



# MSc in Public Relations & Strategic Communications

School of Communications, Dublin City University

## Dublin City University:

*"It's young, gifted and on track. DCU gives students vital experience and skills to augment their academic studies and is instrumental in producing an exceptional calibre of graduate, primed and ready to face the future. They also perform better at interview."* – Colm Murphy, The Sunday Times.

DCU is a young, dynamic and ambitious university with a distinctive mission to transform lives and societies through education, research and innovation. Since admitting its first students in 1980, almost 50,000 students have graduated from DCU and are now playing significant roles in enterprise and business globally.

DCU's excellence is recognised internationally with the University being ranked highly among leading global institutions. DCU regularly features in the QS Top 50 under 50 and the THE Young University rankings (a ranking of the Top 100 Universities under 50 years of age).

## School of Communications:

The School of Communications at DCU (Glasnevin Campus) has been the leading provider of taught courses in media communications in Ireland for over twenty years. The School pioneered the development of teaching in communications, journalism and multimedia at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Our programmes are much in demand and draw some of the highest-achieving students entering third-level education anywhere in Ireland.

The School is the only university department in the state that is focused on media and is one of the largest of its kind in Europe, with 600 undergraduate students, 130 students on taught Masters programmes, and 25 research students.

## MSc Public Relations & Strategic Communications:

In today's society, organisations need to communicate and manage relationships with a variety of stakeholders; from employees and investors to Government, the media and the general public.

Keeping pace with a fast-moving world, public relations is rapidly evolving through the use of social communication media and technology. This specialist Masters programme is designed to provide the skills and ability to think strategically and make effective use of the latest tools in modern communications.

DCU's MSc in Public Relations has been developed in consultation with the public relations industry, together with the advice of academics in Europe and the United States. While it is aimed at students with a degree in a related discipline, such as communications or marketing, graduates from areas have also done well on the programme.

The programme provides students with public relations theory and practice alongside an understanding of recent developments and challenges for the profession. These include the impact of the Internet and the growth of social media; the decline of traditional media; growing issues of corporate social responsibility influencing organisational reputation; and the increasing influence of other social science disciplines on Public Relations theory and practice.

## Who should apply?

This is a multipurpose award. A student would register for this programme in order to pursue an interest in public relations and related sectors. Students will acquire the advanced knowledge and skills to seek employment in public relations agencies and to work as independent public relations consultants.

The programme is structured to meet the differing requirements of those wishing to enter the public relations profession and those already working in public relations roles, but who want to enhance their practice with engagement with the latest thinking and research.

Applicants will normally have an honours primary degree or equivalent (H2.2) but appropriate combinations of professional qualifications and experience may be accepted as equivalent to an honours degree, in accordance with the relevant regulations of the University.

## Aims and Objectives of the Programme:

- To appreciate the strategic importance of public relations in the corporate, political and non-profit sectors.
- To develop an understanding and critical reflection about the role and processes of public relations in organisations and society.
- To engage with topics and issues about public relations, and demonstrate leadership and thoughtful reflection in discussions and group work.
- To develop practical skills for PR planning and implementation alongside reflective skills and scholarship and understanding of the role and agendas which develop from PR as a strategic discipline.

## Programme Delivery and Assessment:

The MSc in Public Relations & Strategic Communications is a blended learning programme in that three of the six taught modules are delivered online, through the DCU ConnectEd programme.

Our online learning platform is loop. It's where you'll watch lectures and undertake your course for the three online modules. This is where you'll be connected with content, teachers and fellow learners. ...and if you're worried that it'll be too technical, it's as easy as buying something online!

All modules will be examined on a continuous assessment basis, including group and solo assignments.

Assessment is continuous through the first two semesters and culminates in the completion of an academic dissertation or a practical project. Reflective practice is encouraged throughout the programme in order to ensure the application of theoretical concepts. Participants are constantly engaged in analysis of situations, both independently and working in groups. In the process, they are encouraged to question assumptions and to provide alternative perspectives that broaden and deepen their understanding of the issues under review.

It is expected that the majority of students on the programme will complete it to Master's level. To facilitate students who may wish to leave the programme at an earlier stage, the option of exiting with a Graduate Certificate (30 credits) and Graduate Diploma (60 credits) is available.

## Programme Structure:

In this one year full-time blended Masters programme, participants learn through engagement in face-to-face sessions and lectures as well as through engagement in DCU's virtual learning environment. Case studies, online engagement, projects and assignments are combined with expert presentations and discussion to explore public relations in the 21st century. Three of the six taught modules are delivered online, followed by a dissertation or project and a formal work placement in industry:

Module Title	Delivery	Credits
<i>Semester One:</i>		
<b>CM5013 Managing the Message</b> Effective messages must be targeted, focused and planned. This module equips students to identify, map and manage relevant stakeholders; to identify and use the most appropriate communication channels for their purpose; and to appreciate the most appropriate form and content for the messages employed.	In class	10
<b>CM5014 Contemporary Public Relations Practice</b> The practice of Public Relations evolves within a changing and challenging environment. Drawing on the expertise of current PR practitioners, this module considers issues of public relations practice illustrated through current Irish and international case studies.	Online	10
<b>CM5020 Integrated Communications</b> Successful strategic communication requires the integration of all communication tools. This module will introduce the student to the theories, principles and practices of integrated communications. The module will enable the student to appreciate the components of integrated communications and particularly Public Relations.	In class	10
<i>Semester Two:</i>		
<b>CM5022 Strategic Communication</b> In addition to its immediate purpose, communication must also contribute to the overall strategic success of any organisation. This module provides students with an appreciation of strategic thinking and the development of strategic communication as part of strategic management of an organisation.	Online	10
<b>CM5025 Contemporary Communication Channels</b> The pace of development of social media challenges communication professionals to select and adopt their most effective use. This module introduces students to the strategic use of emerging communication technologies for effective Public Relations practice and to the range of issues to be considered in the strategic use of digital communication channels within contemporary Public Relations.	In class	10
<b>CM5021 Communication Management</b> Effective communication requires systematic planning, implementation and monitoring of all aspects of the communication process. This module enables students to develop and deliver communications plans; to manage internal and external communication using traditional and digital channels; and to develop a good working knowledge of the theories, practices and key issues underpinning effective communication management.	Online	10
<i>May to August:</i>		
<b>CM5016 Intra Placement</b> Students are required to effectively complete a public relations placement for a period of eight weeks and to successfully complete a related work report.		5
<b>CM5017 Practical Project OR Academic Dissertation</b> Students may choose between an academic dissertation, examining an aspect of public relations or to devise and develop a piece of public relations to address a specific brief.		25

### Fee Information:

2017/18 fees will be confirmed in Spring 2017, but the 2016/17 fees for this programme were:

EU Students: €7,805 and Non-EU Students: €13,300

### Entry Requirements:

Applicants will normally have an honours primary degree or equivalent (H2.2) but appropriate combinations of professional qualifications and experience may be accepted as equivalent to an honours degree, in accordance with the relevant regulations of the University.

### Applications:

Applications are now open for a September 2017 start. Applicants should be made via the Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC) at [www.pac.ie](http://www.pac.ie) – using the PAC code DC674.

First offers will be made to applicants received by the first round, 30th April 2017 deadline. Where places remain available, offers to suitable qualified applicants may be made up to 30 June 2017. Queries on completed applications can be made by email to [registry@dcu.ie](mailto:registry@dcu.ie)

### Further Information:

[www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=MSCPR](http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=MSCPR)

*For further information, please contact:*

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This programme has been accredited by the  
Public Relations Institute of Ireland.



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