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## MODULE DESCRIPTOR

### Module Title

Political Communication and Public Affairs

Reference	BSM068	Version	5
Created	August 2018	SCQF Level	SCQF 11
Approved	June 2018	SCQF Points	15
Amended	August 2018	ECTS Points	7.5

### Aims of Module

To equip students with an understanding of the structures of political power and governance in the UK; the relationship between political communication and journalism; and the role of both in promoting and/or hindering democratic participation, transparency and accountability.

### Learning Outcomes for Module

On completion of this module, students are expected to be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate a sound knowledge of the broad constitutional and political structure, systems of governance and public administration in the UK - at local, devolved, national and international levels.
- 2 Identify and define the ethical, legal and political frameworks within which political communicators and commentators (journalists) and interest groups operate.
- 3 Distinguish between different forms and functions of political communication, media management and commentary/journalism.
- 4 Critically evaluate the role played by political communicators and public affairs practitioners, the effectiveness of political campaigns and communication strategies, and the ethics and efficacy of lobbying.
- 5 Relate professional practice in the field to theoretical concepts from academic literature.

### Indicative Module Content

UK constitution, systems of governance and public administration at local, devolved, national and international levels. Relationship between political communicators/actors, institutions/structures and the media. Political marketing, special advisers and spin, lobbying, briefings, censorship and propaganda. Political advertising, image and celebrity politics. Concepts and theories of public sphere, spectacle, media effects, audience reception and public opinion.

### Module Delivery

The module will be delivered by a combination of formal lectures, seminars and guest speakers. Students are expected to prepare for seminars and contribute to the discussion of the topics. Distance learning students are expected to participate actively on the online discussion threads.

<b>Indicative Student Workload</b>	Full Time	Part Time
Contact Hours	36	36
Non-Contact Hours	114	114
Placement/Work-Based Learning Experience [Notional] Hours	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>150</b>
<i>Actual Placement hours for professional, statutory or regulatory body</i>		

## ASSESSMENT PLAN

If a major/minor model is used and box is ticked, % weightings below are indicative only.

### Component 1

Type: Coursework Weighting: 100% Outcomes Assessed: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Description: Individual Written Assessment

## MODULE PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTOR

### Explanatory Text

The module is assessed by one component: C1 ? Coursework - 100% weighting. Module Pass Mark = Grade D (40%)

Module Grade	Minimum Requirements to achieve Module Grade:
<b>A</b>	70% or above
<b>B</b>	60% - 69%
<b>C</b>	50% - 59%
<b>D</b>	40% - 49%
<b>E</b>	35% - 39%
<b>F</b>	0% - 34%
<b>NS</b>	Non-submission of work by published deadline or non-attendance for examination

## Module Requirements

Prerequisites for Module	None.
Corequisites for module	None.
Precluded Modules	None.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

Students will be expected to consult a range of journals and media sources to complement and maintain their knowledge of current affairs. These may include: Campaign, PR Week, New Statesman, Prospect, Vanity Fair. Journals: Political Communication, Journal of Public Affairs. Further reading is available via Aspire.

**INDICATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- 1 BRANTS, K. and VOLTMER, K., 2011. *Political communication in postmodern democracy* . Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 2 HERMAN, S. and CHOMSKY, N., 1995. *Manufacturing consent: the political economy of the mass media* . London: Vintage.
- 3 McNAIR, B., 2016. *An Introduction to political communication* . 6th ed. London: Routledge.
- 4 MORRISON, J., 2017. *Essential public affairs for journalists* . 5th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 5 SAVIGNY, H., 2017. *Political communication: a critical introduction* . London: Palgrave.
- 6 VAN ZONEN, L., 2005. *Entertaining the citizen: when politics and popular culture converge* . Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield.
- 7 ZETTER, L., 2014. *Lobbying: the art of political persuasion* . London: Harriman House.
- 8 HARDING, J., 2009. *Alpha dogs: how political spin became a global business* . Kindle ed. Penrhyn: Atlantic Press.