

MODULE 4: Writing and Reporting

Stage	1						
Semester	1						
Module Title	Writing and Reporting						
Module Number	4						
Module Status	Mandatory						
Module ECTS Credits	15						
Module NFQ level	9						
Pre-Requisite Module Titles	N/A						
Co-Requisite Module Titles	N/A						
Capstone Module?	No						
List of Module Teaching Personnel	Anne Daly John O'Donovan Patrick Proctor Barry Finnegan Ronan Brady Brian Maye						
Contact Hours				Non-contact Hours			Total Effort (hours)
Lecture	Practical	Tutorial	Seminar	Assignment	Placement	Independent Work	
60	36	12		72		120	300
Allocation of Marks (Within the Module)							
	Continuous Assessment	Project	Practical	Final Examination			Total
Percentage Contribution	100						100%

Intended Module Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

1. Develop stories from pitch to final product, demonstrating an ability to work on your own and in collaboration with others, in the production of media content that is fit to print/broadcast.
2. Create industry standard media content, in print and radio formats, which demonstrate an ability to operate at an advanced level as a reporter.
3. Effectively utilise recording equipment and digital editing software in the production of media content.
4. Demonstrate advanced comprehension and a theoretical underpinning of the role of journalism and the media in local, national, and global contexts.
5. Critically evaluate their own work and that of other's in terms of fairness, accuracy, clarity and structure.
6. Demonstrate a critical awareness of the ethical implications of reporting and be able to apply ethical standards to own work.

Module Objectives

The objective of this module is to enable learners to attain the practical skills required to plan, research, write and edit quality news reports and feature articles and attain the practical skills necessary to work as producers, presenters, researchers and sound ops in a commercial radio environment. This module is worth 15 credits and is divided between print and radio perspectives with integration taking place during the planned news days.

Module Curriculum

Indicative Syllabus for Writing and Reporting For Print

- **How To Fine-Tune Your Writing.** This section examines basic rules on writing well for print, radio and TV (e.g. voice overs). This section also examines how to be aware of the different types of words and their uses and misuses and how to avoid wasteful, redundant and clichéd expression. Different types of sentence types and sentence styles are demonstrated. The differences between tabloid and broadsheet writing is also explained.
- **Writing Headlines and Intros.** This section examines headline types and covers guidelines for writing good headlines including the importance of purpose, accuracy and impartiality. Ways to help write good intros. How to handle particular problems in intros such as quotes, tenses, wordiness, blending details or ideas, questions, abbreviations. This section examines how to get intros to news stories right.
- **Explaining and demonstrating the differences between news and feature articles.** This section explains the difference between primary and secondary sources; how to learn to think *before* you write and how to find the focus of your article.
- **This topic covers interviewing for news reports, feature articles and profiles as well as issues such as planning, implementing and follow-up.** This topic also looks at learning the steps as to what to do *before, during and after* an interview so as to ensure its success such as research, preparation, thinking on your feet, question phrasing, as well as note taking / recording, problems and procrastination.
- **Researching and pitching a story.** This section examines the importance of research and covers issues such as how to avoid classic errors, and avoid being blinded by canapés and wine, as well as how to protect yourself when researching a story. Having researched a story, this section of the module covers how to successfully pitch your story to an editor.
- **This section examines freelancing, tips and its perils!** In covering the skills on how to be a successful freelance journalist this module addresses topics

- such as how to write on what you know about, how to write what sells and how to get what you want from who you want.
- How news and feature writers cover specific issues. Through examining case studies, this section covers how news reporters and feature writers have covered issues such as science, economics and politics as well as examining how reporters should cover courts and emergencies.
 - How to structure a news story. What are news values and how do they impact on reporting? This section also looks at how knowledge of news values can be used by journalists.
 - Using a Storytelling technique and editing news features. Storytelling technique (common in feature writing but can be used in news columns; can relieve monotony but to be used sparingly; especially useful in popular papers, magazines, Sunday papers, court reports). This section also looks at editing news features e.g. “tasters”; specific and human leads; mood and style vital; colour heads; length).
 - Convergence Journalism: What does the future hold for journalism? This section of the module examines new challenges and new models in journalism.

Indicative Syllabus for Writing and Reporting For Radio

- The importance of sound and listening. This section examines programme editorial and radio genres.
- Programme theory and use of sound, running orders, editorial, writing briefs and research.
- How to create and edit effective Vox Pops to industry standards. Use of portable digital recording equipment.
- Programme construction, theory and pitfalls, preparing specific programmes e.g. current affairs, sport, arts.
- Radio Journalism and Ethics.
- Regulation and Awards. This section looks at the role of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland, and the role of the Joint National Listenership Research as well as the impact and significance of Radio Awards.
- Technical skills covering sound desk operation, the effective use of the broadcast desk. How to crossfade music and speech and co-ordinate between the control room and the talk room. Understanding studio mic techniques and output levels .
- How to edit material using industry standard technology. How and when to use sound effects and how to edit music and dialogue.

Newsday

Throughout the module learners participate in five 'Newsday' exercises: a replica of a day in the life of a print news journalist/radio reporter. Commencing at a 9.00 am briefing on campus, learners choose their stories from a list of 'markings' acquired by lecturers. Learners then go to report on their press conference, annual meeting, law courts, venue opening, demonstration, etc. They return to campus, attain any additional required quotes and research, write up their stories and return these completed to a live online learner newspaper.

Reading lists and other learning materials

Recommended Reading for Print

Keeble, Richard (2005). *Print Journalism - A Critical Introduction*. Abingdon, Oxon, UK: Routledge.

Kolodzy, Janet, 2006. *Convergence Journalism - Writing and Reporting Across the News Media*.

Niblock, Sarah, 2006. *News Production: Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge.

Hicks, Wynford & Tom Holmes, 2002. *Subediting for Journalists*. London: Routledge.

Anderson, Peter J. & Geoff Ward (eds) (2007). *The Future of Journalism in the Advanced Democracies*. Farnham, Surrey, UK: Ashgate Publishing.

Harcup, Tony, 2009. *Journalism: Principles & Practice*. 2nd edition. London: Sage Publications.

Secondary Reading

Stein, M. L., Susan Paterno & R. Christopher Burnett (2006). *Newswriter's Handbook - An Introduction*; 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Williams, Eesha, 2001. *Grassroots Journalism: A Practical Manual for Doing the Kind of Newswriting That Doesn't Just Get People Angry, but Active-That Doesn't Just Inform, but Inspires*. Apex Press.

Woodard, Cheryl, 2004. *Starting & Running a Successful Newsletter or Magazine - 4th Edition*. NOLO.

Zayani, Mohamed (ed), 2005. *The Al Jazeera Phenomenon: Critical Perspectives on New Arab Media*. London: Pluto Press.

Recommended Reading for Radio:

Hudson, Gary. 2007. *Broadcast journalism: an insider's guide*. Harlow: Longman. Harlow England ;New York: Pearson Longman.

Beaman, Jim. 2006. *Programme making for radio*. New York: Routledge.

Chantler, P. and Steward P. 2009. *Essential Radio Journalism: How to Produce and Present Radio News* Publisher: Methuen Drama

Hollins, P and Chantler, P 2011 *Hang The DJ? - The Radio Presenter's Guide to the Law* Publisher Blue Revolution & United Radio.

Biewen, J. and Dilworth, A. 2010. *Reality Radio: Telling True Stories in Sound* (Publisher: The University of North Carolina Press Geller, V. 2011. *Beyond Powerful*

Radio, Second Edition: A Communicator's Guide to the Internet Age-News, Talk, Information & Personality for Broadcasting, Podcasting, Internet, Radio Publisher: Focal Press

Keith, M. 2009. *The Radio Station, Eighth Edition: Broadcast, Satellite and Internet* Publisher: Focal Press

Secondary Reading for Radio:

Priestman, C. 2002. *Web Radio: Radio Production for Internet Streaming* Publisher: Focal Press

Kaempfer, R. and Swanson, J. 2004. *The Radio Producer's Handbook* Publisher: Allworth Press

Goodman, A. 2009. *Breaking the sound barrier*. Chicago IL: Haymarket Books.

Websites for Print and Radio:

Aljazeera:

<http://english.aljazeera.net/HomePage>

American Journalism Review:

<http://www.ajr.org/index.asp>

British Journalism Review:

<http://www.bjr.org.uk/>

Broadcasting Commission of Ireland:

www.bci.ie

Columbia Journalism Review:

<http://www.cjr.org/>

Daily Telegraph:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/>

Democracy Now:

<http://www.democracynow.org/>

Disinformation:

<http://www.disinfo.com/site/>

EU Observer: <http://euobserver.com/>

Europa: The Gateway to the European

Union:

http://www.europa.eu/index_en.htm

European Politics and Policy:

<http://www.eupolitix.com/EN/>

Excellent Quality & Library of Music that can be recorded into Cool Edit for use on programming:

Fox News: <http://www.foxnews.com/>

Freeway Blogger:

<http://www.freewayblogger.com/index.htm>

Fund For Investigative Journalism:

<http://www.fij.org/>

George Monbiot's site:

<http://www.monbiot.com/>

Glasgow University Mass Media Unit:
<http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/sociology/units/media.htm>

Greg Palast's site:

<http://www.gregpalast.com/>

<http://www.newstalk.ie/programmes/all/different-voices/>

<http://www.newstalk.ie/programmes/all/different-voices/podcasts/>

<http://www.rte.ie/radio1/doconone/>

<http://www.rte.ie/radio1/doconone/awards.html>

Indymedia Ireland:

<http://www.indymedia.ie/index.php>

Irish Government News Service & Press Room:

<http://www.merrionstreet.ie/>

Irish Radio News, Jobs and Discussion Board: www.radiowaves.fm

Irish Radio Online:

<http://www.listenlive.eu/ireland.html>

Irish TV & Media News & Opportunities: www.iftn.ie

Media

News: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media>

National Union of Journalists www.nuj.ie

News Sources: www.irishtimes.com;

www.thejournal.ie ;

www.breakingnews.ie;

www.examiner.ie; www.rte.ie;

www.independent.ie;

<http://www.irishhealth.com>

www.online.ie;

www.aertel.ie;

www.newstalk.ie

Online Guide and Tutorial to Cool
Edit/Adobe Audition:
<http://www.bbctraining.com/radio.asp>
Political & Media Discussion Site:
www.politics.ie
Radio Awards:
<http://www.ppiradioawards.com/>
Radio Documentaries:

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland:
www.bai.ie
The Drudge Report:
<http://www.drudgereport.com>
Worldwide Radio Online/App:
<http://tunein.com/>
www.grooveshark.com

Module Learning Environment

The learning environment is designed to both engage learners and to encourage critical thinking. This is achieved through lectures, case studies and practical examples which are designed to stimulate discussions and questions. Lectures are delivered in a lecture room and the radio studio (where applicable). Learners also have access to a designated newsroom for news days. Learners are supported with resources to offer structure and guidance. This includes lecture notes, reading materials as well as a detailed module curriculum which includes the learning outcomes, a class schedule, the necessary reading material and the assignment strategy. Participants also have access to Moodle, the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Module Teaching and Learning Strategy

This module is supported with structured web-based resources and applies the use of the programme Teaching Learning and Assessment methodologies. Specifically, the module is delivered using:

- Case Studies
- Participative Lectures
- News days
- Radio studio lectures and demonstrations

Module Assessment Strategy

The module assessment strategy involves a combination of a variety of assessments that assess the learner's knowledge, skills and competencies in a number of ways. These include news days in which learners are given 'live' stories in the morning and asked to file a report, in print or radio, by end of the day. Practical journalistic experience is gained through the news days and learners, working at times individually and as part of a group, are assessed on their output. Journalistic ability, including the ability to develop stories from pitch to final product, is also assessed through the creation of genre specific radio programmes and participation and contribution to the college radio station Griff Fm. In addition to the important practical skills gained in this module, learners are required to demonstrate advanced comprehension and a theoretical underpinning of the role of journalism and the media in local and international contexts and this is assessed through a reflective essay.

A variety of assessment strategies are therefore used in this module.

Element Number	Weighting	Type	Description
1	50%	News days	A series of news days requiring learners to deliver their report within a real time deadline.
2	20%	Reflective Essay	This is a reflective critical essay which demonstrates the independent learning and research skills.
3	20%	Creation of radio programmes	Learners are required to broadcast a radio programme as a group assignment.
5	10%	Griff FM	Learners are required to participate fully in the college radio station and to document their role.