is reflective of the UWS 'Enabling Plan' which seeks to:

- offer inspirational and transformative learning within a flexible and personalised curriculum
- ensure transitions into, within and beyond UWS that raise the horizons for all stakeholders
- maximise staff and student engagement in a culture and environment of support and development
- ensure high quality information to support effective interventions in enhancement
- ensure that our graduates will be highly employable and able to make a difference locally and globally.

Typical Delivery Method
Learning, teaching and assessment in the programme will be aligned with professional practice through the amalgamation of assessments that meet the needs of the university and a range of graduate skills, yet also help prepare students for the demands of the working environment beyond university.
For example, aligned assessments are likely to include the production of a range of professionally produced news and journalistic artifacts that would be expected in industry and where effective communication, engagement and collaborative practice are key learning outcomes. The experiential learning opportunities in the programme will also students to learn how to work in teams co-operate with others in group projects, pose and resolve a range of problems both in the content and production of a range of journalism outputs, such as news, sports and magazine projects, and give and receive feedback through peer-review involving the whole class.
Teaching will comprise practice-based workshops, simulated newsroom environments, production days, seminars and lectures. All modules are supported Aula, an online VLE which enables staff and students to both communicate and share content on assessment, learning activities, information sources such as online broadcast and print materials, discussion forums and support for teaching and learning and has adopted as a key teaching strategy an inquiry-based learning approach, this will be embedded in the programme and developed throughout it.
This will provide students with an opportunity to become reflective practitioners in their own learning experiences and enable them to adopt a more creative and critical approach to journalism inquiry. Developing key transferable skills and academic literacy, as well as, illustrating understanding of the citizenship more broadly will be made explicit in assessments approaches and these will be progressive throughout the programme.
Assessment will comprise the production of portfolios of professionally produced work across all platforms and will typically include news and features type materials in a range of digital formats from short news pieces to longer analytical features programmes to digital magazines. Students will also illustrate their learning through pitches to teaching staff and

industry professionals, seminar papers and presentations, essays and research projects, as well as examinations. Inquiry-based learning will be utilised to help prepare students for the progressive nature of the degree programme.
Learning and teaching on the programme is underpinned by the research activities of staff. The programme sits within the Culture and Creativity research hub and both staff and students benefit from the wider research activities of colleagues in the wider BCI environment.

Any additional costs
N/A

Graduate Attributes, Employability & Personal Development Planning
The programme is fully aligned with institutional priorities around the development of graduate attributes and with the institutional policy on personal development planning. The mapping of programme and module learning outcomes and employability-integrated assessment ensures the visibility of graduate attributes, employability and citizenship competencies. Personal development is embedded and explicitly signposted in the curriculum, with students provided with regular opportunities to capture and evaluate progression and development, stimulating reflection, self-regulation and a more constructive engagement with employability. It is recognised that personal development planning is an essential component of lifelong learning and continuing and professional development. To support this activity, all students are provided with access to personal development planning tools and enabled to develop a personal e-portfolio across the programme.
Students will be encouraged to maintain a PDP portfolio of feedback, evidence, reflection and goals – this may be through use of the VLE or alternative formats. This also enables students to utilise entrepreneurial approaches to showcasing their work for future employers.
Employability is developed throughout the programme. This commences at Level 9 (Newsroom Practice) where students gain an insight into the various roles and responsibilities within news organisations.
The body of knowledge developed through the programme is well focused on the needs of industry and the need for students to be prepared to meet the changing demands of the workplace.
Modules such as Advanced Magazine Journalism (L9), Professional Practice Journalism & Broadcast (L10) and Creative Research Project (L10) provide an opportunity for students to produce work to a high professional standard, which enhances their employability.
The principles of PDP are supported both in the curriculum and through the personal tutor support system.
Essentially PDP is embedded within all modules of the Programme because each is contextualized to provide students with the ability to develop the required graduate attributes of good communication skills, digital literacy, critical thinking, entrepreneurial skills, awareness of personal effectiveness and global citizenship.
Although PDP will be linked to learning outcomes at every opportunity it will be predominantly on going and formative while also drawing on assessed activities. The aim is not only to encourage students to develop skills such as numeracy, language, study skills, employability and analytical thought but also to raise students' self-awareness and confidence through a process of critical reflection and planning of practice.

Work Based Learning/Placement Details
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Attendance and Engagement

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.

For the purposes of this programme, academic engagement equates to the following:

- attendance and engagement in all classes;
- contributing to group work via class-based activities, such as weekly news days; production of audio/video content & online content;
- following appropriate professional standards in the creation and production of journalistic artefacts;
- adopting appropriate academic standards in the creation and production of all academic work.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.

The programme supports equality of opportunity for students from different backgrounds and with different learning needs. Using appropriate platforms, learning materials will be presented electronically in formats that allow flexible access and manipulation of content. The programme complies with University regulations and guidance on inclusive learning and teaching practice. Specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS policy and regulations. The programme is committed to enabling all learners, respecting diversity, promoting equality and embedding inclusivity in all aspects of its work. It is fully cognisant of and compliant with relevant external and institutional policy in this area.

Programme structures and requirements, SCQF level, term, module name and code, credits and awards (Chapter 1, Regulatory Framework)

Learning Outcomes

SCQF LEVEL 7 Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	
A2	
A3	
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	
B2	
B3	
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	
C2	
C3	
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	
D2	
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	
E2	
E3	
E4	
E5	

Level 7 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 7 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 7 **Criteria for Progression and Award** *Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations*

SCQF LEVEL 8 Learning Outcomes	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	
A2	
A3	
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	
B2	
B3	
B4	
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	
C2	
C3	
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	
D2	
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	
E2	
E3	
E4	
E5	

Level 8 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	

				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 8 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 8
Criteria for Progression and Award
Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations

SCQF LEVEL 9 Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading)	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	Develop a critical understanding of a selection of the principal theories, principles, concepts and terminology of journalism and news production.
A2	Develop a critical understanding of a range of key theories, principles and concepts around the role of journalism and the news media in society.
A3	Demonstrate knowledge and competence in a range of social research methods relevant to the study of journalism.
A4	
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	Develop advanced knowledge and gain skills in applying ethical knowledge in practical scenarios and demonstrate awareness of professional codes of practice.
B2	Illustrate an advanced understanding of key production processes relevant to news production and obtain experience of the discipline through a work placement within an editorial department/related workplace environment.
B3	Gain and demonstrate skills within specialist fields of journalism to a professional standard.
B4	Produce work which shows professional competence in operational aspects of news production technologies, systems, techniques and practices across a range of platforms.
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	Communicate effectively with professional level peers, senior colleagues and specialists.
C2	Make formal presentations and pitches about specialised topics to informed audiences.
C3	Demonstrate advanced knowledge of editing software and the requisite practical skills for presenting content in a range of journalistic formats to a professional standard.
C4	Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of design software and the requisite practical skills for presenting content in a range of journalistic formats to a professional standard.
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	
D1	Demonstrate skills of critical and analytical thinking through the process of applying research techniques.
D2	Develop a greater capacity for independent study and utilise enhanced methods of enquiry and research.
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	

E1	Work collaboratively with others to produce online publications and news output across a range of formats.
E2	Demonstrate the ability to monitor and evaluate the progress of own contribution in carrying out defined tasks.
E3	Undertake analytical reflective critique of own practice.
E4	Demonstrate some originality and creativity in dealing with professional news scenarios.
E5	Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of how to effectively and professionally respond to the key ethical and practical issues of project management in accordance with professional codes of practice.

Level 9 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
9	JOUR09006	Newsroom Practice	40	☒	☒	☐	
9	JOUR09001	Research Methods	20	☒	☐	☐	
9	JOUR09008	Journalism & Society	20	☐	☒	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 9 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Term			Footnotes
				1	2	3	
9	JOUR09003	Advanced Magazine Journalism	20	☐	☒	☐	
9	JOUR09007	Broadcast Feature Production	20	☒	☐	☐	
9	JOUR09004	Policy & Organisation of Sport	20	☐	☒	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Option Modules							

Level 9
Criteria for Progression and Award
Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations

To progress to L10, students must meet the criteria outlined in University Regulations, Chapter 3 (3.13).

For information on progression with credit deficit please refer to University Regulations, Chapter 3 (3.14).

For information on the award of distinction please refer to University Regulation, Chapter 3 (3.25).Links: UWS Regulatory Framework; and Student Experience Policy Statement.

SCQF LEVEL 10 Learning Outcomes (Maximum of 5 per heading**)**	
Knowledge and Understanding	
A1	Develop a critically informed insight into different global, international, national and local issues from a journalistic perspective.
A2	Critically appraise issues and debates relevant to the mechanics of news and the influence of political institutions, organisations and public opinion.
A3	Identify and critically evaluate a range of research methods relevant to the study of journalism and its role in society.
A4	Critically evaluate the role of data journalism in the creation of news output.
A5	
Practice - Applied Knowledge and Understanding	
B1	Formulate appropriate research questions and employ appropriate methods and resources for both an academic and journalistic perspective.
B2	Produce work which is informed by, and contextualised within, relevant theoretical issues and debates.
B3	Utilise data to produce a range of journalism across a number of platforms to a high professional standard.
B4	Produce work which shows professional competence in operational aspects of news production technologies, systems, techniques and practices.
B5	
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	
C1	Make formal presentations in a professional manner about specialised topics to informed audiences.
C2	Communicate effectively with professional peers, senior colleagues and specialists.
C3	Demonstrate advanced knowledge of news production software and the requisite practical skills for presenting content in a range of journalistic formats to a professional standard.
C4	
C5	
Generic Cognitive Skills - Problem Solving, Analysis, Evaluation	

D1	Undertake various forms of research for essays, projects and dissertations involving sustained independent enquiry.
D2	Demonstrate the ability to critically analyse and evaluate a range of literature relevant to the study of journalism.
D3	
D4	
D5	
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	
E1	Be adaptable, creative and self-reflexive in producing output for a variety of audiences and in a variety of news media platforms.
E2	Take significant responsibility for own work and the management of self-directed study.
E3	Work effectively as part of a team, taking into account the roles and responsibilities of self as well as that of others in group tasks.
E4	Undertake critical reflection of own practice.
E5	

Level 10 Modules

CORE

SCQF Level	**Module Code**	**Module Title**	**Credit**	**Term**			**Footnotes**
				1	**2**	**3**	
10	JOUR10004	Creative Research Project	60	☒	☒	☐	
10	JOUR10005	Professional Practice, Journalism & Broadcast	20	☒	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	
Footnotes for Core Modules							

Level 10 Modules

OPTION

SCQF Level	**Module Code**	**Module Title**	**Credit**	**Term**			**Footnotes**
				1	**2**	**3**	
10	JOUR10001	News & Politics	20	☒	☐	☐	
10	JOUR10002	Global Issues in Sport	20	☒	☐	☐	
10	JOUR10006	News: an international perspective	20	☐	☒	☐	
10	JOUR10008	Media Relations: practice & management	20	☐	☒	☐	
				☐	☐	☐	

				☐	☐	☐	

Footnotes for Option Modules

Level 10
Criteria for Award
Please refer to UWS Regulatory Framework for related regulations

Refer to Guidance note.

The award of BA (Hons) Journalism/Journalism (Sports) is awarded to students who have at least 480 credits of which a minimum of 200 Point are at SCQF Levels 9 and 10, and of which a minimum of 100 are at SCQF Level 10.

Honours Classification will be awarded in line with the University Regulations, Chapter 3 (3.20 – 3.24).

No Distinction is awarded at Honours level (Regulation 3.25).

Links: UWS Regulatory Framework; and Student Experience Policy Statement.

Regulations of Assessment

Candidates will be bound by the general assessment regulations of the University as specified in the University Regulatory Framework.

An overview of the assessment details is provided in the Student Handbook and the assessment criteria for each module is provided in the module descriptor which forms part of the module pack issued to students. For further details on assessment please refer to Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.

To qualify for an award of the University, students must complete all the programme requirements and must meet the credit minima detailed in Chapter 1 of the Regulatory Framework.

Combined Studies

There may be instances where a student has been unsuccessful in meeting the award criteria for the named award and for other more generic named awards existing within the School. Provided that they have met the credit requirements in line with the SCQF credit minima (please see Regulation 1.21), they will be eligible for a Combined Studies award (please see Regulation 1.61).

For students studying BA, BAcc, or BD awards the award will be BA Combined Studies.

For students studying BEng or BSc awards, the award will be BSc Combined Studies.

Version no: 1

Change/Version Control

What	When	Who
