

## Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

### Basic Course Information

1. Awarding Institution: Nottingham Trent University
2. School/Campus: Nottingham Business School/City
3. Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study: MSc Branding and Advertising FT
4. Normal Duration: 1 year
5. UCAS Code:

### 6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

The fragmentation of media and the complex and competitive nature of markets now means that organisations need to think very carefully about their branding and how they communicate with their stakeholders. The new MSc in Branding and Advertising represents an exciting and stimulating opportunity to reflect on how organisations can rise to the communications challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The changing consumption patterns of the post-modern consumer, together with the increasingly dynamic nature of markets, the rise of globalisation, integrated marketing communications, e-commerce and the emergence of digital marketing, are all helping to redefine the nature of customer relationships. This makes it an exciting and challenging time to study branding and advertising and the broader discipline of marketing. Many people are often confused about the complexities of branding, advertising, marketing and its associated aims. Indeed, people tend to regard advertising, branding and marketing purely as a means of driving consumerism. However, the MSc Branding and Advertising will help you develop a broader view of marketing and the impact marketing activities have on people, organisations and societies. An example is perhaps the best way to explain.

When presented with the demands of a constantly evolving and increasingly competitive global marketplace, what do world-leading companies do? They ask themselves some fundamental questions... Who are the best customers for us and what do they want? Why should they purchase from us? Do we offer better value than our competitors? How do we develop our brand and communicate our message effectively to today's customer? Looking to the future, can we be the first to identify the key changes in the market place? Can we respond and communicate with our customers in a visionary way that ensures we continue to create superior value for them? Marketing is all about asking these key questions (amongst others), knowing what the answers mean and developing sets of creative action plans and communicating these plans in a way which produces the superior value for customers that makes the difference between world-leading companies and the rest.

Whilst branding and advertising are at the forefront of this course, we cannot ignore the role of marketing and well established marketing theory and concepts in developing an understanding of customers which is shared across the organisation and that can help in creating customer-driven competitive strategies. Looking in a little more detail, successful implementation requires a marketing philosophy and marketing processes which are supported across the organisation. Branding and advertising, and the ability to communicate

effectively to all stakeholders, are a crucial part of marketing practice. During the MSc Branding and Advertising you will gain a solid grounding in the wider discipline of marketing whilst also specialising in the philosophy and practice of marketing communications. The course will sit within a suite of MScs (MSc Marketing and MSc Digital Marketing) and you will be part of a community of marketing students who will share content at times and also share learning experiences. This approach will allow you in turn to specialise within the marketing communications discipline whilst also appreciating and understanding the broader marketing arena.

The MSc in Branding and Advertising has been designed to produce graduates capable of making a difference in the marketing communications and general marketing areas. Consultation with the marketing industry, the Chartered Institute of Marketing and recent alumni ensures that what you study is contemporary and that the course as a whole delivers what employers want from graduates. The course also reflects the current marketing communications issues that are of interest and concern to organisations.

The principle aims of the course are:

- To offer a specialist postgraduate course in marketing communications that is both practically and academically relevant to the current discipline of marketing.
- To offer a course that prepares you for a career in marketing communications by meeting the requirements of employers and the target attributes of an NTU postgraduate.
- To enhance lifelong learning skills and personal development for graduates to contribute to organisations and the societies in which they operate.
- To enhance reflective learning skills to develop a reflective practitioner.
- To enable you to apply your emerging higher-level understanding of marketing communications to both simulated and real-life business situations.

These aims are expected to enable graduates to:

- Seek employment in a number of areas including marketing agency account management, customer experience roles or working as managers in corporate branding teams. The qualification would also support you if you are looking to start your marketing career in a generic marketing role as the discipline continues to penetrate most areas of commercial practice.
- Undertake consultancy work in the area of marketing communications.

The fact that the fundamentals of marketing are reinforced in the course means that you will also be awarded a Level 4 Certificate in Professional Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) following the successful completion of an exam. The suite of MScs in Marketing has been mapped to the CIM curriculum which is a reflection of course currency and relevance to the marketing profession. Following the course, you will also have exemptions from the level 7 Diploma in Professional Marketing, typically completed during their first substantive marketing role. The CIM is an industry-recognised, professional body that employers know about. Holding either or both qualifications will allow graduates of the MSc Branding and Advertising to stand out in a competitive job market.

So, you won't just be studying for an MSc in Branding and Advertising but a

CIM Certificate in Professional Marketing as well. As a dual award, the MSc Branding and Advertising represents excellent added value.

**7. Course outcomes**

Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.

**Knowledge and understanding**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Articulate a critical understanding of the contemporary issues, theories and conceptual frameworks used to explain and guide both conventional marketing and marketing communications activities in organisations nationally and internationally.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the strategic marketing process.
3. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of marketing tactics and implementation.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of traditional and contemporary debates related to the philosophy and practice of marketing.
5. Apply knowledge to resolve issues in new and diverse situations within both conventional marketing and marketing communications disciplines.
6. Evaluate the rigour and validity of published research and assess its relevance to the practice of both conventional marketing and marketing communications and synthesise existing research to identify alternative approaches.
7. Demonstrate the ability to make recommendations for organisational practice based on theoretical insights through a process of experiential or applied learning.
8. Demonstrate an aptitude for independent critical thought and rational inquiry.
9. Demonstrate creativity and intellectual curiosity in both the application and synthesis of knowledge.
10. Demonstrate proficiency in the use of techniques of research and enquiry to draw conclusions from a critical evaluation of relevant conventional marketing and marketing communications issues.
11. Demonstrate an appreciation of the wider social, environmental and economic sustainability issues and their interrelationships which may be impacted by or have an impact on organisational activities.
12. Understand the environmental, social, governance and ethical problems that may occur in both conventional marketing and marketing communications disciplines and apply appropriate frameworks or professional codes to resolve such problems.
13. Critically self-reflect, and demonstrate an international awareness and

openness to the world, based on an appreciation of social and cultural diversity.

14. Develop a critical understanding of the role of both conventional marketing and marketing communications disciplines in the global context.

15. Develop a critical understanding of the role of both conventional marketing and marketing communications disciplines in the wider organisational context.

### **Skills, qualities and attributes**

By the end of the course you should be able to:

16. Analyse a variety of relevant data used in diverse contexts to support effective decision making in both conventional marketing and marketing communications disciplines.

17. Communicate key issues and arguments in written and oral format to a professional standard.

18. Effectively use information and communication technologies relevant to both conventional marketing and marketing communications disciplines.

19. Work collaboratively in internationally diverse teams and take leadership roles where appropriate.

20. Make decisions and exercise judgement in organisational settings when faced with a range of alternative courses of action.

21. Take personal responsibility for continuing professional development and develop the potential to be an effective and reflective practitioner.

## **8. Teaching and learning methods**

The course is designed to offer you a learning experience that fits your individual needs. A key feature of this course is that it takes your educational and practical experiences into account and draws upon them to make what we teach relevant. Your fellow students will typically be drawn from a range of different backgrounds, hence, you will be able to both share other peoples' experiences as well as learn from them.

A combination of direct contact (where you are taught by the lecturer) and guided study (where you work individually or in groups with your fellow students in your own study time) are used. Direct contact is spread out over the week, giving you the time and space to undertake the guided study. You will be given many opportunities to develop the skills, qualities and attributes that you will require to be a successful and effective marketing communications manager for an organisation. These opportunities come during direct contact time, guided study and the work you do to complete assignments.

A range of teaching and learning methods are used that include small group tutorials, supervised research linked to real businesses' problems, interactive teaching, industry specific workshops (guest speakers, project work, etc.), e-supported learning, guided and directed individual and group study (before, during and after modules) and a variety of multimedia approaches.

You will build your knowledge and understanding of marketing through all of the methods mentioned above via a teaching approach that is, as far as possible, tailored to your individual learning needs. Small group teaching is particularly helpful in offering you the chance to gain this personal support and feedback from tutors, to share your ideas, challenge one another's thinking, and learn from the experiences of other students from a variety of different countries and backgrounds. The course is designed to build on your previous learning experiences and develop them to a Masters level in branding and advertising.

#### 9. **Assessment methods**

The assessments you complete will both indicate how you are progressing on the course and provide you with an opportunity to apply your acquired knowledge and understanding. In applying this knowledge and understanding you are also building the skills, qualities and attributes that are required by successful and effective marketing communication managers.

The assessments you will submit are varied and you will be working both on your own and in groups. Successful marketing communications managers have to be able to work on their own and interact with others hence the assessment on this course provides a further opportunity to improve the way that you work. To make business links even stronger, the assessments on this course have been designed with the issues faced by marketing communications managers in mind, and some will involve working on real problems. Indeed in Term 2, where the emphasis is very much on 'practice', you will be required to present a marketing 'pitch', a skill used regularly within the professional domain of marketing communications. In turn, all of the assessments you complete will prepare you for a career in marketing communications.

Some of the assessments you undertake will be graded (this is called summative assessment) whilst the rest will be set to allow us to provide early feedback on your progress and give you guidance on how to improve your performance (this is called formative assessment).

Each module has clear assessment guidelines, and tutor support is offered throughout the programme – thus providing you with the opportunity to maximise your learning.

#### 10. **Course structure and curriculum**

The MSc Branding and Advertising has been designed to introduce you to the marketing and communication issues facing organisations. The three main themes are: knowledge, application and delivery. These themes are represented in each of the three terms.

To reflect the importance of the fundamentals of marketing, in Term 1 you will enjoy a consistent provision covering various aspects of foundational knowledge and skills required in the wider marketing discipline. For example, Strategic Marketing and the Global Environment (SMAGE) will allow you to take a more holistic view of an organisation and how it attempts to develop marketing strategy in a challenging global environment. The Customer Experience (TCE) module will explore aspects of consumer buying behaviour and engage you in a reflection of your own buying behaviour and how you are impacted by people and events around you. The final module is Principles of Marketing Communications (PoMC) where the foundational principles of the marketing and marketing communications discipline will be explored.

In Term 2 you will specialise and apply your knowledge in two subject-specific modules, one of which deals with the management issues relating to the management of marketing communications in the organisation (Branding and Corporate Reputation Management) whilst the other (Driving Marketing Communications) focuses on specific marketing communications practice issues such as campaign management and analysis. Both are further supported by a skills-based module (Developing the Effective and Responsible Practitioner – DERP) which will help you develop as marketing communications practitioners.

Term 1			Developing the Effective and Responsible Practitioner (20CP)
Developing the Effective and Responsible Practitioner			
<b>The Customer Experience</b>  20 credit core	<b>Strategic Marketing and the Global Environment</b>  20 credit core	<b>Principles of Marketing</b>  20 credit core	
Term 2			
<b>Branding and Corporate Reputation Management</b>  20 credit core	<b>Driving Marketing Communications</b>  20 credit core		
Term 3			
<b>Applied Consultancy / In-Company Project</b>  40 credit core	<b>Contemporary Perspectives in Customer Engagement</b>  20 credit core		

Finally, in Term 3, the consultancy project/in-company project allows you to work together in small groups in a real world setting relevant to marketing communications or for you to deliver a marketing communications project as part of the in-company project on an individual basis. This experience will provide students with the knowledge and skills valued by employers in the marketing and communications sector. In addition, a core module (Contemporary Perspectives in Customer Engagement) will be studied by all students across the suite of MSc Marketing courses. This will expose you to the very latest leading-edge thinking in the marketing arena.

**11. Admission to the course**

You will require a good undergraduate degree equivalent to a UK undergraduate honours degree. Language requirements conform to the framework.

**12. Support for learning**

The course leader, together with the course administrator and the course team, coordinates the academic support and other facilities available to all students enrolled on the course.

The library, IT and other learning resources are continually updated to ensure they are fit for purpose. In addition, University central support offers a range of professional services: these include the centre dedicated to postgraduate management learning, the International Office and student services.

An induction event, immediately prior to the start of your course, will include: an introduction to members of the course and the modules you will be studying, meeting with your tutor, introduction to the university I.T. facilities and sources of help and student support services. A student handbook, made available to all students at induction, will provide you with essential information about Nottingham Business School and the support provided for your learning.

Increasing use is made, as appropriate, of reliable electronic support for your learning on the course but the availability of face-to-face contact remains an invaluable part of the course. All learning materials will be available via NOW, the university's internal, virtual learning environment, and this will be your first and main point of contact.

### **13. Graduate destinations / employability**

The market demand for graduates of this MSc Branding and Advertising course is expected to include employers seeking to fill career-enhancing positions in major transnational companies and globally aware smaller enterprises as Marketing or Marketing Communication/Branding managers. Graduates will also be equipped to pursue opportunities for self-employment, perhaps as a business or marketing consultant while providers of reputable courses in postgraduate research-based studies, including those leading to a doctoral qualification, will seek to attract them. Typical roles for previous MSc Marketing (Advertising and Communication) students include Brand Managers, Marketing Managers, Market Research Managers and Account Managers in Creative Agencies and it is expected that MSc Branding and Advertising students will have similar opportunities.

### **14. Course standards and quality**

Course standards and quality are maintained in a number of ways. You will be offered constructive feedback in each element of assessed course work. You will have the opportunity to provide written comments on the modules you study via the module questionnaires. You will also be able to offer your comments and suggestions through an elected student course representative at course committees, and your course leader and tutors will be available for a weekly 'surgery' to discuss any concerns or feedback you may want to give. Throughout the year you will also have a personal tutor to discuss and share feedback with on a regular basis.

The course team ensures the continuing relevance of course content by consulting respected professional practitioners, such as employers, marketing professional bodies like the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM) and other academic institutions. The course leader will meet with the MSc Branding and Advertising course enhancement board which includes senior marketing communications professionals and alumni. This group will meet on an individual course basis and also on a 'platform' basis to ensure course delivery meets and keeps pace with industry developments.

The research interests of the staff also enhance the curriculum. Practitioners will also be invited to speak to students either at a platform level or within specific modules about contemporary marketing communications developments on a regular basis.

External examiners report on the appropriateness of the curriculum, the quality of student work and the assessment process. All tutors have their teaching observed by their peers with a summary of good practice observed across the group then being produced and circulated.

**15. Assessment regulations**

This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:

The course adheres to NBS assessment guidelines.

**16. Additional Information**

Collaborative partner(s): The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM)  
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements: QAA Benchmarks for M level programmes in Business and Management 2007  
Course recognised by:  
Date implemented: September 2015  
Any additional information: