

## Programme Specification: Undergraduate

### For Academic Year 2026/27

#### 1. Course Summary

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Names of programme and award title(s)</b>                                   | BA (Hons) Digital Media and Sociology<br>BA (Hons) Digital Media and Sociology with International Year (see Annex for details)<br>BA (Hons) Digital Media and Sociology with Work Placement Year (see Annex for details)   |
| <b>Award type</b>  | Single Honours   |
| <b>Mode of study</b>   | Full-time  |
| <b>Framework of Higher Education Qualification (FHEQ) level of final award</b> | Level 6  |
| <b>Normal length of the programme</b>  | 3 years; 4 years with either the International Year or Placement Year between years 2 and 3  |
| <b>Maximum period of registration</b>  | The normal length as specified above plus 3 years  |
| <b>Location of study</b>   | Keele Campus   |
| <b>Accreditation (if applicable)</b>   | Not applicable   |
| <b>Regulator</b>   | Office for Students (OfS)  |
| <b>Tuition Fees</b>  | <p><b>UK students:</b></p> <p>Fee for 2026/27 is £9,790*</p> <p><b>International students:</b></p> <p>Fee for 2026/27 is £18,200**</p> <p>The fee for the international year abroad is calculated at 15% of the standard year fee</p> <p>The fee for the work placement year is calculated at 20% of the standard year fee</p> |

**How this information might change:** Please read the important information at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>. This explains how and why we may need to make changes to the information provided in this document and to help you understand how we will communicate with you if this happens.

\* These fees are regulated by Government. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study in response to changes in government policy and/or changes to the law. If permitted by such change in policy or law, we may increase your fees by an inflationary amount or such other measure as required by government policy or the law. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

\*\* These fees are for new students. We reserve the right to increase fees in subsequent years of study by an inflationary amount. Please refer to the accompanying Student Terms & Conditions for full details. Further information on fees can be found at <http://www.keele.ac.uk/studentfunding/tuitionfees/>

#### 2. What is a Single Honours programme?

The Single Honours programme described in this document allows you to focus more or less exclusively on this subject. In keeping with Keele's commitment to breadth in the curriculum, the programme also gives you the opportunity to take some modules in other disciplines and in modern foreign languages as part of a 360-credit Honours degree. Thus it enables you to gain, and be able to demonstrate, a distinctive range of graduate attributes.

### **3. Overview of the Programme**

The Digital Media and Sociology programme at Keele equips you to critically analyse the role of media and technology in shaping society, culture, and individual lives while developing innovative responses to contemporary social challenges. Combining insights from two cognate disciplines, this programme draws on sociological theories, digital media studies, and a range of research methods to explore the intersections of society, technology, and identity, preparing you for the modern workplace and active citizenship.

In your first year, you will be introduced to core theories, debates, case studies, and methods of inquiry that are central to both sociology and digital media studies. You will develop a sociological imagination through an exploration of social inequalities, focusing on themes such as social class, gender, race, migration, and belonging. Simultaneously, you will examine how meaning is communicated and mediated through media industries, platforms, and content, gaining an understanding of the structures and processes that shape our understanding of the world.

Building on this foundation, the second year deepens your knowledge of how digital media intersects with societal issues and identities in a rapidly changing global landscape. You will engage with contemporary, intersectional, and non-Western perspectives to analyse how digital technologies and platforms influence audiences, shape identities, and mediate social relationships. You will also develop essential research skills, enabling you to design and conduct independent projects that bridge sociological and digital media approaches.

In your final year, you will explore Digital Media and Sociology as 'live' disciplines, considering how sociological and media research can address pressing issues, from the ethics of technological innovation to the social, political, and environmental implications of digital cultures. Applied modules allow you to investigate topics such as digital inequalities, online activism, the role of algorithms, environmental justice, and the transformation of work and relationships in the digital age. You will be able to develop your interdisciplinary skills and knowledge in digital media and sociology through one of the independent research project modules with the support of a supervisor.

Throughout the programme, you will have opportunities to connect with professionals in digital media industries, public, and community sectors. This applied focus enhances your understanding of how sociological and media knowledge can be mobilised in real-world contexts, while also developing the analytical, practical, and critical skills needed for success beyond university.

Graduates of Keele's Digital Media and Sociology programme leave with a robust understanding of the complex relationship between technology, media, and society. Equipped with critical, research, and transferable skills, you will be well-prepared for careers in digital media, policy, research, community development, and a wide range of fields where understanding the social impacts of digital transformation is key. Whether your interests lie in challenging inequalities, shaping media futures, or addressing technological change, this programme empowers you to make meaningful contributions in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

### **4. Aims of the programme**

The broad aims of the programme are to enable you to:

- Think critically and reflexively about social structures, institutions and phenomena, question assumptions, and understand the underlying causes of social issues.
- Develop a broad, in-depth knowledge of critical approaches in digital media studies, and apply these to analysis of industry, technology, platforms, content, and users.
- Mobilise your sociological imagination in the understanding and application of media and sociological theory and evidence to real-world contexts.
- Identify and employ appropriate social and media research tools and data analysis skills to design and carry out empirical research, including quantitative and qualitative methods, and data analysis, considering the ethical issues related to this.
- Communicate digital media and sociological explanations to diverse audiences through written work and oral presentations.
- Engage with stakeholders in addressing social issues and promoting social change in a digital society.

### **5. What you will learn**

The intended learning outcomes of the programme (what students should know, understand and be able to do at the end of the programme), can be described under the following headings:

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Subject specific skills
- Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

## Subject knowledge and understanding

Successful students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Established concepts and theoretical approaches to sociology and the relationship to divisions and inequalities that exist in different social and cultural contexts.
- How digital media technologies, companies, and platforms intersect with political, social, and economic structures and processes.
- The relationship between institutions, groups and individuals in the construction of social and cultural norms and how regulation may be resisted through activism and new identity formation.
- Contemporary sociological and media theories and approaches, recognising intersectional and non-Western forms of knowledge, the changing global and digital landscape, and the non-human world.
- The social and media research methodologies, tools and skills used to design and conduct empirical research, including quantitative and qualitative methods, and data analysis, and the importance of ethical issues related to this.
- How awareness of digital media and sociology can be mobilised to imagine and advance social change in digitally interconnected worlds.

## Subject specific skills

Successful students will be able to:

- Formulate and investigate sociologically informed questions to address complex social and digital media phenomena.
- Think critically about the potential and problems of digital media in contemporary economic, social, cultural, and political contexts.
- Apply critical and theoretical tools to an analysis of various digital media issues, texts, and technologies.
- Employ major sociological theoretical perspectives, concepts and empirical evidence to analyse and interpret various aspects of social and digitally mediated life.
- Identify, assess, and analyse diverse sources of theoretical and empirical evidence, to construct robust academic arguments.
- Identify and employ the social and digital media research methodologies, tools and forms of data analysis required to investigate social and cultural phenomenon, considering the ethical issues related to this.
- Employ a sociological imagination to recognise social challenges and formulate robust and ethical responses for positive social change in a digital world.

## Key or transferable skills (including employability skills)

Successful students will be able to:

- Identify, manage, and analyse information from a range of legitimate primary and secondary text-based and digital sources.
- Design and carry out research, including the formulation of research questions, sampling strategies, the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, and data analysis, considering the ethical issues related to this.
- Employ digital tools for storing, collating, and analysing data.
- Effectively manage time in the planning, preparation and delivery of work to a set deadline.
- Work independently and collaboratively, and assess and address personal strengths and weaknesses for continuous improvement.
- Communicate ideas and arguments effectively in written and oral form to different audiences.

## [Keele Graduate Attributes](#)

The Keele Graduate Attributes are the qualities (skills, values and mindsets) which you will have the opportunity to develop during your time at Keele through both the formal curriculum and also through co- and extra-curricular activities (e.g., work experience, and engagement with the wider University community such as acting as ambassadors, volunteering, peer mentoring, student representation, membership and leadership of clubs and societies). Our Graduate Attributes consist of four themes: **academic expertise, professional skills, personal effectiveness, and social, environmental and ethical responsibility**. You will have opportunities to engage actively with the range of attributes throughout your time at Keele: through your academic studies, through self-assessing your own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs, and by setting personal development goals. You will have opportunities to discuss your progress in developing graduate attributes with, for example, Academic Mentors, to prepare for your future career and lives beyond Keele.

## 6. How is the programme taught?

Learning and teaching methods used on the programme vary according to the subject matter and level of the module. They include the following:

- **Lectures** enable the communication of core materials on modules and are central to the teaching of modules at years 1, 2, and 3.
- **Seminars** accompany lectures on modules in years 1, 2 and 3. They provide students with the opportunity to discuss lecture content and key readings with a tutor. Seminars can include activities such as close readings, open discussions, and student-led debates, moderated by the tutor. These activities take place in groups of approximately 20 students with one tutor.
- **Workshops** enable the simultaneous communication and discussion of module material. These take the form of two hour classes of around 30 students.
- **Independent study** forms a core component at every level of the programme. Students are expected to become increasingly independent over the course of the programme.
- **Supervision** accompanies independent study in order to provide students with a point of contact in the programme teaching group. Supervision takes the form of one-to-one student-tutor discussion in office hours at all levels of the programme and support by a member of staff for students on the dissertation module in Digital Media and Sociology in year three.
- **Web-based learning** using the Keele Learning Environment (KLE): the KLE is an online learning environment used to give students easy access to a wide range of resources including interactive reading lists, lecture notes, assessment questions and guidance, and supporting resources. Microsoft Teams may also be used to facilitate online communication.

Apart from these formal activities, students are also provided with regular opportunities to talk through particular areas of difficulty, and any special learning needs they may have, with their Academic Mentors or module lecturers on a one-to-one basis.

## 7. Teaching Staff

The permanent teaching staff consists of Professors, Senior Lecturers and Lecturers. All permanent members of staff have doctorates in Media and/or Sociology or closely related disciplines and some hold professionally accredited teaching qualifications. All members of the teaching staff are research active and members of the research institutes at Keele, including the Keele Institute for Social Inclusion. Staff on the programme publish books and articles on international presses and in international journals. The teaching group also has extensive experience of teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level at universities in the UK, Europe, Canada, and Japan.

The University will attempt to minimise changes to our core teaching teams, however, delivery of the programme depends on having a sufficient number of staff with the relevant expertise to ensure that the programme is taught to the appropriate academic standard.

Staff turnover, for example where key members of staff leave, fall ill or go on research leave, may result in changes to the programme's content. The University will endeavour to ensure that any impact on students is limited if such changes occur.

## 8. What is the structure of the Programme?

The academic year runs from September to June and is divided into two semesters. The number of weeks of teaching will vary from course to course, but you can generally expect to attend scheduled teaching sessions between the end of September and mid-December, and from mid-January to the end of April. Our degree courses are organised into modules. Each module is usually a self-contained unit of study and each is usually assessed separately with the award of credits on the basis of 1 credit = 10 hours of student effort. An outline of the structure of the programme is provided in the tables below.

There are two types of module delivered as part of your programme. They are:

- Compulsory modules - a module that you are required to study on this course;
- Optional modules - these allow you some limited choice of what to study from a list of modules.

### Global Challenge Pathways

This programme includes the option for you to take a Global Challenge Pathway. These modules offer you an exciting opportunity to work with students and staff from different disciplines to explore topical global issues such as power and conflict, health inequalities, climate change, generative AI, social justice, global citizenship, and enterprise from different perspectives.

Global Challenge Pathways can either be taken as one 15-credit module at Levels 4, 5 and 6, or one 15-credit module at Levels 5 and 6. For more information about our Global Challenge Pathways please visit:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/globalchallengepathways/>

### Modern Languages or Certificate in TESOL

Alternatively, you could choose to study modules with the University Language Centre. The Language Centre offers three pathways; The Language Specialist, The Language Taster, and The Trinity Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language (TESOL). Language Centre modules are available separately for students at Levels 4 and 5. At Level 6 they are included within the Global Challenge Pathways.

If you choose the Language Specialist pathway, you will automatically be enrolled on a Semester 2 Modern Language module as a continuation of your language of choice (at Level 4 this is a faculty funded 'additional' module). Undertaking a Modern Languages module in Semester 2 is compulsory if you wish to continue to the Language Specialist Global Challenge Pathway the following academic year.

For more information about Language Centre option modules available to you please visit the following webpages.

For Level 4 and 5 students please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/languagecentre/languagecentreoptions/>

For Level 6 students please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/students/academiclife/global-challenge-pathways/>

For further information on the content of modules currently offered, please visit: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/recordsandexams/modulecatalogue/>

A summary of the credit requirements per year is as follows.

| Year    | Compulsory | Optional |     |
|---------|------------|----------|-----|
|         |            | Min      | Max |
| Level 4 | 105        | 15       | 15  |
| Level 5 | 60         | 60       | 60  |
| Level 6 | 30         | 90       | 90  |

## Module Lists

### Level 4

| Compulsory modules                        | Module Code | Credits | Period       |
|---|-------------|---------|--------------|
| Understanding and Producing Digital Media | MDS-10043   | 30      | Semester 1   |
| Becoming a Social Scientist               | SSC-10001   | 15      | Semester 1-2 |
| Exploring Inequalities                    | SSC-10004   | 30      | Semester 1-2 |
| Media Industries                          | MDS-10049   | 30      | Semester 2   |

| Optional modules                    | Module Code | Credits | Period     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|------------|
| Imagining Social Order and Deviance | SSC-10002   | 15      | Semester 2 |

### Level 5

| Compulsory modules                | Module Code | Credits | Period     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------|------------|
| Contemporary Social Theory        | SOC-20049   | 15      | Semester 1 |
| Researching Audiences and Users   | MDS-20062   | 30      | Semester 2 |
| Globalisation and its Discontents | SOC-20043   | 15      | Semester 2 |

| <b>Optional modules</b>                         | <b>Module Code</b> | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Period</b> |
|---|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| The American South: US Summer School (Level 5)  | LIB-20012          | 15             | Semester 0    |
| Data and Design                                 | MDS-20066          | 30             | Semester 1    |
| Storytelling for Change                         | MDS-20068          | 30             | Semester 1    |
| Crime, Morality and the Media                   | SOC-20034          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Professional Experience with Media (Year 2)     | MDS-20072          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |
| Social Sciences Placement                       | SSC-20001          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |
| Pathways with Media: Developing Your Profile    | MDS-20074          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Creative Digital Image Production (Photography) | MDS-20078          | 30             | Semester 2    |
| Families and Households: Diversity and Change   | SOC-20041          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Social Sciences at Work                         | SSC-20005          | 15             | Semester 2    |

### **Level 5 Module Rules**

Students **must** take one of the following four professional development modules: 'Social Sciences Placement', 'Social Sciences at Work', 'Professional Experience for Media (Year 2)', or 'Pathways with Media: Developing Your Profile'. Only one of this list can be selected.

Students who complete a work placement modules in Level 5 cannot take a work placement module at Level 6.

Students who complete LIB-20012 The American South: US Summer School (Level 5) cannot take the Level 6 version of this module, LIB-30004.

### **Level 6**

| <b>Compulsory modules</b> | <b>Module Code</b> | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Period</b> |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Social Futures            | SOC-30061          | 30             | Semester 1-2  |

| <b>Optional modules</b>                                | <b>Module Code</b> | <b>Credits</b> | <b>Period</b> |
|--|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| The American South: US Summer School (Level 6)         | LIB-30006          | 15             | Semester 0    |
| Podcast and Radio Production                           | MDS-30067          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Music and Social Movements                             | MUS-30073          | 15             | Semester 1    |
| Digital Media Project                                  | MDS-30055          | 30             | Semester 1-2  |
| Professional Experience with English (Year 3)          | MDS-30069          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |
| Employing Media: Putting Your Subject into Practice    | MDS-30071          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |
| Dissertation - ISP                                     | SOC-30028          | 30             | Semester 1-2  |
| Work Placement for Social Sciences Final Year Students | SSC-30003          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |
| Engaged Social Science                                 | SSC-30005          | 15             | Semester 1-2  |
| News, Politics and Power                               | MDS-30057          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Social Media Work                                      | MDS-30065          | 15             | Semester 2    |
| Beyond Human   | SSC-30001          | 15             | Semester 2    |

## **Level 6 Module Rules**

Students must take (just) one of the two Project modules, either 'Digital Media Project' or 'Independent Study Project in Sociology'. Students cannot take the ISP in both subject areas. The project should integrate perspectives from both Media and Sociology, enabling a comprehensive approach to debates around digital media and society, while remaining grounded in one disciplinary framework supported by prior learning and supervision in the chosen subject area.

Students must take (just) one of the following four professional development modules: 'Work Placement for Social Sciences Final Year Students', 'Professional Experience for Media (Year 3)', 'Engaged Social Science', or 'Employing Media: Putting Your Subject into Practice'.

All students must take at least one of the following option modules: 'Podcast and Radio Production', 'News Politics and Power', and 'Social Media Work'. They can take more than one of these if they wish.

## **Learning Outcomes**

The table below sets out what students learn in the programme and the modules in which that learning takes place. Details of how learning outcomes are assessed through these modules can be found in module specifications.

### **Level 4**

| <b>Subject Knowledge and Understanding</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>   | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>  |
| Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical foundations of media and sociological thinking and the relevance to contemporary social and cultural contexts.   | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries  |
| Identify how digital media technologies, companies, and platforms intersect with political, social, and economic structures and processes.  | Media Industries  |
| Describe sociological explanations for social inequalities and their value in challenging individualistic and common-sense understandings.  | Exploring Inequalities  |
| Identify the causes and impacts of various forms of discrimination and inequalities across different cultures and societies.  | Exploring Inequalities  |
| Explore potential solutions to current challenges in culture and society referring to media and sociological perspectives.  | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |
| Examine the relationship between institutions, groups, and individuals in shaping identities, power dynamics, and the construction of knowledge and behaviour.                                    | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |
| Develop and demonstrate foundational academic and professional skills, competencies, and employability attributes for success in undergraduate studies and future careers in the social sciences. | Becoming a Social Scientist   |

| <b>Subject Specific Skills</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>   | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>  |
| Learn basic academic conventions, reflect on own performance, and present materials in a coherent and professional fashion.   | Understanding Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Becoming a Social Scientist           |
| Identify and describe key media and sociological theories, concepts, and perspectives through reference to a range of legitimate sources.                               | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |
| Explain the basic principles, methods and forms of analysis used in media and sociological inquiry.   | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |
| Develop skills in locating, evaluating, and employing a range of legitimate academic and non-academic sources to support media and sociological arguments and analysis. | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |
| Demonstrate the ability to accurately summarise and paraphrase media and sociological arguments and ideas in written and oral formats.                                  | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |
| Apply basic media and sociological concepts and theories to real-world examples and case studies to illustrate their relevance and implications.                        | Exploring Inequalities<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |

| <b>Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>   | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>   |
| Effective time-management and organisational skills to meet deadlines and prioritise tasks.   | Exploring Inequalities<br>Becoming a Social Scientist<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media     |
| Written communication skills through the preparation of structured and coherent essays, reports, and other written assignments.                       | Understanding Inequalities<br>Becoming a Social Scientist<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media |
| Active listening and note-taking abilities during lectures, seminars, and group discussions.  | Exploring Inequalities<br>Becoming a Social Scientist<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media     |
| Collaborate effectively with peers in group discussions or group activities, demonstrating interpersonal and teamwork skills.                         | Exploring Inequalities<br>Becoming a Social Scientist<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media     |
| Basic information and digital literacy skills to locate, evaluate, and ethically use online resources and digital tools for research and assignments. | Exploring Inequalities<br>Becoming a Social Scientist<br>Media Industries<br>Understanding and Producing Digital Media     |
| Reflect on personal skills attributes, identify where there may be gaps, and recognise how these might be addressed.                                  | Becoming a Social Scientist  |

## **Level 5**

| <b>Subject Knowledge and Understanding</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>  | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>                  |
| Critically evaluate contemporary sociological theories, including poststructural, intersectional, and non-Western perspectives, in the context of global and digital transformations.  | Contemporary Social Theory                                |
| Examine how sociological theories have evolved to incorporate debates about positionality, difference, and the non-human world, developing a critical appreciation of competing perspectives to formulate theoretically informed questions about the social world. | Contemporary Social Theory                                |
| Relate central sociological concerns about social stratification and inequality, to processes of globalisation, building upon understandings obtained at level four.   | Globalisation and its Discontents                         |
| Critically assess the complexities and challenges of the modern world and the role of sociological perspectives in understanding and navigating these issues.  | Contemporary Social Theory                                |
| Explain the process of producing research in media and sociology, reviewing the difference between methodology and method, and analysing the suitability of different data collection procedures for various research problems.                                    | Researching Audiences and Users                           |
| Identify and distinguish between various quantitative and qualitative research methods and data sources.   | Researching Audiences and Users                           |
| Demonstrate knowledge about how to design, implement, and analyse research ethically.  | Researching Audiences and Users                           |
| Explore strategies for translating and mobilising subject knowledge and skills into practical, real-world applications and contexts.   | Any of the professional development or placement modules. |
| Evaluate and reflect on potential career paths and opportunities across diverse professional settings.   | Any of the professional development or placement modules. |

| <b>Subject Specific Skills</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>   | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>  |
| Conform to academic conventions relating to sociological inquiry, reflect on own performance, and present materials in a coherent and professional fashion.                                   | All Level 5 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Locate, critically evaluate, and employ a range of legitimate academic and non-academic sources to support arguments, methods, and forms of analysis relating to digital media and sociology. | All Level 5 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Demonstrate a critical appreciation for how sociological concepts and theories can be applied to real-world examples and case studies to illustrate their relevance and implications.         | Contemporary Social Theory  |
| Identify and distinguish between various quantitative and qualitative research methods and data sources used by social scientists.  | Researching Audiences and Users   |
| Explain the process of producing research, the difference between methodology and method, and the suitability of different data collection procedures for various research problems.          | Researching Audiences and Users   |
| Design basic research instruments, construct research designs, and analyse research ethically.  | Researching Audiences and Users   |
| Identify potential career paths and opportunities, considering the transferability of your knowledge and skills.  | Any of the professional development or placement modules.                         |

| <b>Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>   | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>   |
| Advanced time-management and organisational skills to work to meet deadlines and prioritise tasks.  | Redefining Social Theory: Global and Digital Contexts<br>Researching Audiences and Users |
| Prepare well-structured and coherent written assignments for the exposition of complex information and data.  | Contemporary Social Theory<br>Researching Audiences and Users                            |
| Link sociological learning to a range of real-world challenges and begin to identify possible solutions.  | Globalisation and its Discontents  |
| Reflect on personal skills attributes, identify where there may be gaps, and recognise how these might be addressed.                                | Any of the professional development or placement modules.                                |
| Evaluate and formulate strategies and methods for answering research questions or hypotheses, considering the ethical implications of such designs. | Researching Audiences and Users  |

## **Level 6**

| <b>Subject Knowledge and Understanding</b>  |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>   | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>  |
| Cultivate independent skills in defining problems and developing expertise in interpreting and evaluating research within particular areas of digital media and sociology.                | All Level 6 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Demonstrate systematic understandings of key aspects of social life, judging the merits of competing explanations in digital media and sociology.   | All Level 6 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Identify, design and conduct an original study, recognising the importance of ethics, applying theoretical and methodological frameworks and using appropriate tools to analyse findings. | Independent Study Project in Digital Media or Sociology                           |
| Critically analyse literature or field related to digital media and sociology or collaborate with an external stakeholder to address a specific research problem.                         | Independent Study Project in Digital Media or Sociology                           |
| Critically apply sociological knowledge to contemporary social challenges in the construction of sociological responses.  | Social Futures  |
| Develop a roadmap for navigating social change and propose alternatives for the future.   | Social Futures  |
| Identify where sociology can be employed in personal and professional settings.   | Engaged Social Science  |

| <b>Subject Specific Skills</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>  | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>  |
| Evaluate the increasing complexity of sociological knowledge.  | All Level 6 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Assess social thought and recognise the contingency and critique of the sociological enterprise, suggesting possibilities for future work.   | All Level 6 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Assess complex sociological texts and identify possible directions for further theoretical and empirical research in Sociology.  | All Level 6 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Critically evaluate primary and secondary source material, synthesise arguments, and present discussions in written form.  | All Level 6 modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Formulate research questions and apply research methodologies in the production of original research, and analyse findings referring to appropriate theoretical secondary sources. | Independent Study Project in Digital Media or Sociology                           |
| Assess usefulness and application of academic knowledge and skills in personal and professional settings.  | Engaged Social Science  |

| <b>Key or Transferable Skills (graduate attributes)</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Learning Outcome</b>  | <b>Module in which this is delivered</b>                                  |
| Construct a range of strategies and methods for answering research questions and testing hypothesis. | Independent Study Project in Digital Media or Sociology                   |
| Locate, review, evaluate and analyse literature and empirical data on a research topic.              | All modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Mobilise advanced written and oral skills into different personal and professional settings.         | All modules approved as part of the Digital Media and Sociology Programme |
| Assess and employ ethical guidelines for research.   | Independent Study Project in Digital Media or Sociology                   |

## 9. Final and intermediate awards

Credits required for each level of academic award are as follows:

|  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
| <b>BA (Hons) Digital Media and Sociology</b> | 360 credits | You will require at least 120 credits at levels 4, 5 and 6<br>You must accumulate at least 270 credits in your main subject (out of 360 credits overall), with at least 90 credits in each of the three years of study, to graduate with a named single honours degree in this subject. |
| <b>Diploma in Higher Education</b>           | 240 credits | You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher and at least 120 credits at level 5 or higher  |
| <b>Certificate in Higher Education</b>       | 120 credits | You will require at least 120 credits at level 4 or higher  |

**International Year option:** in addition to the above students must pass a module covering the international year in order to graduate with a named degree including the 'international year' wording. Students who do not complete, or fail the international year, will be transferred to the three-year version of the programme.

**Work Placement Year option:** in addition to the above students must pass a non-credit bearing module covering the work placement year in order to graduate with a named degree including the 'with Work Placement Year' wording. Students who do not complete, or fail the work placement year, will be transferred to the three-year version of the programme.

## 10. How is the Programme Assessed?

The wide variety of assessment methods used on this programme at Keele reflects the broad range of knowledge and skills that are developed as you progress through the degree programme. Teaching staff pay particular attention to specifying clear assessment criteria and providing timely, regular and constructive feedback that helps to clarify things you did not understand and helps you to improve your performance. The following list is representative of the variety of assessment methods used on your programme:

- **Critical Reviews** test students' ability to summarise the key points of scholarly work and evaluate the arguments of particular authors in light of the sociological tradition.
- **Essays** provide students with the opportunity to formulate arguments and develop ideas using evidence obtained from library research and other valid sources. As such, the essay assessment enables students to develop their research skills, which involve the ability to sort legitimate from illegitimate source materials, and other academic conventions, such as referencing.
- **Open Book Assessments** are designed to test students' ability to analyse, evaluate or synthesise knowledge within a limited time scale, rather than simply their ability to recall facts or information as with a traditional examination.
- **Oral Presentations** assess students' subject knowledge and understanding. They may also test their

ability to work effectively as members of a team, to communicate what they know orally and visually, and to reflect on these processes as part of their own personal development.

- **Portfolios** are used to assess a range of skills related to academic skills and knowledge and provide students with the opportunity to reflect upon their own personal development.
- **Posters:** since the presentation of material in essay or report form is not always appropriate, it is important that students have the capacity to make use of visual aids to communicate ideas. The poster format enables students to synthesise visual and written material to analyse a particular area of sociological study.
- **Projects** enable students to focus on a case study of their choice within the sociological field under investigation and apply a range of theoretical and conceptual tools to analyse real-world situations.
- **Reflexive Diaries** require students to write a reflexive account of their experience of a module explaining the content of lectures, seminar discussions, and their own personal and academic development. The purpose of this assessment is to encourage students to reflect on their own experiences in order to become more successful learners.
- **Reports** enable students to learn how to organise and distil information into a clear and coherent written format and consequently develop their employability skills in this area.
- **Creative assessments**, such as video blogs, podcasts, and interactive concept maps enable students to use creativity and design to support an engaging critical analysis in a range of formats.
- **The Dissertation (ISP)** allows students to undertake their own research supervised by a member of staff. Students make use of their theoretical and practical learning on the programme to formulate a significant piece of work.
- **The Research Proposal** requires students to develop an independent research project and think through theoretical problems surrounding methodology and practical concerns relating to, for example, availability of sample, financial restrictions, and time limits. Again, this form of assessment is key to the development of independent research skills and a portfolio of employability skills.

Marks are awarded for summative assessments designed to assess your achievement of learning outcomes. You will also be assessed formatively to enable you to monitor your own progress and to assist staff in identifying and addressing any specific learning needs. Feedback, including guidance on how you can improve the quality of your work, is also provided on all summative assessments within three working weeks of submission, unless there are compelling circumstances that make this impossible, and more informally in the course of tutorial and seminar discussions.

## 11. Contact Time and Expected Workload

This contact time measure is intended to provide you with an indication of the type of activity you are likely to undertake during this programme. The data is compiled based on module choices and learning patterns of students on similar programmes in previous years. Every effort is made to ensure this data is a realistic representation of what you are likely to experience, but changes to programmes, teaching methods and assessment methods mean this data is representative and not specific.

Undergraduate courses at Keele contain an element of module choice; therefore, individual students will experience a different mix of contact time and assessment types dependent upon their own individual choice of modules. The figures below are an example of activities that a student may expect on your chosen course by year stage of study. Contact time includes scheduled activities such as: lecture, seminar, tutorial, project supervision, demonstration, practical classes and labs, supervised time in labs/workshop, fieldwork and external visits. The figures are based on 1,200 hours of student effort each year for full-time students.

### Activity

|                         | <b>Scheduled learning and teaching activities</b> | <b>Guided independent Study</b> | <b>Placements</b> |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Year 1 (Level 4)</b> | 23.8%   | 76.2%                           | 0%                |
| <b>Year 2 (Level 5)</b> | 15.5%   | 78.7%                           | 5.8%              |
| <b>Year 3 (Level 6)</b> | 16.3%   | 77%                             | 6.7%              |

## 12. Accreditation

This programme does not have accreditation from an external body.

## 13. University Regulations

The University Regulations form the framework for learning, teaching and assessment and other aspects of the student experience. Further information about the University Regulations can be found at:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/student-agreement/>

If this programme has any exemptions, variations or additions to the University Regulations these will be detailed in an Annex at the end of this document titled 'Programme-specific regulations'.

## 14. What are the typical admission requirements for the Programme?

See the relevant course page on the website for the admission requirements relevant to this programme:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/>

Applicants who are not currently undertaking any formal study or who have been out of formal education for more than 3 years and are not qualified to A-level or BTEC standard may be offered entry to the University's Foundation Year Programme.

Applicants for whom English is not a first language must provide evidence of a recognised qualification in English language. The minimum score for entry to the Programme is Academic IELTS 6.0 or equivalent.

### English for Academic Purposes

Please note: All new international students entering the university will provide a sample of Academic English during their registration. Using this sample, the Language Centre may allocate you to an English language module which will become compulsory. This will replace any GCP modules. *NB:* students can take an EAP module only with the approval of the English Language Programme Director and are not able to take any other Language modules in the same academic year.

English Language Modules at Level 4:

- Business - ENL-90003 Academic English for Business Students (Part 1); ENL-90004 Academic English for Business Students (2)
- Science - ENL-90013 Academic English for Science Students
- General - ENL-90006 English for Academic Purposes 2; ENL-90001 English for Academic Purposes 3; ENL-90002 English for Academic Purposes 4

English Language Modules at Level 5:

- Business - ENL-90003 Academic English for Business Students (Part 1); ENL-90004 Academic English for Business Students (2)
- Science - ENL-90013 Academic English for Science Students
- General - ENL-90006 English for Academic Purposes 2; ENL-90001 English for Academic Purposes 3; ENL-90002 English for Academic Purposes 4

English Language Modules at Level 6:

- Business - ENL-90003 Academic English for Business Students (Part 1); ENL-90004 Academic English for Business Students (2); ENL-90005 Advanced Business English Communication
- Science - ENL-90013 Academic English for Science Students
- General - ENL-90006 English for Academic Purposes 2; ENL-90001 English for Academic Purposes 3; ENL-90002 English for Academic Purposes 4

**Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)** is considered on a case-by-case basis and those interested should contact the Programme Director. The University's guidelines on this can be found here:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/qa/programmesandmodules/recognitionofpriorlearning/>

## 15. How are students supported on the programme?

Support for student learning on the Programme is provided in the following ways:

- Module and seminar group leaders are responsible for providing support for learning on the modules and in the seminar groups for which they are responsible. They also give individual feedback on in-course assessments.
- Every student is allocated to an Academic Mentor who is responsible for reviewing and advising on students' academic progress. The University has a team of life and learning developers based in Student Services who are responsible for supporting students and enhancing their ability to access the curriculum and everything else that the University has to offer throughout their time at Keele.
- Academic Mentors also act as a first point of contact for students on non-academic issues which may affect their learning and can refer students on to Student Services for additional help in relation to health,

disability, welfare, finance and careers. Specialist help and advice on these and other issues is also available for international students.

- The School also has a dedicated Student Experience and Support Officer (SESO).
- All members of teaching staff offer three office hours each week during the semester. Days and times are posted on office doors and in the module guides for the courses they are teaching. Staff are also available at other times by appointment outside of teaching and other activities within their normal working hours. These meetings may take place in person or online.

## 16. Learning Resources

Digital Media and Sociology is taught in teaching rooms equipped with computers, internet access, whiteboards, and projection equipment. Rooms may be arranged either in traditional lecture format or more informally to allow students to work together in small groups.

The learning resources available to students on the Programme include:

- The extensive collection of digital media and sociological materials relevant to undergraduate study held in the University Library. These materials include books, journals and government publications. Much of this material is also accessible online to Keele students from anywhere in the world with a University username and password.
- The Media Suite containing digital labs, technical equipment store and spaces for recording and filming. Students can access the Adobe suite of software to work on any creative projects, which is the professional standard in creative industries.
- The Keele Learning Environment (KLE) which provides easy access to a wide range of learning resources including lecture notes, digitised readings (electronic materials available in a repository maintained by the University Library), and other resources - video, audio and text-based - accessible from external providers via the internet.
- Most modules have electronic resource lists generated using Talis Aspire, a software package that allows students to access online journal articles, digitised readings, websites and other resources by clicking on links in a single document.
- Students for whom English is not their first language are offered language classes, facilities and services by the University's Language Centre. In addition to credit-bearing modules on English for academic study, students also have access to one-to-one tutorials for individual help and advice, and to a wealth of resources for self-study and practice.

## 17. Other Learning Opportunities

### Study abroad (semester)

Students on the programme have the potential opportunity to spend a semester abroad in their second year studying at one of Keele's international partner universities. Please note that students cannot take both a Global Challenge Pathway (GCP) and the semester abroad option.

Exactly which countries are available depends on the student's choice of degree subjects. An indicative list of countries is on the website (<http://www.keele.ac.uk/studyabroad/partneruniversities/>); however this does not guarantee the availability of study in a specific country as this is subject to the University's application process for studying abroad.

No additional tuition fees are payable for a single semester studying abroad but students do have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their destination university, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the destination they are studying at additional costs may include visas, study permits, residence permits, and compulsory health checks. Students should expect the total costs of studying abroad to be greater than if they study in the UK, information is made available from the Global Education Team throughout the process, as costs will vary depending on destination.

Whilst students are studying abroad any Student Finance eligibility will continue, where applicable students may be eligible for specific travel or disability grants. Students who meet external eligibility criteria may be eligible for grants as part of this programme. Students studying outside of this programme may be eligible for income dependent bursaries at Keele. Students travel on a comprehensive Keele University insurance plan, for which there are currently no additional charges. Some governments and/or universities require additional compulsory health coverage plans; costs for this will be advised during the application process.

### Study Abroad (International Year)

A summary of the International Year, which is a potential option for students after completion of year 2 (Level 5), is provided in the Annex for the International Year.

## Work Placement Year

Students have the opportunity to apply directly for the 4-year 'with Work Placement Year' degree programme or to transfer onto the 4-year degree programme at the end of Year-1 and in Year-2 at the end of Semester 1. Students who are initially registered for the 4-year degree programme may transfer onto the 3-year degree programme at any point in time, prior to undertaking their year-long placement. Eligibility rules are included in the Annex.

Students wishing to take the work placement year should meet with the Programme Director to obtain their signature to confirm agreement before they will be allowed to commence their placement.

International students who require a Tier 4 visa must check with the Immigration Compliance Team prior to commencing any form of placement.

A summary of the Work Placement Year, which is a potential option for students after completion of year 2 (Level 5), is provided in the Annex for the Work Placement Year.

## Other opportunities

### 18. Additional Costs

#### Optional costs

There may be optional costs that students can choose to incur to enhance their learning experience. These are not required to complete the course. Details of these optional costs are outlined below to help you plan accordingly.

Students who opt to take our work-based placement modules at level 5 and 6 may be expected to pay travel costs (usually one day weekly) to their placement.

Optional 4-week US Summer School trip:

Estimated maximum total cost (after taking into account Turing scheme funding): £820 for Widening Access students; £1675 for other students. (Estimated maximum cost of £2220 (£950 for flights; £1250 for accommodation; £20 for visa waiver application) to be sourced by student, in addition to usual subsistence costs. Based on 2025 figures, Turing funding is expected to reimburse student costs to a value of approximately £1400 for Widening Access students, and approximately £545 for other students.)

Students who conduct fieldwork trips in the local area adjacent to Keele campus may incur public transport and/or parking costs, but these are not anticipated to be extensive. Students who elect to take and gain places on our work-based placement modules at Level 5 and 6 may be expected to pay travel costs (usually one day weekly) to their placement. Distances vary and indicative distances range from 10 miles from Keele Campus to 40 miles (maximum). Opportunities are available to students, subject to availability and based on the number of partner agencies who offer such places, for work-based placements. Allocation for places is competitive, based on academic performance and selective application process. This usually involves the submission of an application and an interview process involving the host partners and administered by the programme.

Students who take one of our optional Work Placement modules, or our Work Placement year, may need to apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, if they plan to work with particular organisations, for example, schools and charities. The current costs for a DBS check are detailed on the additional costs webpage: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/tuitionfeesandfunding/undergraduatetuitionfees/additionalcosts>

These costs have been forecast by the University as accurately as possible but may be subject to change as a result of factors outside of our control (for example, increase in costs for external services). Forecast costs are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain representative. Where additional costs are in direct control of the University we will ensure increases do not exceed 5%.

Students may also incur general expenses related to university study, such as for printing, textbooks and other materials. Students who undertake a placement may be responsible for additional costs, such as travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs. For further information, please refer to the [additional costs](#) information.

### 19. Quality management and enhancement

The quality and standards of learning in this programme are subject to a continuous process of monitoring, review and enhancement.

- The School Education Committee is responsible for reviewing and monitoring quality management and enhancement procedures and activities across the School.

- Individual modules and the programme as a whole are reviewed and enhanced every year in the annual programme review which takes place at the end of the academic year.
- The programmes are run in accordance with the University's Quality Assurance procedures and are subject to periodic reviews under the Revalidation process.

Student evaluation of, and feedback on, the quality of learning on every module takes place every year using a variety of different methods:

- The results of student evaluations of all modules are reported to module leaders and reviewed by the Programme Committee as part of annual programme review.
- Findings related to the programme from the annual National Student Survey (NSS), and from regular surveys of the student experience conducted by the University, are subjected to careful analysis and a planned response at programme and School level.
- Feedback received from representatives of students in all three years of the programme is considered and acted on at regular meetings of the Student Staff Voice Committee.

The University appoints senior members of academic staff from other universities to act as external examiners on all programmes. They are responsible for:

- Approving examination questions
- Confirming all marks which contribute to a student's degree
- Reviewing and giving advice on the structure and content of the programme and assessment procedures

Information about current external examiner(s) can be found here:

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/ga/externalexaminers/currentexternalexaminers/>

## 20. The principles of programme design

The programme described in this document has been drawn up with reference to, and in accordance with the guidance set out in, the following documents:

**a.** UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

**b.** QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (2024)

[https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/sbs/sbs-communication-media-film-and-cultural-studies-24.pdf?sfvrsn=c401b481\\_4](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/sbs/sbs-communication-media-film-and-cultural-studies-24.pdf?sfvrsn=c401b481_4) and Sociology (2019) [https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-sociology.pdf?sfvrsn=6ee2cb81\\_4](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/subject-benchmark-statement-sociology.pdf?sfvrsn=6ee2cb81_4)

**c.** Keele University Regulations and Guidance for Students and Staff: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/regulations>

## 21. Annex - International Year

### BA (Hons) Digital Media and Sociology with International Year

| <b>International Year Programme</b>  |
|--|
| <p>Students registered for this Single Honours programme may either be admitted for or apply to transfer during their period of study at Level 5 to the International Year option. Students accepted onto this option will have an extra year of study (the International Year) at an international partner institution after they have completed Year 2 (Level 5) at Keele.</p> <p>Students who successfully complete both the second year (Level 5) and the International Year will be permitted to progress to Level 6. Students who fail to satisfy the examiners in respect of the International Year will normally revert to the standard programme and progress to Level 6 on that basis. The failure will be recorded on the student's final transcript.</p> <p>Study at Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6 will be as per the main body of this document. The additional detail contained in this annex will pertain solely to students registered for the International Year option.</p> |
| <b>International Year Programme Aims</b>   |

In addition to the programme aims specified in the main body of this document, the international year programme of study aims to provide students with:

1. Personal development as a student and a researcher with an appreciation of the international dimension of their subject
2. Experience of a different culture, academically, professionally and socially

### **Entry Requirements for the International Year**

Students may apply to the 4-year programme during Level 5. Admission to the International Year is subject to successful application, interview and references from appropriate staff.

The criteria to be applied are:

- Academic Performance (an average of 55% across all modules in Semester 1 at Level 5 is normally required. Places on the International Year are then conditional on achieving an average mark of 55% across all Level 5 modules. Students with up to 15 credits of re-assessment who meet the 55% requirement may progress to the International Year. Where no Semester 1 marks have been awarded performance in 1st year marks and ongoing 2nd year assessments are taken into account)
- General Aptitude (to be demonstrated by application for study abroad, interview during the 2nd semester of year 2 (Level 5), and by recommendation of the student's Academic Mentor, 1st and 2nd year tutors and programme director)

Students may not register for both an International Year and a Placement Year.

### **Student Support**

Students will be supported whilst on the International Year via the following methods:

- Phone or Skype conversations with Study Abroad tutor, in line with recommended Academic Mentoring meeting points.
- Support from the University's Global Education Team

### **Learning Outcomes**

In addition to the learning outcomes specified in the main text of the Programme Specification, students who complete a Keele undergraduate programme with International Year will be able to:

1. Describe, discuss and reflect upon the cultural and international differences and similarities of different learning environments
2. Discuss the benefits and challenges of global citizenship and internationalisation
3. Explain how their perspective on their academic discipline has been influenced by locating it within an international setting.

In addition, students who complete the International Year will be able to:

These learning outcomes will all be assessed by the submission of a satisfactory individual learning agreement, the successful completion of assessments at the partner institution and the submission of the reflective portfolio element of the international year module.

### **Regulations**

Students registered for the International Year are subject to the programme-specific regulations (if any) and the University regulations. In addition, during the International Year, the following regulations will apply:

Students undertaking the International Year must complete 120 credits, which must comprise *at least 40%* in the student's discipline area.

This may impact on your choice of modules to study, for example you will have to choose certain modules to ensure you have the discipline specific credits required.

Students are barred from studying any module with significant overlap to the Level 6 modules they will study on their return. Significant overlap with Level 5 modules previously studied should also be avoided.

## **Additional costs for the International Year**

Tuition fees for students on the International Year will be charged at 15% of the annual tuition fees for that year of study, as set out in Section 1. The International Year can be included in your Student Finance allocation, to find out more about your personal eligibility see: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

Students will have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their destination university, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the destination they are studying at additional costs may include visas, study permits, residence permits, and compulsory health checks. Students should expect the total costs of studying abroad be greater than if they study in the UK, information is made available from the Global Education Team throughout the process, as costs will vary depending on destination.

Students who meet external eligibility criteria may be eligible for grants as part of this programme. Students studying outside of this programme may be eligible income dependent bursaries at Keele.

Students travel on a comprehensive Keele University insurance plan, for which there are currently no additional charges. Some Governments and/or universities require additional compulsory health coverage plans; costs for this will be advised during the application process.

## **22. Annex - Work Placement Year**

### **BA (Hons) Digital Media and Sociology with Work Placement Year**

#### **Work Placement Year summary**

Students registered for this programme may either be admitted for or apply to transfer during their studies to the 'with Work Placement Year' option (NB: for Combined Honours students the rules relating to the work placement year in the subject where the placement is organised are to be followed). Students accepted onto this programme will have an extra year of study (the Work Placement Year) with a relevant placement provider after they have completed Year 2 (Level 5) at Keele.

Students who successfully complete both the second year (Level 5) and the Work Placement Year will be permitted to progress to Level 6. Students who fail to satisfactorily complete the Work Placement Year will normally revert to the 3-year programme and progress to Level 6 on that basis. The failure will be recorded on the student's final transcript.

Study at Level 4, Level 5 and Level 6 will be as per the main body of this document. The additional detail contained in this annex will pertain solely to students registered for the Work Placement Year option.

#### **Work Placement Year Programme Aims**

In addition to the programme aims specified in the main body of this document, the Work Placement Year aims to provide students with:

1. The opportunity to carry out a long-term, placement-based learning experience between Years 2 and 3 of their degree programme.
2. Enhanced employability.
3. The opportunity to develop and consolidate the knowledge and skills they have gained during the course of their studies at Level 4 and 5.
4. A professional CV and portfolio that they can use when applying for employment.

#### **Entry Requirements for the Work Placement Year**

Admission to the Work Placement Year is subject to successful application, interview and references from appropriate staff. Students have the opportunity to apply directly for the 4-year 'with work placement year' degree programme, or to transfer onto the 4-year programme at the end of Year-1 and in Year-2 at the end of Semester 1. Students who are initially registered for the 4-year degree programme may transfer onto the 3-year degree programme at any point in time, prior to undertaking the year-long work placement. Students who fail to pass the work placement year, and those who fail to meet the minimum requirements of the work placement year module, (\* or equivalent, work placement), will be automatically transferred onto the 3-year degree programme.

\* We recommend where possible students undertake a placement of between 9 - 12 months on a full-time basis to maximize academic and personal growth. However, the Work Placement Year mandates a minimum of 24 weeks in duration, ideally on a full-time basis, but no less than 21 hours per week. This enables those undertaking an unpaid placement to work on a part-time basis alongside.

The criteria to be applied are:

- A good University attendance record and be in 'good academic standing'.
- Academic Performance (an average of 50% across all modules in Semester 1 at Level 5 is normally required. Places on the Work Placement Year are then conditional on achieving an average mark of 50% across all Level 5 modules. Students with up to 15 credits of re-assessment who meet the 50% requirement may progress to the Work Placement Year. Where no Semester 1 marks have been awarded performance in 1st year marks and ongoing 2nd year assessments are taken into account)
- Students undertaking work placements will be expected to complete a Health and Safety checklist prior to commencing their work experience and will be required to satisfy the Health and Safety regulations of the company or organisation at which they are based.
- (*International students only*) Due to visa requirements, it is not possible for international students who require a Tier 4 Visa to apply for direct entry onto the 4-year with Work Placement Year degree programme. Students wishing to transfer onto this programme should discuss this with student support, the academic tutor for the work placement year, and the Programme Lead. Students should be aware that there are visa implications for this transfer, and it is the student's responsibility to complete any and all necessary processes to be eligible for this programme. There may be additional costs, including applying for a new Visa from outside of the UK for international students associated with a transfer to the work placement programme.

Students may not register for both an International Year and a Work Placement Year.

## **Student Support**

Students will be supported whilst on the Work Placement Year via the following methods:

- Regular contact between the student and a named member of staff who will be assigned to the student as their University supervisor. The University supervisor will be in regular contact with the student throughout the year, and be on hand to provide advice (pastoral or academic) and liaise with the Placement supervisor on the student's behalf if required.
- Two formal contacts with the student during the placement year: the University supervisor will visit the student in their placement organization at around 5 weeks after the placement has commenced, and then visit again (or conduct a telephone/video call tutorial) at around 15 weeks into the placement.
- Weekly supervision sessions will take place with the placement supervisor (or his/her nominee) throughout the duration of the placement.

## **Learning Outcomes**

In addition to the learning outcomes specified in the main text of the Programme Specification, students who complete the 'with Work Placement Year' option will be able to:

1. Understand the variety of ways in which skills developed during the study of Social Sciences can be deployed in non-academic contexts.
2. Assess their own strengths and weaknesses in an employment context through a SWOT analysis, design learning outcomes, and reflect on their own progress throughout the module.
3. Articulate their placement experiences effectively and critically reflect on their enhanced skill set in front of an audience.
4. Understand the aims and priorities, as well as the strengths and possible limitations, of an external organisation and complete tasks as directed.
5. Reflect on and critically evaluate their learning from the work placement, showing evidence that they have researched their sector and evaluated the effectiveness of their activities with this in mind.

These learning outcomes will be assessed through the non-credit bearing Work Placement Year module (SOC-30051) which involves:

1. Supporting students in locating and securing a relevant work placement in any workplace where the research, analytical, and communication skills as a developed part of a Social, Political and Global Studies degree can be used.
2. Students completing a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) at the beginning of the placement, reflecting on their employability skills in terms of their assessment of sector skill demands. This will be used to create Intended Placement Outcomes and contribute to Continuing Professional Development. The action plan will be negotiated and agreed by the student, module convenor and employer.
3. Students creating a professional CV and portfolio that can be used when seeking employment after graduation.
4. Students completing a 15-20 minute presentation in June/July, critically reflecting on the activities/projects they have completed so far, and the skills they have learned/developed. The audience will primarily be other students on this module, to ensure shared experiences and to create connections in preparation for returning to Keele for third year (Level 6).
5. Students developing a heightened awareness of the various ways in which their knowledge and skills can be utilised in real-world situations.

## **Regulations**

Students registered for the 'with Work Placement Year' option are subject to programme-specific regulations (if any) and the University regulations. In addition, during the Work Placement Year, the following regulations will apply:

- Students undertaking the Work Placement Year must successfully complete the zero-credit rated 'Work Placement Year' module (SOC-30051).
- In order to ensure a high quality placement experience, each placement agency will sign up to a placement contract (analogous to a service level agreement).
- Once a student has been accepted by a placement organisation, the student will make a pre-placement visit and a member of staff identified within the placement contract will be assigned as the placement supervisor. The placement supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that the placement experience meets the agreed contract agreed with the University.
- The placement student will also sign up an agreement outlining his/her responsibilities in relation to the requirements of each organisation.

Students will be expected to behave professionally in terms of:

(i) conforming to the work practices of the organisation; and

(ii) remembering that they are representatives of the University and their actions will reflect on the School and have an impact on that organisation's willingness (or otherwise) to remain engaged with the placement.

## **Additional costs for the Work Placement Year**

Tuition fees for students on the Work Placement Year will be charged at 20% of the annual tuition fees for that year of study, as set out in Section 1. The Work Placement Year can be included in your Student Finance allocation; to find out more about your personal eligibility see: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

Students will have to bear the costs of travelling to and from their placement provider, accommodation, food and personal costs. Depending on the placement provider additional costs may include parking permits, travel and transport, suitable clothing, DBS checks, and compulsory health checks.

A small stipend may be available to students from the placement provider during the placement but this will need to be explored on a placement-by-placement basis as some organisations, such as charities, may not have any extra money available. Students should budget with the assumption that their placement will be unpaid.

Eligibility for student finance will depend on the type of placement and whether it is paid or not. If it is paid, this is likely to affect student finance eligibility, however if it is voluntary and therefore unpaid, should not affect student finance eligibility. Students are required to confirm eligibility with their student finance provider.

International students who require a Tier 4 visa should check with the Immigration Compliance team prior to commencing any type of paid placement to ensure that they are not contravening their visa requirements.

## Version History

### This document

**Date Approved:** 31 March 2026

### Previous documents

| Version No | Year    | Owner     | Date Approved | Summary of and rationale for changes |
|------------|---------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1          | 2025/26 | EMMA HEAD | 02 May 2025   |                                      |