

Module Specification

Module Summary Information

1	Module Title	PR Theory and Context
2	Module Credits	20
3	Module Level	7
4	Module Code	MED7362

5	Module Overview
<p>PR Theory and Context is the core module for the PR MA route. It teaches the fundamental elements of PR theory and examines the societal implications of PR practice. Topics include models of PR practice from propaganda to relationship-building, media relations, PR and promotion, issues management and crisis PR, the role of the PR practitioner, public opinion and the public sphere, and global PR issues.</p> <p>Emphasis is placed on understanding the changing nature of the discipline, including those driven by the continual evolution of digital platforms and channels. The module develops your ability to consider public relations as a strategic activity, and builds familiarity with the public relations toolkit – the range of tactical devices employed for delivering organisational messages and engaging with a range of stakeholder groups. This includes developing techniques for measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of such activity.</p> <p>As well as critically examining the reality of what is sometimes described as the “professional project” you are encouraged to consider ethical issues surrounding public relations activity, including power imbalances and tensions around truth, persuasion, authenticity, transparency and legitimacy. The module is delivered through a fluid structure of short lectures, discussions and practical work, including close examination of case studies and regular engagement with PR practitioners. You are assessed through a portfolio of coursework.</p> <p>Combined with MED7363 Communication Planning and Action plus an appropriate optional module PR Theory and Context allows the route to meet the criteria needed to achieve Recognised status with the Chartered Institute of Public Relations. Students are encouraged to join the CIPR, and to take part in CIPR regional activities. The content of this module and others in the MA suite are informed by regular discussions with an advisory panel made up of prominent PR practitioners.</p>	

6	Indicative Content
<p>This module considers many varying and often conflicting definitions of public relations. Beginning from a historical perspective it investigates the impact of PR on society and introduces a range of key concepts that help build that understanding. It positions PR as relationship management and tries to explain how and why people make decisions about behaviours, from building brand identity to influencing lifestyle choices.</p>	

7		Module Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:		
	1	Ability to engage with a range of theoretical approaches to understanding the public relations function and critically analyse the objectives and delivery of a range of strategic communications activities.
	2	Ability to contribute to and develop informed discussion and debate on the role and nature of PR practices in a post-industrial, information society.
	3	Demonstrate an understanding of how PR practitioners operate in a range of working environments.

8		Module Assessment		
Learning Outcome				
	Coursework	Exam	In-Person	
1-3	X			

9		Breakdown Learning and Teaching Activities	
Learning Activities	Hours		
Scheduled Learning (SL) includes lectures, practical classes and workshops, peer group learning, Graduate+, as specified in timetable	30		
Directed Learning (DL) includes placements, work-based learning, external visits, on-line activity, Graduate+, peer learning, as directed on VLE	130		
Private Study (PS) includes preparation for exams	40		
Total Study Hours:	200		