

## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Master of Arts and Postgraduate Diploma Consumption, Culture and Marketing**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2013**.

The aims of the programme are:

- to provide an advanced level understanding of the development of consumption and a critical appreciation of its social implications;
- to develop critical engagement with the major theoretical debates relating to how marketing strategically intervenes in cultures of consumption;
- to develop a conceptual understanding that enables students to critically evaluate current research on the intersections of consumption, culture and marketing;
- to provide a comprehensive understanding of research methods applicable to students' own advanced scholarship or research;
- to foster an independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

The programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks). Teaching takes place during the day over two terms from September to April. The dissertation is submitted the following September. On successful completion of the programme a student will have a critical understanding of MA Consumption, Culture and Marketing.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme, and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

### Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- a systematic and critical understanding of consumption as a social process;

- a sound knowledge of the texts, theories and methods used to enhance understanding of the issues, processes and phenomena associated with consumption;
- critical awareness of current issues at the forefront of consumer culture theory;
- an advanced knowledge and critical understanding of research methodologies applied to consumption, culture and marketing.

#### *Skills and other attributes*

- the ability to evaluate relevant critical, theoretical and contextual research at the forefront of the field;
- the ability to articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories at an advanced level, demonstrating self-direction and originality;
- the ability to develop their own lines of criticism and argument;\*
- the ability to conduct research independently at an advanced level using traditional and electronic resources;\*
- the ability to assess the merits of contrasting theories, explanations and policies;\*
- the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing;\*
- the ability to deal with complex issues, both systematically and creatively, and make sound judgments;\*
- the ability to identify, investigate, analyze, formulate and advocate solutions to problems;\*
- the ability to communicate complex information and ideas effectively, both orally and in writing;\*
- in the case of students progressing to Master of Arts, the ability to write up a substantial dissertation project, using the appropriate methodological and bibliographical skills.\*

\* transferable skills

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#### **Teaching, learning and assessment**

Teaching and learning methods are based on an intensive learning and delivery method in which the student attends 10 sessions over 10 teaching weeks per term. A session will comprise of lectures and seminars but will vary according to the intended outcomes of the particular course or session. Lectures provide coverage of the essential subject matter, literature review, and summaries of the key debates, as well as supplying guidance for further study or library work. Each course provides guided reading and indicative bibliography, and throughout the programme, considerable emphasis is placed on group work as well as independent study and library work. Research skills are further developed to a professional level through the design and production of an independent research dissertation, which also serves to integrate knowledge and skills acquired throughout the programme. It is expected that the dissertation will be researched and written primarily in the summer months, although supervision and dissertation training will begin earlier in the academic year.

Assessment methods vary, in accordance with the skills and knowledge being tested for a specific topic or course. Individual projects, group presentations and essays are all used - over the course of the assessment of the programme. Full details of the assessments for individual Marketing courses can be obtained from the School of Management and specific Sociology courses from the Centre for Criminology and Sociology.

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#### **Details of the programme structure(s)**

The duration of the programme is 52 weeks, beginning in September, and teaching is spread over the Autumn and Spring Terms. Students will submit further written work in the Summer Term, and the Summer months will be dedicated to the completion of the Dissertation.

The brief outline of the programme is shown below; however students can obtain further details from the Student Handbook. The programme structure for the PgDip is as below, with the exception that students will not undertake the dissertation. Weightings for courses within the PgDip are proportionate, but exclude the dissertation.

The programme includes two core courses (one from Sociology and one from Marketing), which are delivered during the Autumn term. In the Spring term, students must choose three courses from a range of elective courses (with at least one from Sociology and one from Marketing). During the Spring term students will also take a core course on research methods to support the writing of a dissertation over the summer.

### Term 1

#### *Core Marketing Course:*

MN5071 Consumers and Brands (30 credits)

#### *Core Sociology Course:*

CR5001 Sociology of Consumption (30 credits)

### Term 2

#### *Core Research Courses*

MN5074 Consumption Research Methods (20 credits)

MN5059 Dissertation (40 credits)

#### *Elective Courses*

*Students must choose three electives, taking at least one from Marketing and one from Sociology:*

#### Marketing Electives:

MN5064 Marketing Communications (20 credits)

MN5067 Consumption, Markets and Culture (20 credits)

MN5072 Marketing, Society & Technology (20 credits)

#### *Sociology Electives (Two courses will run each year):*

CR5002 Social Identities, Consumption and Difference (20 credits)

CR5003 Children and Consumption (20 credits)

CR5004 Fear, Risk and Consumption (20 credits)

CR5005 Crime and Consumerism (20 credits)

CR5006 Youth Culture and the Making of Modern Consumer Society (20 credits)

[A full list of courses including elective courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the Department.](#)

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### **Progression and award requirements**

Progression throughout the years is monitored through performance in oral presentations, contributions to seminar discussion and coursework. All students on the MA programme will be eligible to submit a dissertation. Students who have failed a number of taught courses will be counselled by the Programme Director about whether progressing to the dissertation stage is likely to be in their best interest.

### **Requirements for the award of Master of Arts, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate**

To pass the **MA** a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks between 40-49% can be condoned in courses which do not constitute more than 40 credits towards the final assessment, provided that the overall weighted average is at least 50.00%, but a failure mark (i.e. below 50%) in the dissertation cannot be condoned.

The Masters degree with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Masters degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Diploma** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50% when the student is either ineligible or has chosen not to proceed to the dissertation, or has failed the dissertation on either the first or second attempt. Failure marks in the region 40-49% are not usually condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, but if they are, such condoned fails would be in courses which do not constitute more than 25 credits towards the final assessment.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Certificate** may be awarded if a student achieves a mark of at least 50% in at least 60 credits and has either chose not to continue with the programme, or has failed the remaining credits.

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### **Student support and guidance**

- All course lecturers and tutors are available for consultation on academic or other issues related to specific courses, during surgery hours or by arrangement.
- The Programme Director and Deputy Programme Director have administrative oversight of the programme and responsibility for monitoring the welfare of tutees. They are available to advise on matters of course unit or degree registration, degree structures and administrative or other difficulties encountered on specific courses.
- A detailed Student Handbook, Dissertation Handbook and course resources will be provided.
- An induction programme will run during the first week of the degree.
- Students will be invited to contribute to the Postgraduate Student-Staff Committee in the School of Management, chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies.
- There will be extensive supporting materials and learning resources in the College library and Senate House, Postgraduate Resources Room, its IT laboratory and the College computer centre.
- Students will have access to a Computer Based Training Room in the Moore building (24 hour access).
- Laptop computers may be loaned for short periods, for delivery of course presentations.
- Students will have access to a College Careers Service and Departmental Careers Service liaison officer who organises alumni programmes and careers related events.
- Students will have access to the Student Counselling Service, Royal Holloway International, the Health Centre, the Chaplaincy and the Educational Support Office for students with special needs.
- There are a wide range of facilities in the Students' Union.

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## **Admission requirements**

Admission to the programme normally requires an Upper Second or First class honours undergraduate degree from a UK university, or its overseas equivalent, preferably in, sociology, management, criminology, politics, geography, history and other social science subjects. However, the School of Management has considerable flexibility in its admissions and strongly encourages non-standard applicants. The qualification may also be attractive to professionals who have taken a career break and wish to up-date and extend their knowledge. Mature students are strongly encouraged to apply; again each case is judged on its merits. Candidates who do not have standard qualifications but have appropriate work/professional experience may also be admitted; each such application will be assessed on its own merits.

Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. For further details please refer to the [Prospective Students](#) web page. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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## **Further learning and career opportunities**

The MA Consumption, Culture and Marketing provides a firm foundation for postgraduate research and progression onto MPhil/PhD programmes. The MA is an excellent basis from which to establish or consolidate careers in marketing and management. The School's graduates have found employment in a wide range of disciplines and industries as well as the public sector. Recent graduates from the school's Management programmes have joined many prestigious organisations including HSBC, IBM, Chase De Vere, Samsung, Vodafone, London Underground, and Accenture. The degree also provides skills that are transferable to a variety of employment opportunities including media and journalism, administration and education. For more details on further learning and careers opportunities please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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## **Indicators of quality and standards**

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4\* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent, outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4\* standard and 18th for 3\* and 4\* research. The Royal Holloway School of Management is in the top 20 for UK Business Schools, ranked 5th in London, and for regional universities we are second after Oxford University for University Business and Management departments in the South East of England. 55% of the School of Management's research profile is of 3\* and 4\* standard (world ranking and internationally excellent). In addition, the School of Management has connections with business, including many well-known multinationals, and executives and managers frequently contribute to the development and teaching of programmes.

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## **List of programmes with details of awards, teaching arrangements and accreditation**

All the programmes are taught entirely by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London. The MA programme leads to an award of the University of London. The Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate lead to an award of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. The Banner programme code is given in parenthesis.

## **Master of Arts in Consumption, Culture and Marketing**

MA Consumption, Culture and Marketing (2597)

## **Postgraduate Diploma in Consumption, Culture and Marketing (exit award only)**

PgDip Consumption, Culture and Marketing (2598)

## **Postgraduate Certificate in Consumption, Culture and Marketing (exit award only)**

PgCert Consumption, Culture and Marketing (xxxx)

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