

Module	Newspaper Media Production and Investigative Journalism
Course code	BAJH-NMPIJ
Credits	5
Allocation of marks	100% Continuous Assessment

Intended Module Learning Outcomes

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

1. Show a competency in industry standard production tools, and have an understanding of the technical issues involved in modern print production.
2. Show an insight into newspaper and magazine design principle and techniques, and plan and produce print layouts to a high standard.
3. Exercise appropriate judgement to initiate and complete an investigative journalism news report and critically analyse same.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of what investigative news reporting journalism is and the differences between it and other genres of news production.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical issues which arise for investigative journalists within a critical awareness of how new media technology and new media-production business models are effecting news media production, particularly investigative journalism.

Module Objectives

This subject aims to provide learners with the necessary skills to find employment in print publications. To do this, the module covers both contemporary publication design and advanced news gathering and reporting. Learners obtain an understanding of visual communication principles and technical issues involved in producing a print publication. This involves considering design as a process and the role of visual elements in creating meaning. Additionally, the module imparts a theoretical understanding of the genre of investigative news reporting and its critical role in democratic societies, it develops learner's genre-specific media production skills, while it also contextualises the unique difficulties investigative news media experiences within a broader political and economic context.

Module Curriculum

Topic: Role of visuals in design and communication:

Principles of visual journalism. Visual culture and the reader. Design as a process. Developing ideas and concepts for a defined audience. Building meaning into design. The role of infographics.

Topic: Elements of design:

Typography, image, shape, texture, space and colour. How we use these elements together to create a unified, coherent visual system in print publications. Type as a visual element.

Topic: Design principles.

Theory and application of balance, contrast, unity, alignment. Rules and conventions in print design. Differing audiences and design considerations; tabloid and broadsheet design. Use of space in design.

Topic: Techniques and implementation.

Application of design principles in Adobe InDesign and Photoshop. Digital imaging and quality management. Producing press quality output in a digital environment.

Topic: Developing investigative techniques:

What is investigative journalism? It's relationship to the news agenda; its moral impetus and essentiality for democratic societies. How and why it is different from standard news media production. Exploring methods and techniques: sources, structures, people, documents, government publications & offices, company reports, NGO reports, internet, other media publications, the insider, contacts, your growing database, brainstorm.

Topic: Historical Background and Case Study Analysis:

Starting with mid-nineteenth century England we examine the evolution and development of news media consumer demand, and journalism characterised by rational observation and moral empathy. Analysis and critique of investigation journalism case studies from Ireland, the US and the UK.

Topic: Ethical Issues and Dilemmas in Investigative Journalism.

Making further distinctions between standard news production and investigative journalism, we examine how and why problems of an ethical nature are so prevalent in the work of investigative journalism. In particular we look at regulation, cheque book journalism, confidentiality, anonymity, sources, deceit and privacy.

Topic: The Changing Context for Investigative Journalism.

We examine the historical resilience and financial viability of investigative journalism as a consumer product in advanced capitalist societies and in particular examine opportunities for news production presented by, for example, the growing not-for-profit sector's journalistic output, crowdsourcing, and crowdfunding.