

## Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

### Basic Course Information

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| 1. | Awarding Institution:                         | Nottingham Trent University.         |
| 2. | School/Campus:                                | Arts and Humanities: City Campus     |
| 3. | Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study: | BA (Hons) Broadcast Journalism<br>FT |
| 4. | Normal Duration:                              | Three years                          |
| 5. | UCAS Code:                                    | P500                                 |

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

The BA honours degree in Broadcast Journalism is a vocational degree which combines practical training in broadcast journalism with a solid academic base. Taught by staff with substantial experience in the media, and situated in a purpose-built accommodation, you will learn the skills needed to work in a broadcast newsroom, along with media law, politics, and an understanding of the role of journalism within society. By the end of the course you will be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to work in a broadcast newsroom.

The course is distinctive in the following ways:

It was the first undergraduate course to receive full bi-media recognition from the industry watchdog, the Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC) in 1998. Since then it has had continuous accreditation, and the BJTC has praised the quality of the teaching, the excellent facilities, and the dedication of staff.

It is supported at all levels by strong links with the broadcasting industry and, in particular, by the Broadcasting and Journalism Consortium which includes representatives from BBC East Midlands, ITV Central, ITN, Sky News, Capital Radio and the Bauer Media Group.

Opportunities for placements are available for all students to prepare you for the world of work, and provide valuable contacts for your future.

Visiting professors have included Richard Bilton, from BBC documentaries, ITN programme producer Richard Frediani, ITV Factual Programme's executive producer Mike Blair and Trevor Dan, former Radio Academy chief executive.

The course is made up both practical and academic modules.

The educational aims of the course are to:

- Provide a course of study to develop the knowledge and skills needed to work in broadcast journalism.
- Train journalists of the future who have an informed and responsible awareness of the role of media in society.
- Provide an education which will foster cognitive and transferable skills useful in the development of students' future career potential and employment.
- Encourage the development of argument in a variety of formats in a clear, lucid, rigorous and creative manner.
- Produce confident and ambitious graduates.

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:

- Critically appraise the cultural, historical, social, political, economic, regulatory, legal and ethical context and discourses around broadcast journalism. **(B)**
- Competently apply the practical skills relevant to a career in broadcast journalism news. **(B)**
- Recognise and criticise industry structures and practices in broadcast journalism. **(B)**
- Plan, design and execute a rigorous programme of research in a chosen topic. **(B)**
- Evaluate your learning journey through your course in the context of your future suitability for employment and a career in the news industry. **(B)**

**(B)** : Indicates that the outcome has been mapped to the Journalism Benchmark. The Journalism benchmark standards form part of the Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies national framework, of October 2016, for describing the content and standards of a bachelor's degree with honours in the discipline of Journalism. The benchmark standards also align to industry standards set by the Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC).

**Skills, qualities and attributes**

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

- Work collaboratively, manage time and develop interpersonal skills to enable you to make a full contribution to your chosen career. **(B)**

- Apply news judgement to find, evaluate and manage information and sources of information across a range of different situations and different platforms. **(B)**
- Communicate effectively orally and across different platforms to a professional standard to allow you to recognise your responsibility as a local, national and international citizen. **(B)**
- Assimilate and synthesise diverse ideas and relate information to theory and theory to practice. **(B)**
- Research, produce and manage broadcast journalism output and demonstrate competency in practical skills of relevance to a career within broadcast journalism news. **(B)**
- Articulate and manage the skills profile you have developed through your studies and recognise the opportunities these present to you in the graduate labour market. **(B)**

**(B)**: Indicates that the outcome has been mapped to the Journalism Benchmark standard. The Journalism benchmark standards form part of the Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies national framework of October 2016 for describing the content and standards of a bachelor's degree with honours in the discipline of Journalism. The Benchmark standards are aligned to industry standards as set by the Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC).

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

The curriculum content reflects the requirement for you to achieve a competent level of performance across a range of core practical and critical inquiry modules. You will work to develop the foundations skills needed to become an effective journalist. Modules are complementary, enhancing core knowledge. All modules are delivered and designed by staff whose interests and expertise most closely relate to that provision and need.

Teaching methods vary from module to module, but given the dynamic range of activities on the programmes of study, you will benefit from a vibrant and challenging programme of lectures, seminars, tutorials, convergence news days, court visits, group working, e-learning and other practical workshops.

Learning and teaching support is comprehensive; all modules are supported by module guides, staff are available for you to seek individual assistance and you are also encouraged to use electronic communication with tutors and fellow students.

Your feedback is actively sought and your comments inform future development of modules. All modules are also supported by web-based learning materials.

The **Practical Strand** (in radio, television and online) is taught across all three years. These modules aim to develop the skills you'll need to work as a broadcast journalist. Teaching and learning activities include writing for broadcast, research, interviewing, radio and television recording and editing, researching and dissemination news across social media and digital platforms, news reading and presenting. Students also spend a considerable time learning the skills necessary to be able to use broadcast equipment, mobile journalism kits, editing softwares, CMS and IT systems. All students are involved in convergence newsday activities which aim to simulate the real world. These take place on a weekly basis at key stages during your course of study, and as a rolling week of newsday activity. Staff act as consultant editors, as do representatives from industry. Roles on newsdays are rotated and cover news reading, presenting, reporting, television gallery roles and editing. From the second year you will also produce material for the outward-facing news website CBJSpotlight.

There is also the opportunity, in the third year, for a number of students to take **the Notts TV pathway**. This involves working as an intern within the newsroom of Notts TV, which is one of a number of hyper-local television stations licensed by Ofcom across the UK, broadcasting its programmes and producing its linked website from NTU'S city campus. At the end of the second year all students are given the opportunity to apply to take the Pathway, as an alternative mode of study, in their final year. Successful applicants will have achieved at least a 2:1 in their law module, demonstrated a commitment to working at the station, through previous work experience during university holidays, and through conversations with staff about their suitability for this internship.

In place of the core *Newsroom Practice* module (40 credits), *Data Journalism*, a 20-credit core module and one other optional 20-credit module, Pathway students will complete two 40 credit modules – *Journalism at Work* and *The Group Documentary Project*. Assessments for *Journalism at Work* consist of portfolios which reflect your intern work during your attachment at Notts TV and on CBJ newsdays. The attachment will be organised around a 2-week rotation with students spending one week working with the Notts TV news team and the alternate week attending scale-up workshops and working on a group project, guided by CBJ tutors, that will result in a television programme with a linked online presence. The Pathway is designed to bring together all the skills and knowledge of the first two years of the course, whilst also providing valuable real-world experience of working in a newsroom. On the Notts TV Pathway you will also produce a Group Project with other interns in the form of a TV documentary, plus associated assessments, for *The Group Documentary Project*, so you gain experience of long-form journalism as well as news production.

Students on this route will also take the 40-credit *Documenting News* module, as core, alongside all other third years.

In addition, in order to extend this opportunity for work experience to everyone enrolled on BA Broadcast Journalism, all third year students, as part of the Newsroom Practice module, will be rotated in small groups to spend one week at Notts TV during term-time. During this rotation you will be supported by the Notts TV co-ordinator, and professional staff at Notts TV, as well as module staff. This is designed to enhance your CVs with skills that will improve your employability.

The **Placement** forms a core part of the course you will study. You will be required to complete a minimum of three weeks in industry placements, usually at different organisations. The placement is not perceived as work experience, nor as time out studying to test theory against practice, but is the natural extension of professional training and practice taking place at the University. Placements enable you to test out your competency, to learn how to use specialised equipment and to develop your confidence in working with different teams. The placement provider completes a placement logbook, providing useful feedback on your time with their organisation.

Knowledge of **media law** is a vitally important part of your course of study. Therefore, media law is a core module at all three levels of the BA (Hons) course. It is delivered through lectures and seminars, plus tutor support, and embedded in all practical sessions. You will be required to visit the courts and transfer your understanding of law to practical newsday activities. The success in this area is attributable to creative and imaginative teaching and learning in a subject which needs to be brought to life for and made relevant to your needs as a student and your future career as a working journalist.

You will also study **ethics and regulation** as a core component part of this course of study. Here again, teaching and learning takes place within a dynamic framework. You will explore ethical and regulatory issues through lectures, visiting speakers and class activities.

**Politics** and **Social Theory** are also core subjects and are taught through a variety of methods and integrated into other modules to ensure you have a sound knowledge of the political systems in the UK, are able to apply that knowledge to your journalistic practice and to examine and analyse these organisations and institutions.

There are core modules in **Social Media** and **Data Journalism** and optional modules in **Photojournalism, PR and Communications, Sport, Fashion, Global, Political** and **Celebrity** journalism which will explore these key aspects of the industry through lectures, case-studies, student-led discussions, presentations and visiting speakers.

The research skills and professional practice elements of your course are brought together in a year-long project within the **Documenting News** module which requires you to produce news and current affairs content across multi-platforms. You will be required to produce a critical research essay on a topic of your choice and from that make a journalism documentary for either radio or television, and an online version of this feature. This is regarded as a challenging but rewarding part of the course. This work is taught through a variety of master class lectures and one-to-one supervision sessions across the year.

## 9. **Assessment methods**

Broadcast Journalism's assessment policy is inclusive, flexible and provides diverse, wide-ranging and progressively more challenging approaches to assessment as you advance through your studies. Practical assessments in the first year have been designed to support incremental learning of the new skills, knowledge and industry competencies being introduced. They will provide you a sound foundation on which to build upon in practical modules in the second and third year. After each piece of practical coursework you will be given a one-to-one tutorial to discuss how you might further improve on your journalism. Formative feedback is also given during scale-up workshops and newsday activities throughout the three years of the course.

The majority of modules are 20-credit and year-long. Modes of assessment vary from one module to another but assessment 'equivalence' between modules is ensured. The *Documenting News* module, at level 6, is weighted at 40-credits, reflecting both its length and the importance as are the practical modules at all three levels. All modules make extensive use of coursework (essays, reports, reviews, biographies, portfolios of practical work, and presentations), some are entirely assessed in this way whilst others include a seen or unseen examination. All examinations are assessed anonymously as are essays and written coursework.

Students on the Notts TV pathway will take the 40-credit *Journalism at Work* and 40-credit *The Group Documentary Project* modules. Its assessment includes two portfolios of work taken from Notts TV and CBJ newssdays for *Journalism at Work* and a year-long group project to produce a TV documentary and a reflective essay for *The Group Documentary Project*.

Assessment is co-ordinated between modules at each level to ensure both diversity and the spread of submission dates, whenever possible. Module specific criteria and assessment guidelines are published in each module guide. These are guided by University and School statements on levels of achievement but defined for each module in relation to specific learning outcomes. You are assessed on your knowledge

and understanding, discipline specific skills, intellectual skills and key skills.

Module teams annually review assessment tasks, and all assessments are internally moderated and scrutinised by external examiners. All module assessment is summative, but there are many opportunities for formative assessment, for which verbal feedback and guidance is given to support your progression, within practical modules across all three levels.

In addition all assessment at Level 1 fulfils a formative role for both subject development and degree outcomes. The third year practical module includes a synoptic review of the vocational skills, abilities and journalistic practices you have gained during your degree. Feedback is provided through both extensive annotations on your work and a coversheet returned with further formative comments. Standards are quality assured by the subject external examiner who scrutinises all level 3 modules including the Documenting News module and a number of level 2 modules.

In summary: to support teaching & learning and to measure learning outcomes, the type and variety of assessments you'll come across include the:

Essay.

Presentation.

Portfolio of a wide range of professional practice competencies.

Reflective essay.

Placement logbook.

Examination.

Class test.

Reports.

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

Modules on the BA (Hons) in Broadcast Journalism are complementary: each year builds on the knowledge and skills of the previous year. In the first year, you will undertake four 20-credit modules, and one 40-credit module, all of which are core. Your second year will be semesterised to enable you to study abroad if you choose to do so; in the first semester you will take a core 20-credit practical module, a core 20-credit law module and a further 20-credit module selected from two options; and, in the second semester, you will take another core 20-credit practical module and selected two further 20-credit modules from a choice of four options. In your final year, you will be required to complete two 20-credit modules, one selected from three options, and two 40-credit core practice modules. Coursework, assessments and examinations, usually take place towards the end of each module. Other forms of assessment may be required at other points in the year. The structure and content of the course is outlined in the diagram below:

**BABJ YEAR ONE:**

Digital Journalism (40 credits)	Covering the Courts (20 credits)	Democracy in Action (20 credits)	Media Matters (20 credits)	Social Media (20 credits)
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**BABJ YEAR TWO SEMESTER A**

Broadcast News (20 credits)	Keeping out of Court (20 credits)	Journalism Ethics and Society (20 credits)  <b>OR</b> Political Journalism (20 credits)
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**BABJ YEAR TWO SEMESTER B**

Programme Production (20 credits)	<b>STUDENTS TO SELECT TWO.</b> Sport Journalism (20 credits) Global Journalism (20 credits) Photojournalism (20 credits) Fashion Journalism (20 credits)
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**BABJ YEAR THREE**

Newsroom Practice (40 credits)	Documenting News (40 credits)	Data Journalism (20 credits)	<b>Students choose one:</b> Celebrity Journalism (20 credits) Challenge and Conflict in Journalism (20 credits) PR and Comms (20 credits)
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**BABJ PATHWAY**

Journalism at Work (40 credits) The Group Documentary Project (40 credits)	Documenting News (40 credits)
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**First year:**

In *Digital Journalism* you will learn how to write for online, operate as a mobile journalist, conduct interviews for radio and television, record and edit material for radio and television news output, and how to use social media to gather and disseminate news.

To complement this you will study a module called *Covering the Courts* which also includes the English legal system, courts, reporting restrictions, and contempt, along with an introduction to court reporting.

A broad knowledge of politics is provided in *Democracy in Action*. This looks at the structure of the British political system, how it works, and how different branches and institutions interact.

In order to understand the importance of social media within journalism and society you

will also study *Social Media*. This provides you with the knowledge to examine and analyse the impact of social media on the industry as well as the tools and practices used by journalists to research and disseminate news across social media platforms.

The final module in your first year is *Media Matters* which will help you build up a knowledge of key issues that affect both the media and the world at large, and will help to inform your journalism. This module also examines how media affects society and the link between politics and the media as well as the importance of a journalism in a democratic society.

### **Second year, first semester:**

In *Broadcast News* you will continue to develop your practical journalism skills and undertake more advanced editing and production skills to produce news packages for radio and television and material for online as well as being given professional voice coaching.

In *Keeping out of Court* you will be given further law training covering issues like defamation, privacy, human rights, election law and copyright.

To complement these modules you will select one of the following optional modules; *Journalism, Ethics and Society*, in which you will learn about media regulation and examine ethical issues faced by journalists in the UK; or *Political Journalism*, which also looks at ethical issues and current controversies, such as fake news, propaganda, political partisanship, through the relationship between journalism and politics and its impact on past and current events.

### **Second year, second semester:**

In Programme Production you will participate, as part of a team, in newscasts, during which, alongside your fellow students, you will be required to plan and produce live radio and TV magazine programmes with links to social media and with supporting online content on CBJSpotlight, our outward-facing news website. From the elements you produce and the planning work you undertake, you will collate a portfolio of work for assessment at the end of this module.

You will then choose two modules from the following options; *Sports Journalism*, which explores key aspects of this important *part of the industry through lectures, student presentations and visiting speakers*; *Fashion Journalism*, which explores the sustainability achieved through the relationship between the world of fashion and journalism; *Global Journalism*, which provides insight and analysis on how journalists operate across different societies; and *Photojournalism*, which will enable you to

demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of the theory and practice of stills **photography**. These modules are all delivered through lectures, seminars, scale-up workshops and visiting speakers.

By the end of your second year you will be competent to work in a real newsroom, therefore you are encouraged to take three weeks' worth of placements at different organisations between Easter and the start of the new academic year. This will be ideally in a broadcast newsroom, digital news environment or with factual programming department. You will receive help to find suitable placements and guidance on how to prepare for the experience.

### **Third year:**

In *Newsroom Practice* you will participate in weekly newscasts to produce content for hourly radio news bulletins and daily TV news programmes. You will continue to learn about bulletin and programme construction through these real-world newscasts, and will be given further advanced editing skills and production skills, during scale-up workshops, and be required to make more advanced news packages including as-live and live broadcasting and presenting. Your online skills will also be honed to enable you to produce engaging material of a professional standard. You will also produce a synoptic essay in which you will review the vocational skills, abilities and the journalism practice you have gained throughout your degree.

In *Data Journalism* you will apply and critically evaluate the new and emerging tools and processes used in researching and producing news content through statistical analysis and data, as required by employers and our professional accrediting body the BJTC.

You will then choose one of the following options; *Challenge and Conflict in Journalism* which examines the range of theoretical and practical challenges and conflicts faced by journalists by considering issues including Freedom of Information, official secrets, protection of sources, laws governing journalistic content and comments on the internet; *Celebrity Journalism*, which examines this increasingly important part of the industry through lectures and student presentations; and *PR and Communications*, which will enable you to demonstrate a working knowledge of PR in the private, public and voluntary sectors and use professional techniques and tools to produce a basic PR campaign.

The *Documenting News* module is a culmination of the theory and practice you have learned over the course. This is a 40-credit module that combines advanced research skills with a topical documentary feature for either radio or television, and an online artefact. This module is a showcase for the wide range of skills you have gained over the three years of the course, and it has attracted very favourable comments from external examiners. Features made for this module have also gone on to win national journalism

and student journalism awards sponsored by organisations such as the RTS, BJTC, Midlands Media, Student Radio Awards, Nottingham's International Soroptimist Society, and Amnesty International.

Students taking the *Notts TV Pathway*, in place of the core *Newsroom Practice* module (40 credits) Data Journalism and one other optional 20-credit module taken by other third year students, will complete portfolios of work for assessment, produced during their attachment to the station and at CBJ, while completing the 40-credit module *Journalism at Work*. The attachment will be organised around a 2-week rotation with students spending one week working with the Notts TV news team and the alternate week attending scale-up workshops and working on a group project, guided by CBJ tutors, that will result in a television documentary with a linked online presence as assessment for the second 40-credit module taken by Pathway students, *The Group Documentary Project*. The Pathway is designed to bring together all the skills and knowledge of the first two years of the course, whilst also providing valuable real-world experience of working in a newsroom.

Students on this route will also take the *Documenting News* module. In order to extend the work experience aspect of the Pathway to all students on BA Broadcast Journalism, as part of the *Newsroom Practice* module, all third year students will be rotated in small groups to spend a week at Notts TV during term-time. During this rotation you will be supported by the Notts TV co-ordinator, and professional staff at Notts TV, as well as module staff. This is designed to enhance your CVs with skills that will improve your employability.

#### **11. Admission to the course**

For current information about admissions requirements, please see the information on the 'How to Apply' tab

#### **12. Support for learning**

There is an induction programme at the start of the first year. This gives an overview of the way your course runs and includes introductions to the IT and library resources, and to the range of student support services. A Student Handbook which contains the essential information about the support we provide for your learning on each year of the course will be available on the NOW student learning rooms. You also meet your module tutors, administrators and our engineering team during induction. In addition, sessions are provided which include an introduction to the news media industry and, in particular, local and regional news organisations, team-building exercises (which incorporate IT and some simple journalism skills), 'Meet the Consortium' and an opportunity for you to meet your personal tutor. Personal tutor group meetings are held throughout the year to give students general support and advice on coping with university life, and individual

meetings can be arranged by appointment at any time. An annual 'I Heart CBJ' event is also held in November of your first year to help you further integrate within the department and adjust to university life. This comprises a week-long series of events including opportunities to meet and gain advice from fellow CBJ students, including CERT Mentors, in the second and third year and to attend revision sessions for technical skills.

'Welcome back' events are also held at the start of levels 5 and 6. Personal tutor group sessions are also arranged to support and guide you in securing placements, preparing your CV and preparation for job applications and interviews. These include, in your final year, the annual CBJ Futures Day; a careers event with industry professionals and prospective employers consisting part in panel discussions, workshops and networking sessions.

Extensive module information, including learning materials and module news, is provided on the university's NOW online portal. This also includes programme information such as the programme handbook and assessment information and deadlines. NOW can be accessed from off-campus. There are many workstations on campus with access to IT resources available 24 hours, 7 days a week. There is a well-equipped library, which offers extensive electronic learning resources.

You can seek academic support from your tutors both through electronic communication and during posted office hours, which allow one-to-one contact between you and your tutor. The School operates a Study Skills Support process for all students. The School has a dedicate team of librarians who also offer study skills support and advice for students. This is backed up by the University Student Support Services which offers extensive advice and guidance on a range of issues, e.g. financial problems, dyslexia and disability and personal problems.

[https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/student\\_services/](https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/)

You will be given assistance in your placement preparation by the Centre's Placement co-ordinator and you will be assigned to two individual supervisors for your final-year *Documenting News* project; one will support and guide you, through personal tutorials, in researching and writing your research essay, the other, also through personal tutorials and practical sessions, will support and guide you in the production of your documentary.

Students on the alternative Notts TV pathway will also be supported by the Notts TV Co-ordinator to ensure the learning outcomes of the course are met while they are attached to NottsTV.

Preparing for **life beyond graduation** is also integral to your course of study. You will be provided with career support initiatives, these include sessions on CV writing and also preparing for job interviews as well as regular opportunities to meet and network with our

industry partners, including the annual CBJ Futures Event.

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

Graduate employability is fundamental to the strategic aim of Nottingham Trent University, as reflected by the fact that NTU is consistently placed close to the top of the league table of all UK Universities for graduate employment. A government survey in 2009 named Nottingham Trent as having the top level of employability in journalism in the UK.

Our Broadcast Journalism graduates possess a wide range of professional, academic and transferable skills which provide the foundation for a successful career. The programme is designed to equip students with the skills required for the research, production, presentation and management of broadcast news. Training in this subject develops professional, personal and transferable skills, often leading to early career advantages in a number of highly competitive areas of the media.

Because of the vocational nature of this course, there are very strong links with the news media throughout the three years of study. These particularly come in to play when students do their placement. In order to get a placement you have to submit your CV and an application letter, and sometimes even go through an interview. This is invaluable experience for life after university, and often students gain paid employment following their placement. To supplement this you will also be invited to special sessions in your third year when the university Career's office will give you advice on how to prepare for interviews, and the best way to present your CV. Members of the CBJ Consortium and graduates also visit the Centre to pass on their experience of working in the media and how to apply for jobs and prepare for interviews.

Graduates from the BA (Hons) in Broadcast Journalism are currently working in radio, television and online newsrooms and factual programming across the country including a range of ILR radio stations, BBC radio and television, Sky News, ITV regions and ITN as well as being employed by Notts TV.

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

Course standards are monitored in a variety of ways:

- A course committee, which includes membership from undergraduate students at all levels of study, meets three times a year and monitors student feedback about the course and individual modules
- Student evaluation of modules is sought via through module feedback questionnaires;
- You will be provided with feedback on all assessed work;
- The course has two External Examiners from other UK Universities who

- submit annual reports on the standards and quality of the course;
- The subject benchmarks of the Quality Assurance Agency have been incorporated into the course's learning outcomes;
- Each year the course submits an interim course report, and every three years a Periodic Course Review is held which involves students, external examiners and stakeholders such as placement providers.
- The quality of courses is regularly reviewed by the University as part of its quality assurance and enhancement processes. The latest review of courses within the School of Arts and Humanities was in December 2015
- The Broadcast Journalism Training Council, which accredits the course, provides guidelines for broadcast and multi-platform journalism training have been incorporated into the subject's learning outcomes.

**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:

There are no course specific exceptions from the University's Common Assessment Regulations.

**16. Additional Information**

Collaborative partner(s):	n/a
Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements:	For QAA purposes Broadcasting & Journalism is placed within the Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies National Framework of October 2016.
Course recognised by:	Broadcast Journalism Training Council
Date this course specification approved:	December 2017
Any additional information:	