

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies: Provision in UK Higher Education

June 2024

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Foreword by the Advisory Group

All forms of media and communication play a significant and influential role in the social, economic and cultural life of citizens across the world. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies permeates every aspect of our professional and private lives, with digital technologies increasingly intertwined with our lived experiences and social interactions. Globally, people spend an average of six hours and 37 minutes per day using the internet, according to Data Reportal's 2023 research, with access via mobile devices accounting for more than half of this time.¹ The time spent engaging with digital communication alone equates to more than 40% of our waking hours. As an inextricable component of the global economy, the provision of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies at higher education is vital.

Whilst economic value is only a partial justification for the importance of a field of study, it is worth noting that figures from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport indicate that the 'creative industries' accounted for 2.3 million jobs in 2021, a 49% increase since 2011. As this report will explore, research and teaching from Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has a profound impact on our understanding and engagement with the cultural and creative industries. The increase of degree offerings in these subject areas over time reflects the expansion of the creative and cultural industries, their economic contributions, and the need for new and diverse talent. Given that the creative sectors have grown 1.5 times the rate of the UK economy over the past decade,² these subjects crucially produce a pipeline of agile graduates with the necessary creative skills and knowledge.

Such is the strategic importance of these sectors that the Government has committed to grow the creative industries by "an extra £50 billion while creating one million extra jobs by 2030".³ In the Government's 2023 Creative Industries Sector Vision, the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak advocated the cultural and economic benefits of the creative industries, whilst celebrating their broader societal significance: "These industries have a special place in our national life and make a unique contribution to how we feel about ourselves as a country", he noted, and that "so often the creative industries help to strengthen the bonds between communities".⁴ In their joint foreword to the same report the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and Sir Peter Bazalgette (Industry Co-Chair of the Creative Industries Council) exalted the importance of the UK creative industries because:

The importance of the creative industries also goes well beyond the economy. They provide the news that informs our democracy, the designs that shape our cities and the content and performances that enrich our lives and strengthen our global image. The sector has proved that it is an essential positive force for society, bringing joy, inspiration and opportunity to our lives. The creative industries form the national conversation through which we define our shared values.

¹ Data Reportal (2023) 'Digital 2023: Global Overview Report' [accessed February 2024].

² Department for Culture, Media & Sport (June 2023) 'Creative industries sector vision: a joint plan to drive growth, build talent and develop skills' [accessed February 2024].

³ Department for Culture, Media & Sport (June 2023) 'Ambitious plans to grow the economy and boost creative industries' GOV.UK [accessed February 2024].

⁴ 'Creative industries sector vision'.

And while the contribution to the creative industries is undoubtedly worth celebrating, as this report demonstrates, graduates from degrees covered in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies enter sectors outside the creative and cultural industries, where the rigour and salience of their skills and knowledge are widely valued and recognised. The eclectic relevance and transferability of skills within these fields are part of its defining characteristics, as highlighted by the recently updated QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies. The importance of skilled visual and textual analysis to the integrity of research, its interpretation and expression across a broad range of media, informs and supports a plurality of creative and other industries, which rely on efficient and effective communication.

From the impact of digital media on public access to museum collections and archives, through to the study of the effects of social media, artificial intelligence, and immersive viewing technologies on the generation, circulation, and interpretation of information into the twenty-first century: Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies matters. The history and work of these fields are critical to understanding forms and practices of information technologies, from the ethical implications of cultural, institutional, and political values to its connections with the sciences and medical humanities or environmental impact. Students learn to negotiate questions of representation, gender, identity, and memory through the analysis of images, texts, audiovisual media, and information networks that are integral to understanding the world around us.

The intellectual and technological history of these courses can be traced through various disciplines within the arts, humanities and social sciences. The objects and artefacts of study can be traced from the late 1800s through the expansion of industrialisation, capitalism and the modern metropolis, which foreground the conditions for the emergence of cultural production.⁵ However, the formal study of screen media, journalism, and communication emerged through intersections with various subjects in the arts and humanities, such as modern languages, literature, philosophy, psychology, politics, history and creative practice. As such it is often described as a field with multiple roots that retains an eclectic and diverse character. In the UK, its origins can in part be tracked through the inclusion of film in school curricula in the 1930s, the study of filmmaking at the London Film School in the 1950s, and the introduction of film and television studies at UK universities in the 1960s and 70s.⁶

The theories, methods and practices that combine in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies explore how cultural values, institutions and traditions both inform and engage with issues of identity, meaning and social structures. For example, the Society for Education in Film and Television became a nexus for 1960s and 70s feminist theories that began to decipher gendered and racialised representations in film and television narratives, the popular press and the visual arts. Such critical historiographies continue to unpick the problematic elision of women's labour, forgotten social histories of production, creative practice, and the imbalances of power, ideology, race and representation in museum collections and archives to both identify and question institutional values.⁷ As such the field has been and continues to be at the forefront of many progressive social changes.

Located in SHAPE (Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts for People and the Economy) disciplines, the aggregate of first-degree enrolments in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies rose from 2012/13 to 2018/19. However, the complexity of subjects studied across the SHAPE disciplines and changes to the coding of university courses (JACS to CAH) suggest a minor gradual decrease from 2019/20 to 2021/22. This decline, although

⁵ Bell, M. (2021) *Movie Workers: the Women who Made British Cinema* (University of Illinois Press).

⁶ Münsterberg, H. (1916; 2014) *The Photoplay: A Psychological Study* (Duke Classics); Doane, M. A. (2002) *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Harvard University Press).

⁷ Peterson, J. (2013) *Education in the School of Dreams: Travelogues and Early Nonfiction Film* (Duke University Press).

minor, alongside the geographical distribution of foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate courses, has implications for parity of access to education and progression for mature students and scholars across a broad range of economic backgrounds and underrepresented communities who bring vital perspectives to questions of social justice. Coupled with a decrease in both GCSE and A Level entries to courses that are categorised under 'Media/Film/TV Studies', we are witnessing a potential declining trend in student numbers that must be taken seriously given the importance of our field as highlighted above and in this report. Any reduction in provision, either by Higher Education funding bodies or in secondary and further education, would have significant short and long-term consequences nationally.

This threat is further exacerbated by reductions to core funding streams for universities, across both education and research. The Office for Students (OfS) reduced recurrent and capital funding for the performing arts, creative arts and media studies by 50%, for example, after a steer from the Department for Education (DfE) to prioritise funding for STEM subjects.⁸ Whilst the OfS acknowledged that 95% of respondents to the consultation strongly opposed the proposals, they conceded that if institutions fail to comply with the DfE request, this might lead to repayment of the grant in part or whole. Research in our field meanwhile has been impacted by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) loss in supplementary income that came from cross-funding programmes and the abrupt scrapping of the Global Challenges Research Fund following cuts to Overseas Development Assistance/UK Research and Innovation. This despite the world-leading or internationally excellent standard of research in the field, and the broader industrial and societal benefits of the creative industries as highlighted by the Government's own vision paper.

Whilst the external landscape provides a complex backdrop for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, this British Academy report serves to highlight the broader importance of these areas of study and their strength within UK higher education. Education and research in our subject areas are integral to the UK economy, globally recognised as strengths and a valuable site for strategic investment and funding for students, staff and connected industries. As an Advisory Group we welcome the detailed evidence in this report, which provides a comprehensive and compelling state of the field analysis. We encourage everyone to use it as a contextual marker and evidence for supporting the continued growth and expansion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies.

⁸ Rt. Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP (February 2021) '[Guidance to the Office for Students \(OfS\) – Secretary of State's strategic priorities](#)', Office for Students [accessed February 2024].

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Key findings

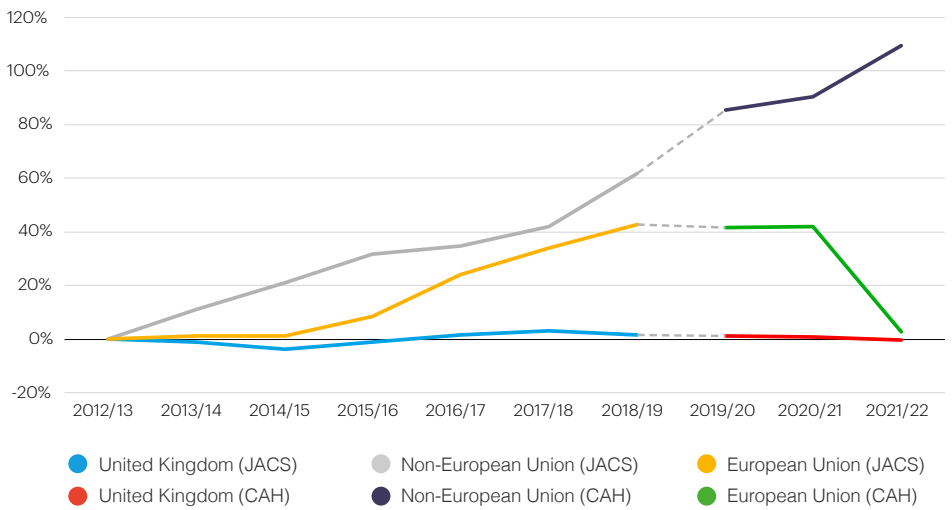
- 1** Between 2012 and 2018, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate student numbers increased by 7%. This was followed by a 2% drop between 2019 and 2021.
- 2** There are different trends within the subjects making up the field, with Media Studies first degree undergraduate enrolments growing by 5% between 2019 and 2021, while Cinematics & Photography has decreased by 5%. There has been a longer term decrease in first degree undergraduate enrolments in Journalism, with numbers falling by 21% between 2012 and 2021.
- 3** Across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught student numbers increased by 72% between 2012 and 2021. Over the same period, postgraduate research student numbers grew by 31%.
- 4** With 45% of students, London and the South East are disproportionately attractive regions at postgraduate taught level in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies.
- 5** Internationally domiciled students make up an increasing proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies cohorts, particularly at postgraduate level. 54% of postgraduate taught students in 2021 were domiciled outside of the United Kingdom and numbers of non-EU domiciled students have grown by 106% in absolute terms since 2012.

Postgraduate taught Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students by region of Higher Education Institution, 2021/22



6 European Union domiciled student enrolments dropped at all levels in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in the academic year 2021/22, reflecting a wider decrease in EU domiciled students in UK higher education that may be connected to a change in visa status.

Percentage change of undergraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by domicile, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



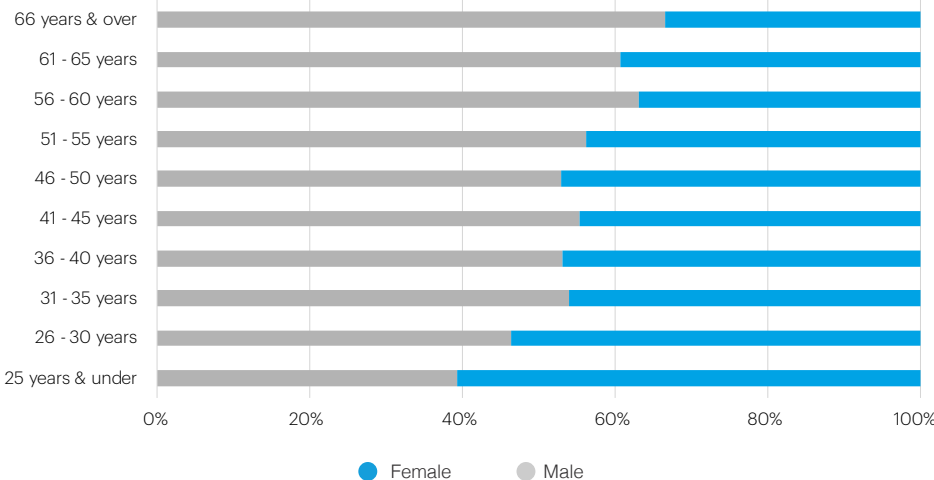
7 Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is institutionally diverse, although the proportion of students at Russell Group institutions is increasing: the overall number of undergraduate students at these institutions grew by 141% between 2012 and 2021.

8 Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates are highly literate in media and digital skills that are transferable to a broad range of industries, not least the creative industries sector which has grown 1.5 times the rate of the wider UK economy over the past decade.

9 Recent graduates from the field are employed in some of the fastest growing sectors of the UK economy. The top two destinations in 2021/22 for graduates from the field were Information and communication sectors (28%) and Professional, scientific and technical activities (12%).

10 In the REF 2021 cycle, almost 80% of submissions from both the two Units of Assessment covering Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research outputs were deemed to be world-leading or internationally excellent for overall research quality.

Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by age bracket and sex, 2021/22 (FTE)



11 Trends over recent years suggest that the profile of academic staff in the field is shifting. Female staff make up higher proportions among younger staff age groups and there are an increasing proportion of female professors (49% of professors in 2021). The proportion of staff identifying as White has fallen from 87% in 2012 to 83% in 2021.

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Introduction

Context

As the UK's National Academy for the humanities and social sciences, it is the British Academy's role to support, strengthen and champion these disciplines. This report has been produced as part of the Academy's wider [Observatory](#) function, which seeks to monitor the health and sustainability of SHAPE (Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts for People and the Economy) disciplines. It follows previous Academy studies on its constituent disciplines. This includes the pilot report on the provision of [Theology and Religious Studies](#) (2019) in UK higher education and a report on [Business and Management Studies](#) (2021). The most recent report in this series is on the provision of [English Studies](#) (2023). The Academy is committed to providing its community of constituent disciplines with the evidence required to understand and reflect on their health and sustainability. Doing so not only highlights the value of the discipline to society but equips its academic community with a clearer understanding of how it might respond in order to support the development of teaching and research in a changing landscape.

Why Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies?

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is a large and dynamic field in UK higher education. It is popular among UK and overseas students across undergraduate and postgraduate levels: in the last decade the number of undergraduate students has increased and the number of postgraduate students has nearly doubled. Its popular and diverse teaching curriculum is supported by the rigour and influence of the field's globally recognised research. Scholarship in the field has profound impact that, as this report will explore, ranges from the cultural and creative industries to the NHS, human rights, and AI and digitalisation.

However, as the Advisory Group highlight in the Foreword to this report, the field faces risks from reduced core funding streams for universities and reductions in research income. Further, despite strong evidence of world-leading research and a clear desire in government policy for the skills and knowledge developed by these subjects,⁹ Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has not been immune to divisive perceptions by the perennial 'culture wars' on university degrees.¹⁰

This report serves as a resource for the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies community as an evidence base for current higher education trends and in anticipation of future activity. The report also ties together a literature review and detailed qualitative analysis of the REF impact case studies, which are intended for audiences both in and out of the community to better understand the influence of this interdisciplinary field.

What can you expect from this report?

This report is primarily an investigation of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies using quantitative data and descriptive statistics. We worked closely with this report's Advisory Group to develop a robust methodology through which to analyse the health of the discipline, including the use of data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

⁹ Further explored later in this report in Chapter 4: Academic research, Chapter 5: Graduate Outcomes, Chapter 6: Reflections key themes.

¹⁰ Curran, J (2013), 'Mickey Mouse Squeaks Back: Defending Media Studies', *Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association* [November 2023].

and the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 main and sub-panel reports. Similar to previous reports in this series, our analysis is structured on four core pillars of higher education provision: student trends and numbers at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, their graduate outcomes, academic staff, and research income and activity.

How to use this report

This report can be read in multiple ways depending on the reader's key interests and can also be read by individual chapter. To understand the health of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies at higher education level, we recommend that engagement with this report is holistic. For this reason, we have included a conclusion (Chapter 6) which reflects on the key themes found across the findings of this report. Detailed layouts of the data codes utilised in this report can be found in the methodology section toward the end of the report – this can be referred to as you read the report. You will also find a glossary at the end of the report.

1. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies: key characteristics

Within this chapter we outline what the field of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is and summarise its diverse spread of programmes and syllabuses available to students. We explore the history of the field to better understand its inherent dynamism and interdisciplinarity. Finally, we explore the contributions of researchers and examine the body of scholarship produced in the UK. This scholarship not only impacts individuals but exerts a broader influence across society, domestically and globally.

This chapter provides qualitative context to nuance the assessment of the health of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in UK higher education. In addition, we employ the 2024 QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (Subject Benchmark Statement)¹¹ to help frame and define teaching and study of the field. For insights into scholarship in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, we draw from the reports of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) panels.

What is Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies?

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is a dynamic and hybrid field, characterised by its use of diverse methodologies, theories and techniques. Encompassing subject areas across the arts, humanities and social sciences, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is understood by practitioners as a broad set of disciplines and fields intersecting across the study of communication, journalism, culture, and screen media such as film, cinematics and television, audio-visual, radio and popular music, photography and digital media.

This non-exhaustive list serves to showcase the wide-ranging examples that can be analysed within the scope of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. It is an agile field, one that continues to evolve in response to shifting social phenomena, industry practices, their wider contexts and environments. Developments in technology (including immersive technologies and Artificial Intelligence, online networks and platforms) contribute to the diversity of the media landscape. Scholars across the field critically appraise the risks and possibilities of these shifting landscapes in relation to existing social, political and economic dynamics.

The body of scholarship and teaching produced by Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies explores how our cultural values, institutions, and traditions both shape and are shaped by broader issues surrounding identity, meaning, political and social structures. Robert Kolker offers this useful summary which, although specific to Media Studies, is applicable to the field as considered in this report: “Media Studies ... describes and analyses, accounts for, and situates media within the even more complex matrix of the culture of which

¹¹ Quality Assurance Agency (2024) *Subject Benchmark Statement: Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies* [Accessed April 2024]

both the media and the audience are part”.¹² Scholarship may examine this by considering the relationship between media and audiences, how meaning is crafted and disseminated, and the wider cultural and creative policies and politics that underpin the media ecology. Forming a crucial area of research are the creative and cultural industries and their institutions, media ownership, access and regulation.

Students and researchers interrogate, experiment with or produce a range of communicative, aesthetic and cultural artefacts and sources. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies degree programmes across undergraduate and postgraduate levels are therefore diverse in their offer. The 2024 Subject Benchmark Statement notes that:

*“Titles may include, for example: advertising; broadcasting; communication studies; cultural studies; subject histories; digital, film, television, media or screen studies; interactive media; journalism; film, television and media production; games studies; publishing; political communication and lobbying; future media; content creation; cultural management; and public relations.”*¹³

These diverse titles signify a richness of subject content and format that contribute to the development of knowledge and a critical understanding of media, culture and society. Students may engage in critical theory, historical, sociological or political economic analyses, or they may take up production or practice-led research and teaching.

It is worth noting, however, that degrees and scholarship across the field are not bound to a singular methodology that pertains to pure ‘theory’ or pure ‘practice’.¹⁴ Courses may share some core features, whether they offer a more general or specialist scope, but will differ across institutions. For example, a course may focus on critical approaches to media in its core modules but have optional modules ranging from video production to photography. This adaptable curriculum design reflects the fluidity of the field, encouraging diverse approaches to student learning as practitioners, theorists and media consumers.

This multifaceted educational approach encourages students to experiment with different media forms, developing “analytical and research skills together with a critical grasp of their responsibilities as practitioners”.¹⁵ To develop these skills, opportunities are available for internships, networking, and exposure to media or creative industries throughout their programmes.

As a minimum, the QAA Subject Statement outlines that graduates from across the spectrum of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies programmes are expected to demonstrate a range of subject-specific knowledge and skills, such as:

- understand and interrogate the representational, technological and cultural significance of media, film, communication and cultural texts and contexts
- critically assess the role of media forms, including community and participatory media, in contributing to political and cultural debates and the contestation of power
- consider the complex and intersecting ways in which diverse communities and organisations contribute to the development of media and cultural policies and practices
- identify, critically evaluate and competently employ research methods suitable to a particular research context – these may include digital methodologies, close textual analysis, archive research, quantitative textual analysis and social research methods, research-by-practice, (auto)ethnography, critically reflective practice, audience research methods or participatory approaches.¹⁶

¹² Kolker, R. (2009) *Media Studies: An Introduction* (Blackwell Publishing), p. 7.

¹³ *Subject Benchmark Statement*, p. 3.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

To support this, the UCAS Subject Guide highlights the importance of the skills gained in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies programmes for navigating an increasingly complex and fast-moving ecology of media forms, processes and industries. The skills and learning methods enable students to interrogate the interplay between media and entertainment, communication and culture, crucial for navigating an era “of almost total mediation”.¹⁷

Indeed, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies courses nod to a broader democratic mission: promoting an “informed citizenry” through a critical examination of “power, influence, representation and value”.¹⁸ To that end, the field plays an important role in unpicking and subverting misinformation, deciphering images and texts to reveal the ways in which imbalances of power are, for example, gendered, racial and classed. To achieve this goal, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies programmes have a shared aim to endow students with the creative tools and skills needed to interact with complex contemporary challenges.

How did Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies emerge?

Despite key elements not emerging as autonomous fields of study within higher education until the mid to late twentieth century, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has discernible traditions and histories that shaped its integration into the academy. This history includes the political and cultural use of images and texts in illustrated lectures as an educational form in the nineteenth century, as well as the history of photography, film and media as modes of communication interlinked with education and the study of visual arts and texts. Although a comprehensive history is beyond the scope of this report, this section provides a brief account of the emergence of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies as a formal subject area to better understand both its provision and breadth across higher education in the UK today.

In the UK, research predominately concerned with contemporary culture and media escalated in the inter and post-war period of the twentieth century, during a boom in mass entertainment that included cinema, radio, and the emergence of television.¹⁹ These research interests began with investigating, for example, the influence and impact of contemporary media on audiences, the construction of media narratives, and the relationship between media coverage and social groups.²⁰ Terry Bolas traces the practice of media education to cinema or film appreciation in schools in the 1930s, marking this as the point where “children, education, film, the institution of cinema and their interrelationships were repeatedly described and interpreted”.²¹

A greater recognition of how culture, power and society intersect led to emerging research interests in popular culture during the 1950s. These intersections demanded new frameworks to analyse a wide range of media texts and communications against notions of a ‘mass’ society, and how “mediated meanings [were] continually being constructed, reconstructed and challenged by producers and audiences”.²² As such, understandings and critiques of contemporary cultural dynamics – particularly those typified within these modern media texts (such as television, film and screen, radio and audio, the press and broadcasting) – were pursued by scholars seeking to break from traditional academic boundaries that insisted on ‘high’ cultural analysis. This was in part motivated by the desire to engage wider constituencies in the analysis of the media cultures that increasingly pervaded everyday life.

¹⁷ UCAS (2023) *Media Studies Subject Guide* [Accessed September 2023].

¹⁸ Buckingham, D. (2018) *The Media Education Manifesto* (Polity Press), p. 8.

¹⁹ Golding, P. (2019) *Media Studies in the UK*, *Publizistik*, 64, pp. 504-5.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Bolas, T. (2009) *Screen Education: From Film Appreciation to Media Studies* (Intellect), p. 12.

²² Murdock, G and Golding, P. (2014) *Media Studies in Question* in J. Steel and M. Conboy (eds) *The Routledge Companion to British Media History* (Taylor and Francis), p. 55.

Julian McDougall offers a useful distinction between ‘popular’ and ‘high’ culture, noting that “popular culture is different to high culture in the sense that it doesn’t have a ‘canon’”.²³ In other words, how value is determined and ascribed to cultural forms, texts and artefacts is not neutral, but rather is socially or culturally derived. Communication, media, film and cultural programmes of research began to question long-held assumptions of what constitutes traditional notions of canonical texts. In the twentieth century, this in a sense contributed to a democratically realised mode of research focused on “reclaiming and validating the experiences of the working classes”.²⁴

School and college teachers from English and Liberal Studies, respectively, pioneered engagement with media such as film with systematic support from the British Film Institute (BFI), where the BFI sought a theoretical framework and basis for media education. David Buckingham observes that this reallocated resource and attention from media education in schools to higher education, summarising this as “a *disciplinary* project – about establishing the legitimacy of the subject through the academy”.²⁵ As such, in the 1950s and 60s researchers at the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies tapped into critical paradigms (such as critical theory, Marxist, and post-structuralist thought) to analyse and interpret popular and contemporary cultural forms. Graham Murdock and Peter Golding note the growing ethnographic impetus that shaped analysis into and of the mass media. They cite the Leicester Centre for Mass Communication Research (where they had both been researchers) as facilitating scholarship and enquiry into the ethnographic assumptions of broadcasting and the cultural industry.²⁶

James Curran highlights the academic distinction between the development of Media Studies in the UK and its counterpart in the USA, noting that the latter has focused more on communications and journalism “through a sociology of culture tradition strongly influenced in the post-war period by a now discredited mass society thesis”.²⁷ Although this had shaped media research in the early- to mid-twentieth century, approaches in the UK fostered a greater focus on critical and social theory not dissimilar to techniques employed in literary criticism and analysis.²⁸ The critical analyses emanated in response to and against a backdrop of shifting political and social movements in the late twentieth century.

As this scholarship expanded throughout the century, research into contemporary media and culture produced resources that could shape and form degree modules. Initially, academic centres, such as those in Birmingham and Leicester, pioneered this. But soon academics from other fields in the social sciences and the humanities contributed to the growing body of research. As Golding suggests, a significant step in the field’s integration into academia took place in the former polytechnic institutions (later, the post-1992 or ‘new’ universities), with the first undergraduate programme introduced at the Polytechnic of Central London in 1975.²⁹

Murdock and Golding note that many of the early academics working within the newly forged field of ‘Media Studies’ came from the creative or media industries. As such, the openness and lack of strict disciplinary boundaries invited innovative approaches to research and study that were not tied to one approach.³⁰ These approaches include practical modes of producing, programming or curating media, disrupting traditional or textual models of critique. Indeed,

²³ McDougall, J. (2012) *Media Studies: The Basics* (Taylor and Francis), p. 7.

²⁴ Thussu, D (2009) ‘Why Internationalise Media Studies and How?’ in ed. D. Thussu *Internationalising Media Studies* (Routledge), p. 14.

²⁵ Buckingham, D. (2014) ‘The Success and Failure of Media Education’, *MERJ*, pp. 10-11.

²⁶ Murdock, G and Golding, P. (2016) ‘Political Economy and Media Production: A Response to Dwyer’, *Media Culture and Society*, 38(5), p. 767.

²⁷ Curran, J (2013) ‘Mickey Mouse Squeaks Back: Defending Media Studies’, *Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association*, [Accessed November 2023].

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Golding, ‘Media Studies in the UK’, p. 507.

³⁰ Murdock and Golding, ‘Media Studies in Question’, p. 55.

many former polytechnic universities positioned themselves as hubs linking the academy with the cultural and creative industries. The hybrid researcher-practitioner position occupied by media scholars enhanced students' command of technical skills and critical approaches to conceptualising and practising media. Further, media and communication policy developed as a research and teaching interest which scrutinised – and continues to scrutinise – the cultural and creative industries themselves.

As John Hartley observes, the introduction of Media Studies in higher education came at a time when many students from working-class backgrounds were the first in their families to enter university.³¹ Research and teaching from across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has nurtured a productive interchange between academia and industry, pioneered by former polytechnics and post-1992 universities, creating opportunities and access for a broader student demographic.

Media Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies scholarship

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies scholarship in the UK has global influence and impact. Almost 80% of research was found to be world-leading or internationally excellent in the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 cycle (which this report will later explore in greater detail).³² Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research is marked by critical and self-reflexive approaches, a dynamic adaptivity to the evolving media, cultural and communication landscape, and a “transformative impact” for diverse or marginalised communities.³³

UK scholarship has produced a significant body of critique-led research which interrogates the reach and influence of media. Indeed, the cultural centrality of the BBC – both in the history of public broadcasting in the UK and its use as a soft power internationally – has itself elicited substantial scholarship. For example, inclusion of post-colonial theory to appraise British media unsettles televised tropes and depictions of the Global South.³⁴ Feminist, race, queer and disability studies, to name only a handful, constitute significant sites of research, learning and teaching across the field, problematising media representation, consumption or production in relation to marginalised and minoritised social groups.

Other approaches include the political economy of media and communications which serves as a critical litmus test of “the diversity and quality of the information, analysis and deliberation produced by major news and current affairs outlets”.³⁵ These examples of scholarship situate media cultures, narratives, histories and policies within broader patterns and structures, drawing attention to power dynamics operationalised by and through media. As such, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research contributes to our understandings of (mis)information, public relations and knowledge sharing, untangling concepts of ‘Fake News’ and post-truth in light of the social, political and economic.

In addition, scholarship across the field is adaptive and malleable, producing or refining frameworks and methodologies in response to rapidly changing social phenomena. As Richard Berger and Julian McDougall highlight, the scope of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has changed even further since the 1990s to engage with and respond to “‘new media’ industries”.³⁶ The internet, digital and emerging global trends in communication, particularly at the turn of the twenty-first century, have demanded new

³¹ Hartley, J. (2004) *Communication, Cultural and Media Studies: The Key Concepts* (Routledge), pp. ix-x.

³² This refers to work submitted to Panel D sub-panels 33 and 34. It should be noted that media, communication, film and/or culture research were submitted to other sub-panels. Chapter 4 in this report explores this in greater detail. REF2021 (May 2022) *Overview Report for Main Panel D and Sub-Panels 25-34*, p. 208.

³⁴ For example: Brunt, R. and Cere, R. (2012) *Postcolonial Media Culture in Britain* (Palgrave Macmillan).

³⁵ Murdock and Golding, ‘Political Economy and Media Production: A Response to Dwyer’, p. 768.

³⁶ Berger R. and McDougall, J. (2012) ‘What is Media Education For?’, MERJ 3(1), p. 7.

conceptualisations of media. The relationship between globalisation and new media or communications – from film and television streaming services and social media platforms to app-based news broadcasting and ‘hashtag’ activism – has dramatically shifted notions of media consumption, production and regulation.

The range of digital technologies and infrastructures that has evolved over the last fifty years has provided new opportunities for media curation and practice by ordinary citizens and social groups. Not only has this transformed traditional directions of influence and engagement with entertainment and broadcasting, shifts in the digital era have changed the means through which humans participate in social and political life.³⁷ Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research has grown in response to these changing patterns of the transmission and consumption of traditional media. Further, ‘interactive’ and ‘virtual media’ offer new opportunities for the exhibition of screen media, including new modes of accessing and engaging with museum collections and film archives that seek to further public understanding of the past.

Finally, addressing the relationship between civic participation and curation, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies presents research avenues which examine local or regional creative practices in the UK.³⁸ There is a transformative and immersive value delivered by research across media, communication, film and culture, particularly for excluded, marginalised and minoritised social groups.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in the UK, encompassing its key characteristics, historical development, and the landscape of scholarship within the field.

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is an inherently interdisciplinary and porous field, which means that disciplinary and departmental categorisations in UK higher education cannot always provide a representative profile. The discipline spans arts, humanities, and social sciences, covering such practices as journalism, cinematics and media production.

What defines the scope of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is constantly evolving, reflecting changes in contemporary society. This reflects the origins of the field, which emerged during a period of growing interest in popular culture and a departure from the traditional notions of ‘high culture’, allowing scholars to question established academic boundaries. This interdisciplinary approach is evident in the shape of the field today, which crosses boundaries between academia and industry, and whose scholarship has challenged traditional academic formats to deliver impact across society.

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in the UK stands as a dynamic and influential discipline that continuously evolves to address contemporary challenges. Indeed, its development has in turn legitimated – and anticipated – attention to media such as film and television within more traditional disciplines across the arts, humanities and social sciences. By tracking the development of the field in the twentieth century and into contemporary provision, this chapter has foregrounded the dynamism of this evolving field which cannot be captured through quantitative data alone.

³⁷ Murdock et al, ‘Political Economy and Media Production: A response’, p. 765.

³⁸ REF2021 (2022) *Overview Report for Main Panel D and Sub-Panels 25-34*, p. 61

2. Student trends

This chapter analyses changes in student numbers in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies through sections on undergraduate and postgraduate study. Analysis of contrasting trends in the field is presented using aggregate and individual subject codes. This chapter also includes a section on diversity and protected characteristics which analyses students by domicile, ethnicity, age, sex and reported disability.

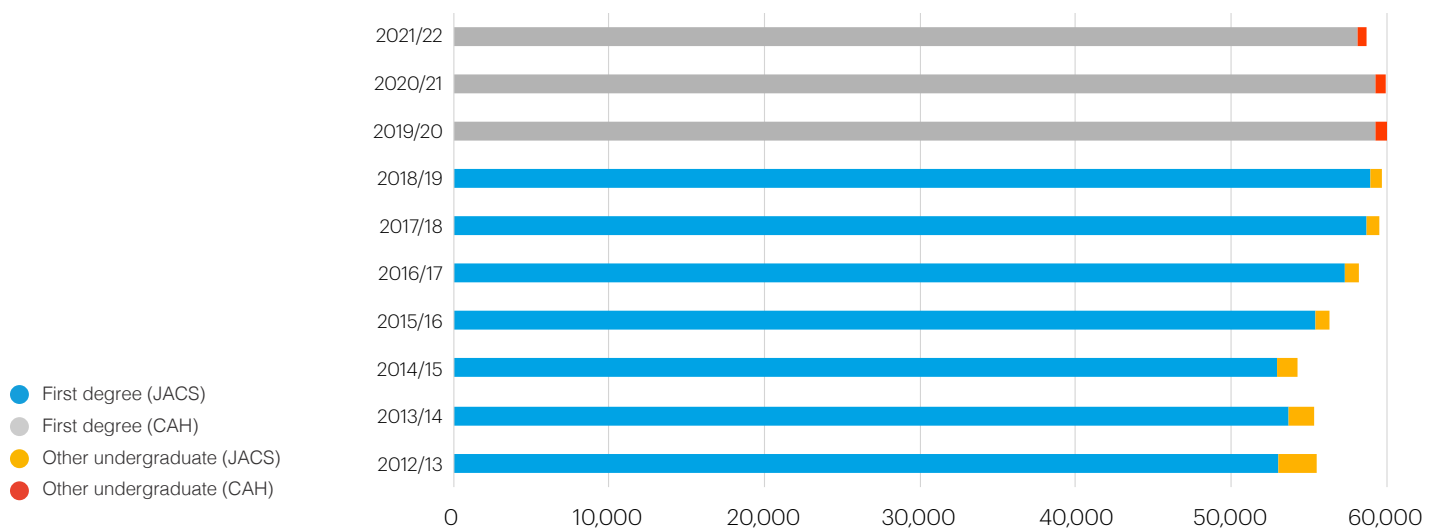
This section uses both JACS and CAH codes for longitudinal analysis of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies.³⁹ Where appropriate, differences in codes are highlighted in the analysis. The term 'Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies' is used for the aggregation of JACS and CAH codes, but when referring to specific, more granular HESA codes, these are referred to by their individual codes, such as '(P3) Media Studies' for JACS and '(24-01-05) Media Studies' for CAH.

Changes in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate study

In 2021/22, there were 58,700 students taking undergraduate degrees in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, studying at 134 (79%) out of the 170 HEIs in the UK. Of these undergraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students, 58,140 were first degree undergraduates and 560 were other undergraduate students. 'Other undergraduate' courses are undergraduate level courses that are not first (bachelor's) degrees and include foundation degrees and diplomas in higher education; a 'first degree' is more commonly known as a bachelor's degree. The 2021/22 undergraduate figure was an increase of 3,160 on the total number of undergraduate students in 2012/13 (55,540), a change of 6%. A longitudinal analysis of the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate HESA data, as shown in Figure 1, shows an overall increase of 7% between 2012/13 and 2018/19. This growth was particularly pronounced from 2015 and may be connected to the lifting of caps on undergraduate courses that year. After the change of HESA coding there was little change from 2019/20 to 2020/21, with a drop of 2% (1,250 students) from 2020/21 to 2021/22. This slight fall was not reflected across SHAPE disciplines where there was an increase in undergraduate numbers of 1% from 2020/21 to 2021/22. The factors that may have contributed to the decline in the last reporting year are explored in later sections.

³⁹ JACS and CAH are the subject coding systems used by HESA. JACS was used between 2012/13 and 2018/19, while CAH has been in use since 2019/20. More detail is provided in [Data sources and methodology](#) at the end of the report.

Figure 1. First degree and 'other undergraduate' students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)

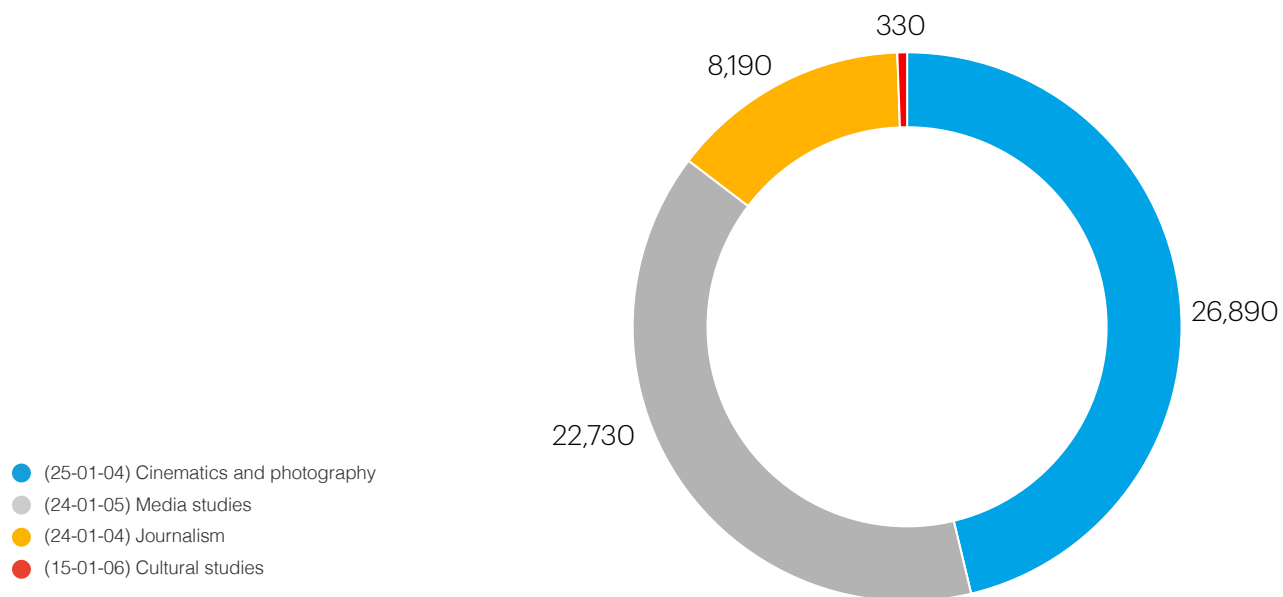


Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate (aggregating both first degree and other undergraduate) enrolments rose from 5% across the SHAPE disciplines in 2012/13 to a 6% share in 2018, but since 2019/20 and the change to CAH coding, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates fell back to 5%, indicating a small decline as an overall proportion of the SHAPE disciplines. The data shows a decrease of 65% in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students taking 'other undergraduate' degrees between 2012/13 and 2015/16, followed by a slower but steady decline up to 2021/22. This broadly reflects the trend across all SHAPE courses during this time. The fall in other undergraduate numbers has implications for access, particularly at foundation level and for mature students.

Student recruitment is unevenly spread across the constituent HESA codes that make up the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate. As shown in Figure 2, which takes 2021/22 as a snapshot, a higher proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate students were coded to (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography with 46% of students, while 39% of students were coded to (24-01-05) Media Studies, (24-01-04) Journalism represented 14%, and just 1% of students were coded under (15-01-06) Cultural Studies.

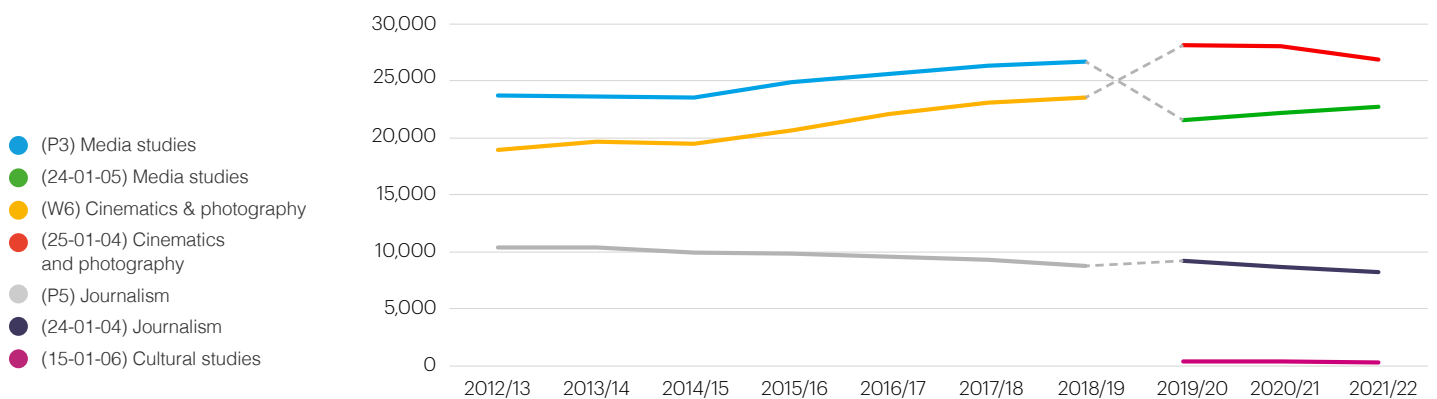
Figure 2. Breakdown of undergraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by subject code, 2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

The longitudinal picture for constituent HESA codes within Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies presents contrasting trends at first degree undergraduate level, as shown in Figure 3. For example, (W6) Cinematics and Photography first degree undergraduates rose by 24% between 2012/13 and 2018/19, but then fell by 5% between 2019/20 and 2021/22 under the code (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography. The change from JACS to CAH codes demonstrates some of the difficulties with the data: the JACS code (W6) Cinematics and Photography listed 23,535 first degree undergraduates in 2018/19 but following the implementation of coding changes, the new CAH code (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography was significantly higher at 28,175 in 2019/20. Other individual Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies HESA codes saw the reverse with JACS (P3) Media Studies at 26,710 in 2018/19 and then CAH (24-01-05) Media Studies at a considerably lower figure of 21,610 in 2019/20. Cinematics and Photography quite strikingly overtook Media Studies as the most common HESA code after the coding change in 2019. A potential reason for this is that course titles within JACS (P3) Media Studies appeared after the coding change in CAH (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography, such as ‘Television Production’, ‘Radio Production’ and ‘Film Production’. It is not possible to track the coding decisions of individual departments, though we can infer that these potentially more production-focused elements were part of the (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography coding with the introduction of the CAH codes. This may account for the spike in first degree undergraduate student numbers under this code and the corresponding fall under the (24-01-05) Media Studies code.

Figure 3. First degree students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by subject code, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

The growth in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies from 2012/13 to 2018/19, as shown in Figure 1, masks a long-term decline in undergraduates studying Journalism, a trend that stretches across both the JACS and CAH Journalism codes, with an overall decrease of 21% since 2012/13. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies growth from 2012/13 to 2018/19 was underpinned by increases for both (W6) Cinematics and Photography and (P3) Media Studies, but since the code change (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography has presented declining numbers in each of the last two reporting years (2020/21 and 2021/22). This trend can also be seen over the same period in (24-01-04) Journalism and (15-01-06) Cultural Studies.

Changes at Levels 2 and 3

This report does not fully address pre-18 education trends, but it is worth noting issues that may impact Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students entering higher education. The finding in the previous section that Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate students rose overall between 2012/13 and 2021/22 contrasts with data for levels 2 and 3 across the UK which, for everywhere except Scotland, shows many years of falling entry for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies related courses. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the total student entries for both GCSE (level 2) and A level (level 3) for courses categorised under 'Media/Film/TV Studies' have decreased over the last 12 years. This occurred over a period that saw overall GCSE and A level entries across all subjects increase by 13% and 1%, respectively. GCSE entries for Media/Film/TV Studies fell from 61,680 in 2012 to 35,812 in 2023, a decrease of 42%. A level entries fell from 32,111 to 23,193, a decrease of 28%. This downward trend generated responses and recommendations from media educationalists,⁴⁰ and there are signs that this trend may be reversing: in 2023 both GCSE and A level Media/Film/TV Studies entries rose by 5% at GCSE level and 10% at A level. This suggests a positive outlook for the subject.

By contrast, entries for 'Media' at Scottish National 5s and Scottish Highers increased from 2014 when new revised qualifications were introduced. The numbers of students studying Media at National 5s increased more than fivefold, growing from 254 in 2014 to 1,300 in 2023, while at Highers level, Media entries more than doubled, increasing from 587 in 2017 to 1,280 in 2023. This is a striking contrast to the trends across the rest of the UK. It is beyond the scope of this study to further analyse school entries for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, but the decrease outside Scotland does not seem to have had a noticeable knock-on

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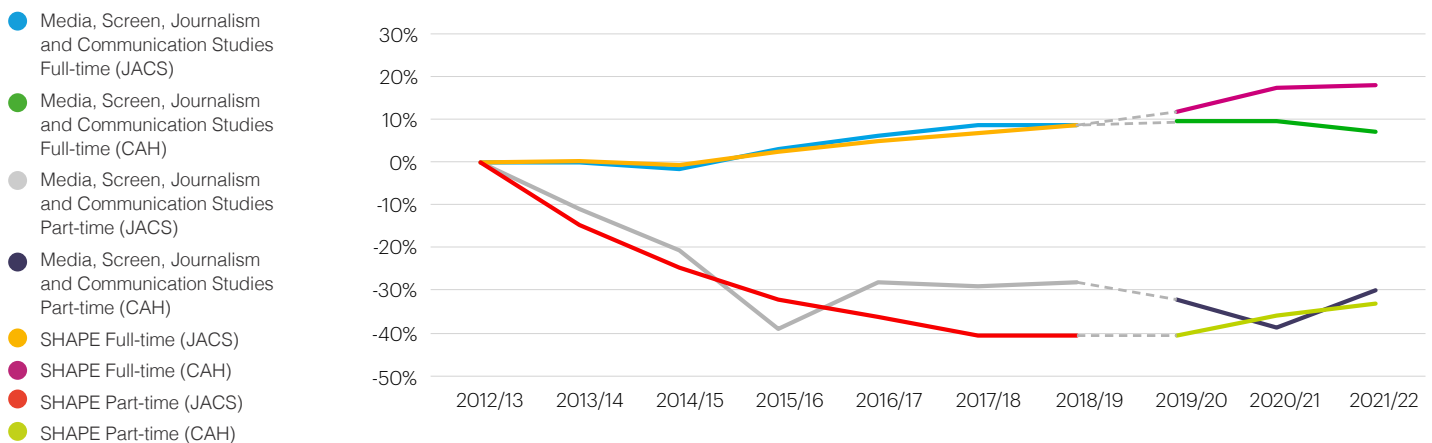
Campbell, R. (2022) 'MEA survey into decreasing numbers of students taking Media Studies', *The Media Education Association* [Accessed January 2024]; and Buckingham, *The Media Education Manifesto*.

effect in higher education provision since undergraduate numbers have grown and remained stable since 2015, even accounting for a delay between levels 2 and 3 qualifications and entering higher education.

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates by mode of study

Within the cohorts of undergraduates comprising the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies since 2012/13, the patterns for those studying full-time and part-time broadly reflect the patterns in the aggregated data for the SHAPE disciplines as demonstrated in Figure 4. Between 2012/13 and 2018/19, full-time undergraduates across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies rose by 9%, while part-time undergraduates fell by 28%. The drop in part-time study reflects a wider decrease across higher education. However, analysis from 2019/20 to 2021/22 shows that Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies full-time students fell by three percentage points. During the same period, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies part-time students fell in 2020/21, but increased in 2021/22 – this rise, with the accompanying drop in full-time students, may have been influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic with more students choosing part-time provision.

Figure 4. Percentage change in full-time and part-time undergraduate students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)

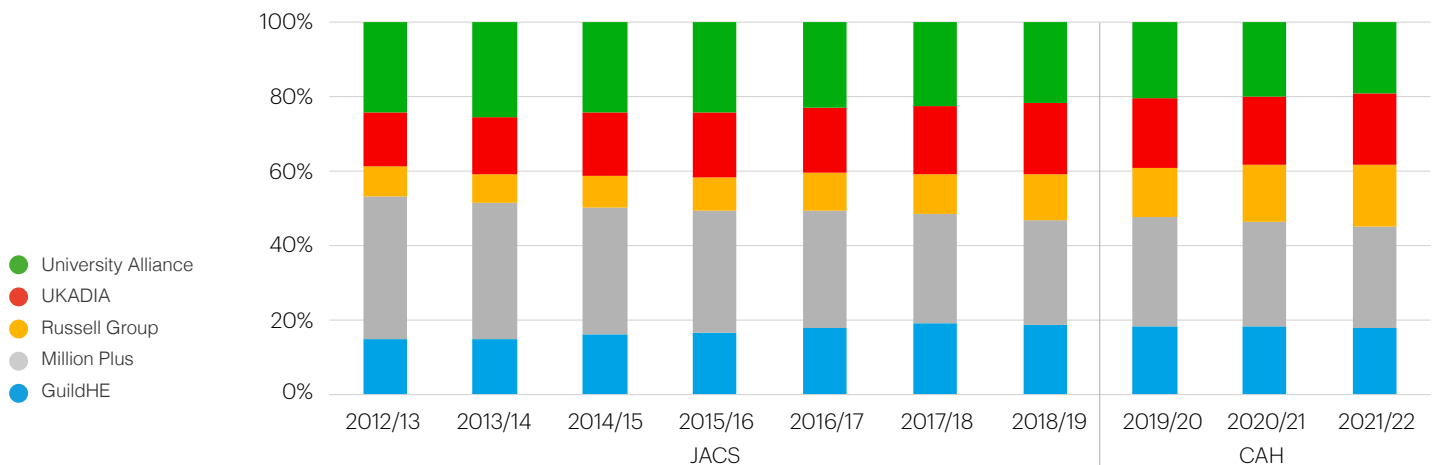


Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate higher education institutions

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies courses are provided at a broad range of HEIs, as demonstrated in Figure 5, which shows the proportion of undergraduate students attending institutions affiliated with UK mission groups since 2012/13. It should be noted that some institutions are not in a mission group, while a few are in more than one of the five included in HESA data – for example, Falmouth University, which had the fourth highest number of first degree Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates, is in both GuildHE and UKADIA. For context, GuildHE represents smaller specialist HEIs, Million Plus represents newer ‘modern’ universities, the Russell Group represents research intensive universities, UKADIA represents specialist art and design institutions, and University Alliance represents a group of professional and technical universities. While acknowledging its limitations, mission group data allows for analysis of institutions by their varying emphases and certain shared characteristics. Trends in mission group student numbers can have implications for student access and for disciplinary health.

Figure 5. First degree students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by Higher Education Institute mission group, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



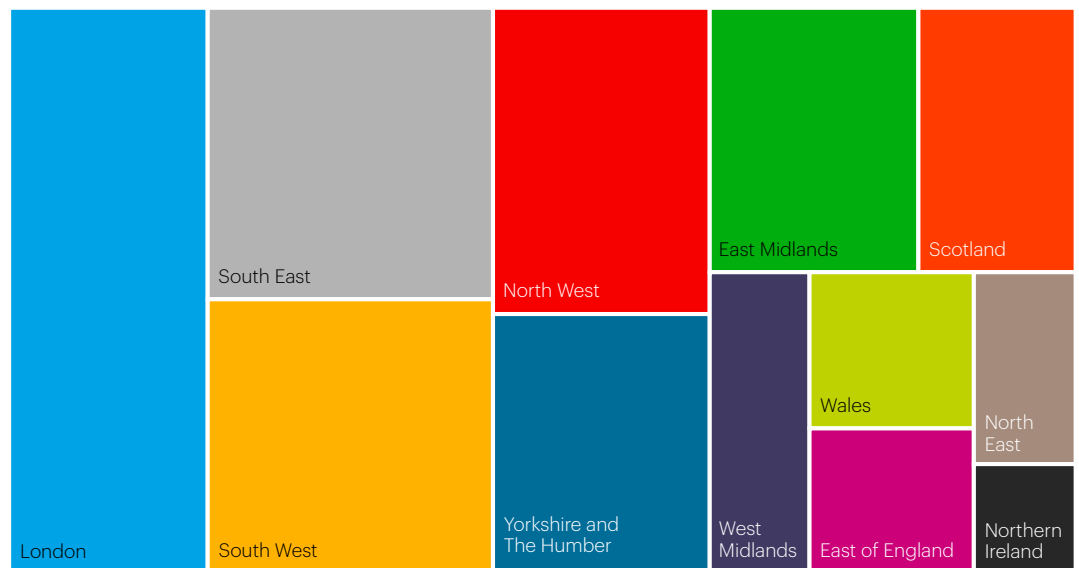
Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

While Million Plus institutions had the largest share of students within institutions in a mission group (27%) in 2021/22, the other groups had significant shares ranging between 17% and 19%. Figure 5 shows that the proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate undergraduates enrolled at a Russell Group institution increased from 8% to 17% from 2012/13 to 2021/22; there have been no new members to the Russell Group during this period, so this suggests an increasing market share for this mission group. In contrast, MillionPlus has seen a decrease from 39% to 27% and the University Alliance from 24% to 19%. While different mission groups are relatively well represented in terms of first degree student numbers, this longitudinal data suggests a long-term trend with the Russell Group growing its provision while other mission groups have experienced decreasing enrolments at undergraduate level.

Regions of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies higher education institutions at undergraduate level

Figure 6 shows the regional spread of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students in 2021/22. At undergraduate level (aggregating both first degree and other undergraduate), nearly one third (32%) of students were at universities in regions in the south east of England, particularly in London (19%) and the South East (14%). The proportion for SHAPE aggregated disciplines for London was lower at 14%, while the South East was higher at 19%. It should be noted that this data does not account for students who do not live in the region of their HEI provide and that the SHAPE data for the South East includes all SHAPE undergraduates in England studying at the Open University (6% of the total for SHAPE undergraduates in the UK), a distance learning university. The 19% figure for SHAPE undergraduates in the South East is therefore likely to be unrepresentative of where students live. Nonetheless, these figures indicate a concentration of SHAPE undergraduates in southeastern England. The Open University did not return any students for the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies at undergraduate level in 2021/22, suggesting that the southeastern concentration of students may be even more acute for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates.

Figure 6. Undergraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students by region of Higher Education Institution, 2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Another notable indication in the SHAPE aggregate data is the lower proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates at Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh HEIs – 13% for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and 17% across SHAPE. The North West is the fourth highest region with 11% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates, reflecting the significant media industry in cities such as Manchester – the University of Salford and Manchester Metropolitan University were both in the top ten HEIs for the most Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates in 2021/22, as demonstrated in Table 1.

Nonetheless, the high proportion of provision in London (a trend that will be shown to be even more pronounced at postgraduate level), and the southern regions of England, has implications for access in other parts of the UK.

Table 1. Higher Education Institutions with the largest number of undergraduate students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2021/22 (FPE)

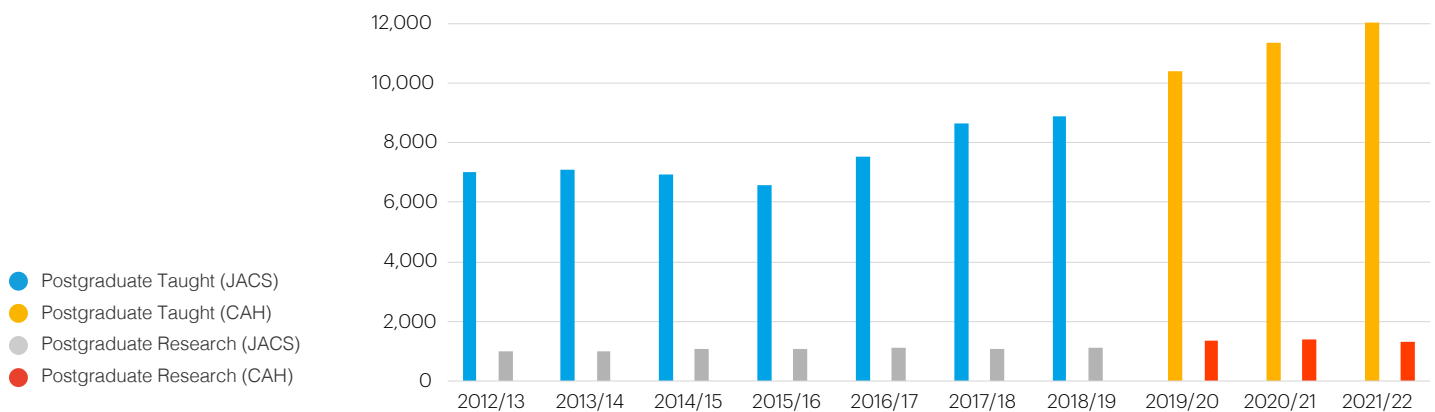
HEI	Region	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate students
University of the Arts, London	London	2,370
The University of Salford	North West	1,945
The Nottingham Trent University	East Midlands	1,710
Falmouth University	South West	1,475
Bournemouth University	South West	1,290
The Manchester Metropolitan University	North West	1,250
University for the Creative Arts	South East	1,205
University of the West of England, Bristol	South West	1,200
The Arts University Bournemouth	South West	1,070
The University of Brighton	South East	1,045

Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Changes in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate study

In 2021/22, there were 13,340 postgraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students in the UK. 12,025 (90%) of these were at postgraduate taught level and 1,310 (10%) were postgraduate research students. In contrast to the mixed landscape at undergraduate level, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught student numbers have nearly doubled from 2012/13 to 2021/22, as illustrated in Figure 7.

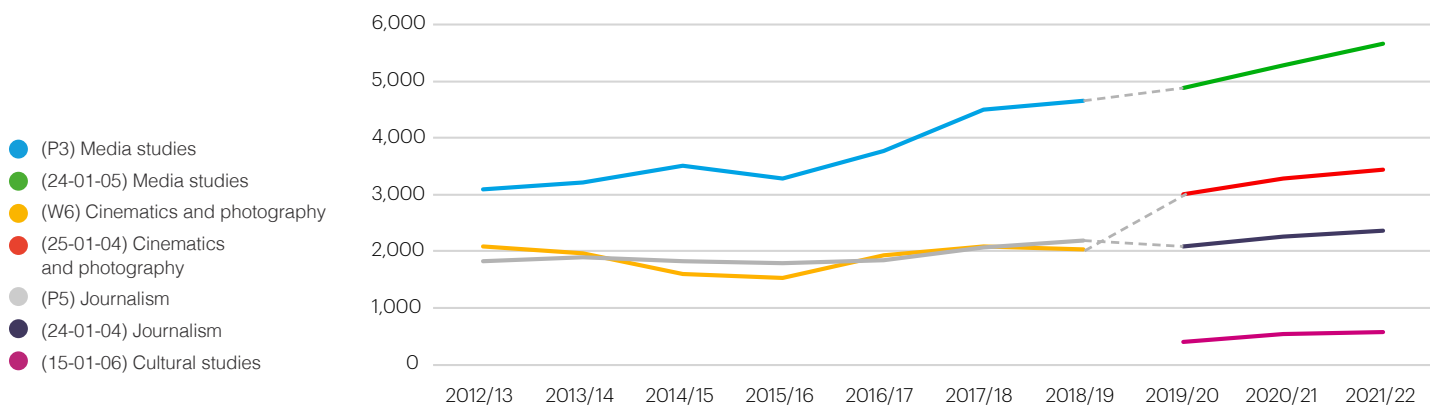
Figure 7. Number of postgraduate students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

The numbers at postgraduate level for SHAPE aggregated disciplines also experienced growth over the same period but often not at as high a rate as Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate levels. In 2021/22, (24-01-05) Media Studies coded students made up 47% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students – (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography was the second highest at 29%, (24-01-04) Journalism was third at 20%, and (15-01-06) Cultural Studies students made up the remaining 5%. Between 2012/13 and 2021/22, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students increased by 72%, compared to an increase of 45% across all SHAPE disciplines. The growth of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies taught provision is partly explained by an expansion of students coded under (P3) Media Studies which increased by 50% from 2012/13 to 2018/19, as reflected in the number of postgraduate taught students shown in Figure 8. Student numbers for both (W6) Cinematics and Photography and (P5) Journalism saw little change during these years. Both these codes grew between 2019/20 and 2021/22, as did (24-01-05) Media Studies. The growth in Journalism postgraduate taught students contrasts with the decrease at undergraduate level, suggesting shifts in provision and possibly student demand.

Figure 8. Postgraduate taught students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by subject code, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)

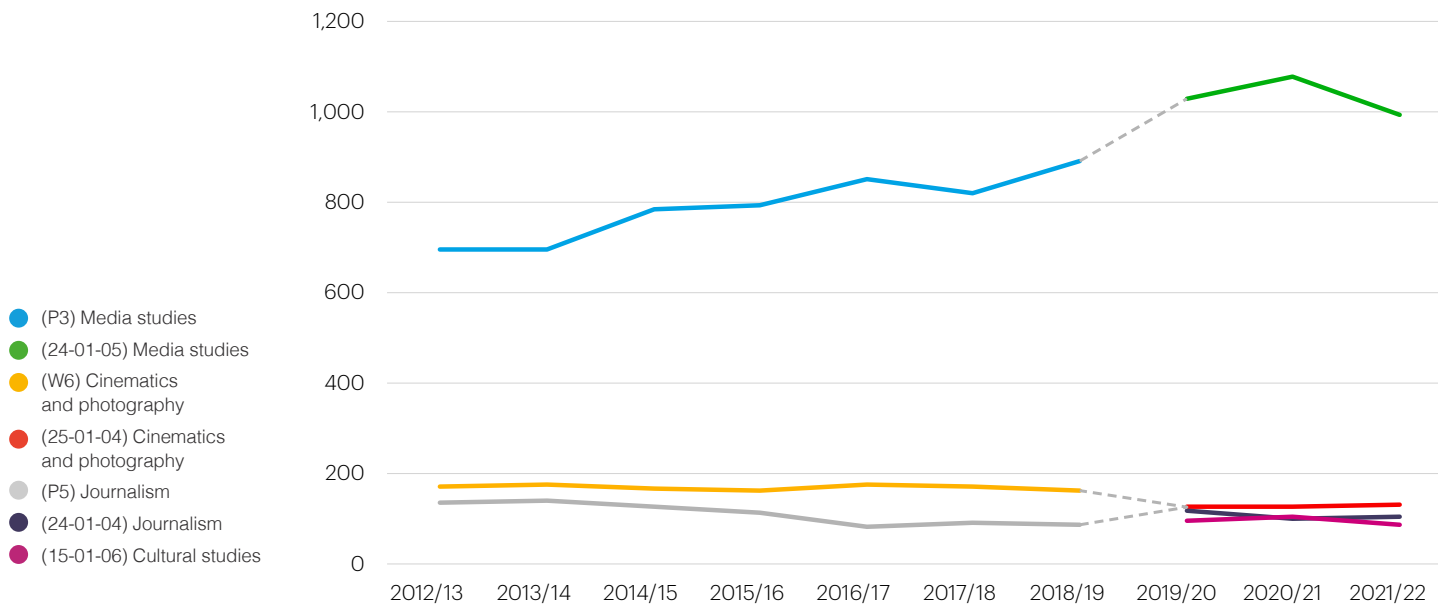


Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Postgraduate research student numbers, shown below in Figure 9, grew from 1,000 in 2012/13 to 1,310 in 2021/22, an increase of 31%, which is above the increase of 1% for postgraduate research students in the aggregated SHAPE disciplines. A longitudinal analysis shows varying periods of growth and reduction of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate research students, with an increase of 14% between 2012/13 and 2018/19, followed by a decrease of 4% between 2019/20 and 2021/22. The increase between 2012/13 and 2018/19 at Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate research level was concentrated in (P3) Media Studies – rising from 695 in 2012/13 to 890 in 2018/19, an increase of 28%. These growth rates mask decreases in student numbers in both (W6) Cinematics and Photography, which fell from 170 in 2012/13 to 160 in 2018/19, and (P5) Journalism which declined from 135 in 2012/13 to 90 in 2018/19. Postgraduate research students coded under (24-01-05) Media Studies made up 76% (with 995 students) of the total for the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in 2021/22. Postgraduate research student numbers declined from 2019/20 to 2021/22 for (24-01-04) Journalism (-12%) and (15-01-06) Cultural Studies (-13%), while (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography increased by 4% though numbers were low at 130. The SHAPE aggregate postgraduate research numbers grew by 5% from 2019/20 to 2021/22.

The overall decrease in the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in the last three years and longer-term declines in Cinematics and Photography and Journalism at the postgraduate research level suggest issues for the field if this trend continues, presenting challenges to the academic pipeline and the long-term provision of these courses.

Figure 9. Postgraduate research students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by subject code, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)

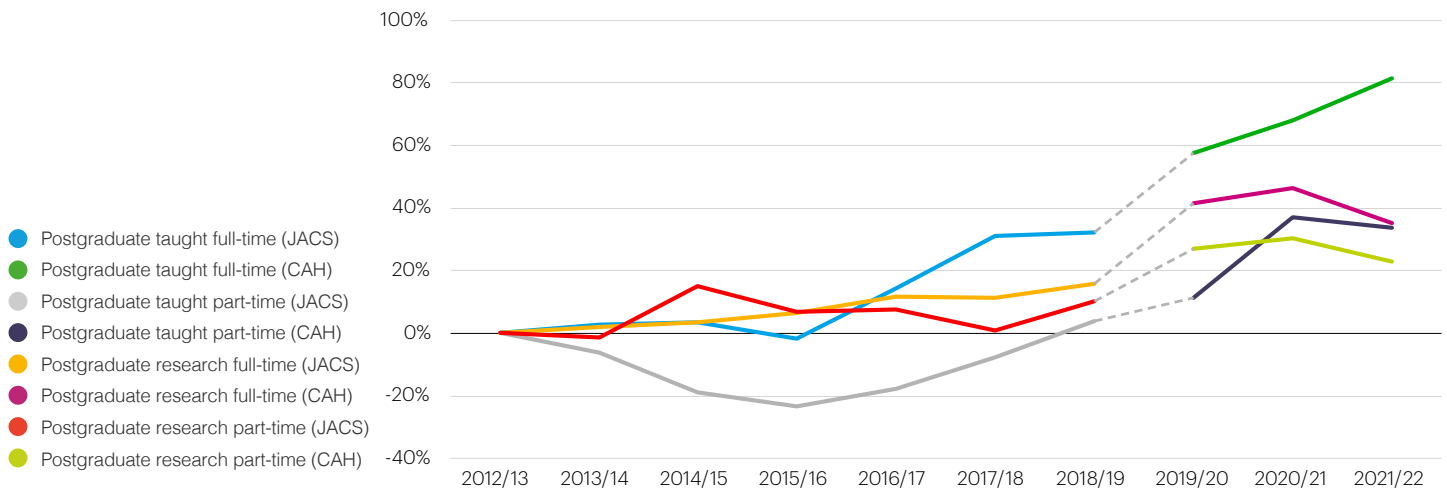


Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Postgraduates by mode of study

In line with the rises in postgraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students since 2016/17, Figure 10 shows growth in both full-time and part-time students across the same period as shown in Figure 7. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught full-time students rose from 8,790 in 2019/20 to 10,125 in 2021/22, an increase of 15% – a percentage point lower than the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate growth between 2019/20 and 2021/22. After several years of declining numbers, part-time postgraduate taught students rose from 1,585 to 1,900 from 2019/20 to 2021/22, an increase of 20%. The spike in growth in 2020/21 may be due to the Covid-19 pandemic in addition to the trend in previous years with more students undertaking Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught part-time degrees. Postgraduate research Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students – both full-time and part-time – increased from 2012/13 to 2018/19 by 16% and 10% respectively, but since the HESA coding change in 2019 both have fallen year on year. Full-time postgraduate research students have fallen from 920 to 875 (-4%) and part-time from 450 to 435 (-3%) from 2019/20 to 2021/22 – both at similar rates to the aggregate fall of 4% for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate research students. The analysis of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate full-time and part-time data shows that full-time taught programmes are in good health; however, the data in 2021/22 suggests that the growth of part-time taught and both full-time and part-time research study may be slowing.

Figure 10. Percentage change in full-time and part-time postgraduate students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)

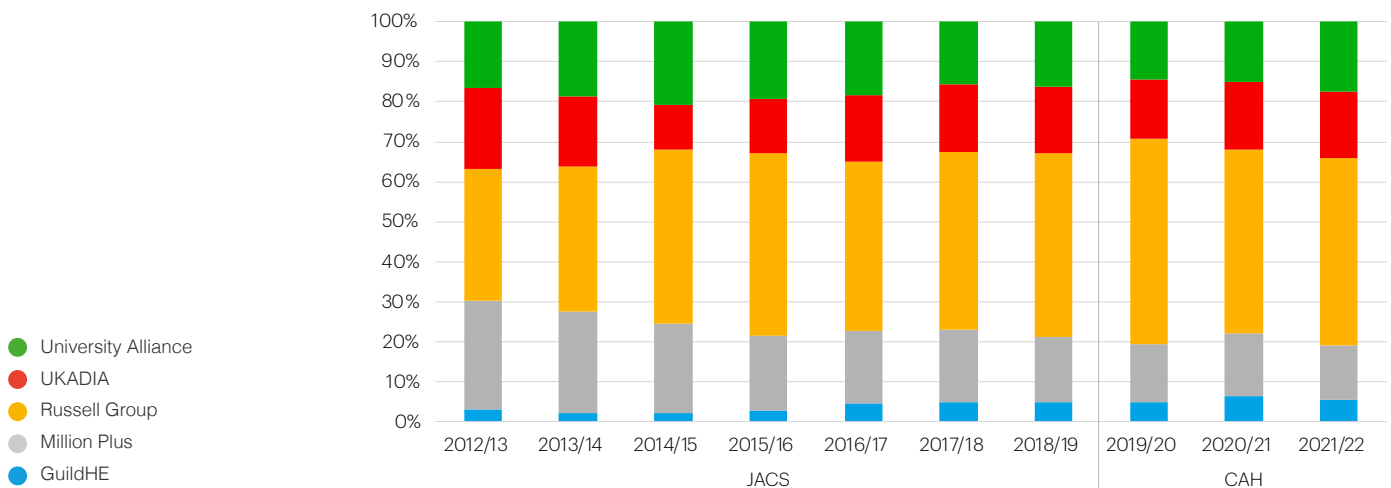


Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate higher education institutions

Longitudinal analysis of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students by institutional mission group shows a contrasting profile with that at undergraduate level which saw students fairly evenly spread between each of the five mission groups available for analysis in HESA. As Figure 11 demonstrates, the Russell Group universities are much more prominent at postgraduate level with 47% of students in 2021/22. The Russell Group share of postgraduate taught students rose by 15 percentage points on the 2012/13 figure of 33%. The Million Plus group of HEIs decreased its share from 27% to 13% over the same period. While Figure 11 only includes students at an institution in one of the five mission groups, it does show significant expansion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies provision at postgraduate taught level by Russell Group universities and this may be a driving factor behind the growing numbers in recent years at this level.

Figure 11. Postgraduate taught students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by Higher Education Institute mission group, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Russell Group institutions in 2021/22 had a much higher proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate students – 37%, considerably higher than University Alliance with just 15% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students at postgraduate level, as shown in Table 2. Four Russell Group HEIs – Cambridge, Imperial, LSE and Oxford – only offer Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies provision at postgraduate level (all under the (24-01-05) Media Studies code). As four of the ‘Golden Triangle’ HEIs, regularly placing very highly in the UK university league tables, this may suggest a certain prestige attached to postgraduate study of the field that may not be found at undergraduate level. In addition, tuition fees are higher at postgraduate level and there are more international students, whose fees are higher than UK national students at this level.

Table 2. Mission groups by percentage of undergraduate and postgraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies (FPE)

Mission group	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies student level		
	Undergraduate	Postgraduate taught	Postgraduate research
GuildHE	94%	6%	0%
Million Plus	90%	8%	1%
UKADIA	86%	14%	0%
University Alliance	84%	14%	1%
Russell Group	63%	33%	4%

Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

The proportion of postgraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students at a GuildHE institution was 6% in 2021/22, or 410 students (in contrast to a 18% share – and 7,020 students – at undergraduate level in the same year). Only two GuildHE institutions had more than 40 Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students: Falmouth University and Arts University Bournemouth. It is worth noting that only a limited number of GuildHE institutions are able to award research degrees, which may explain the lower numbers of students in this cohort. A majority of GuildHE Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students are coded under (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography: 73% at undergraduate level and 80% at postgraduate taught. In contrast, at Russell Group institutions a much lower proportion of students are coded under (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography: 20% at undergraduate and 14% at postgraduate taught. The most common code for this mission group was (24-01-05) Media Studies.

This data suggests two things: that Russell Group HEIs are increasing their numbers of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students and these students are more often coded under (24-01-05) Media Studies, rather than the (possibly) more production-focused (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography. This might suggest a growing division in patterns of provision between practice and non-practice based training in the wider field of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies.

Regions of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies higher education institutions at postgraduate level

One third of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students (33%) were enrolled at London-based HEIs in 2021/22, a significant increase on the 19% figure for undergraduate students as shown in Figure 12. The Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught proportion for London was also higher than for the SHAPE aggregate equivalent of 22%. The high proportion for London reflects the capital's

significance for UK creative industries and media. The city is home to long-standing hubs for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies such as City University, London School of Economics and Political Science and the University of the Arts – which respectively have the highest numbers of postgraduate taught students for (24-01-04) Journalism, (24-01-05) Media Studies and (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography – as well as institutions like the BFI and the BBC. Other HEIs in the South East such as the National Film and Television School (which had the third highest number of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students) in Beaconsfield have campuses in the London ‘orbit’.⁴¹ The South East had the second highest proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students at 12% and Yorkshire and the Humber was third at 10%. Northern Irish, Welsh and Scottish HEIs account for 16% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students, with the equivalent of SHAPE aggregate taught students at 20%. Welsh HEIs account for 6% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students, a percentage point higher than the SHAPE aggregate figure.

Figure 12. Postgraduate taught Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students by region of Higher Education Institution, 2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

For postgraduate research, London HEIs account for 21% of students. By comparison, institutions from the South West only account for 3% of postgraduate research students, which is much lower than for other levels of study (13% for undergraduate and 8% at postgraduate taught). Scotland has higher proportions at postgraduate level (9% for taught and 10% for research) than undergraduate (7%), suggesting a stronger appeal to study in Scotland at an advanced level where there are strong specialist programmes for postgraduate study. Scotland is the fourth most popular region for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate students when combining taught and research with 1,215 students, behind Yorkshire and the Humber (1,400), the South East (1,635) and London (4,205).

While London looms large in the analysis, Yorkshire and the Humber and the East Midlands are two other regions that have a higher proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students than the equivalent figures in the SHAPE aggregate student data, indicating healthy provision of the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies field in these areas. The high proportion at both postgraduate levels at London and South East HEIs indicates the pull of these regions for students but also a challenge for other parts of the UK in attracting postgraduate students. This could have a knock-on effect on department sizes and the local media industries.

Diversity and protected characteristics of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies at undergraduate and postgraduate levels

Indicators are available for a range of student characteristics, including domicile, ethnicity, sex and age. Socioeconomic markers, for example, POLAR regions or access to Free School Meals, are not available in HESA data and are not included in this analysis. Analysis of trends in this data allows us to provide profiles of the demography of students attracted to the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies field and how this may be changing as the political, policy, education and economic landscapes evolve.

Domicile of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students

HESA records student domicile, meaning a student's normal place of residence before they start their course which allows analysis of incoming international students rather than analysis only by nationality.

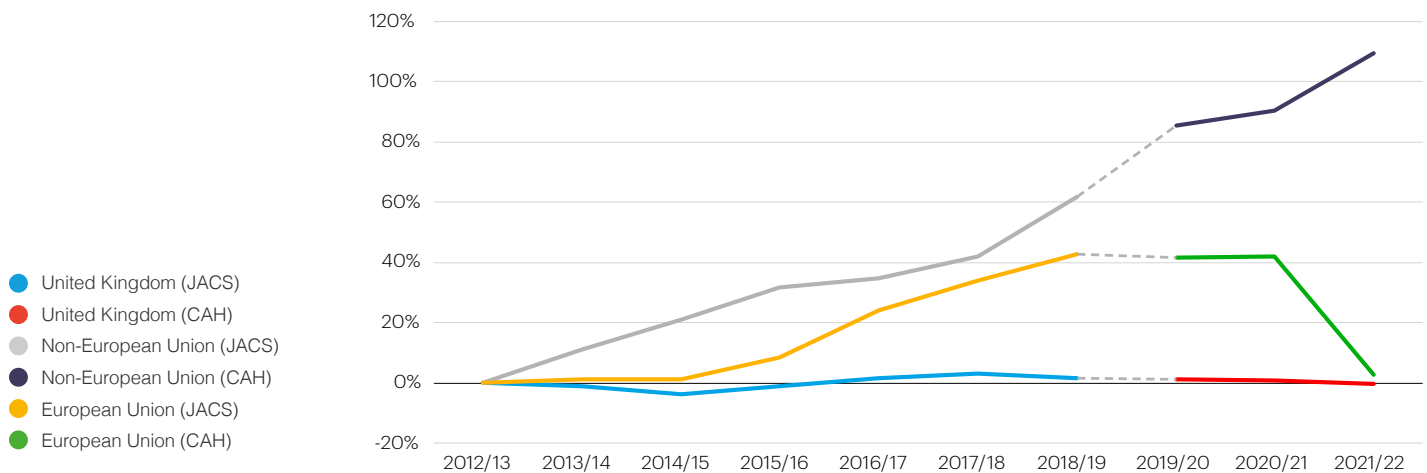
Domicile of undergraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students

In 2021/22, UK domiciled students made up 83% of undergraduates from the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. The remaining undergraduate population consisted of non-EU domiciled students (10%) and EU domiciled students (6%). This is broadly similar to the domicile data for undergraduate across SHAPE which indicates there were 11% non-EU domiciled and 4% EU domiciled. The number of non-EU domiciled Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates in 2021/22 rose 109% in comparison to 2012/13, as demonstrated in Figure 13. A striking drop is discernible for EU domiciled undergraduates in 2021/22, falling by 28% from 5,010 in the previous year to 3,635. This reflects a decrease across UK higher education for EU domiciled students in 2021/22; the decline in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies was slightly steeper than the 23% decrease across the SHAPE disciplines. 2021/22 was the first year that students from the EU were no longer eligible for the same fees as UK nationals. This is a concern for the field, also reflecting sector-wide data suggesting that international diversity is decreasing across the UK student body.⁴² This may be the major factor, returning to Figure 1, accounting for the overall drop in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates in 2021/22.

The percentage changes for UK domiciled students have not been substantial in either the JACS or the CAH coding periods. However, if we look at UK domiciled undergraduates at both first degree and other undergraduate levels, the former saw an overall increase of 4% from 2012/13 to 2021/22. This contrasted with a significant fall in other undergraduate numbers, which were overwhelmingly UK domiciled (92% in 2012).

⁴² Jaye, P. (October 2023) 'International diversity 'declining on UK campuses'', *Times Higher Education* [accessed February 2024].

Figure 13. Percentage change of undergraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by domicile, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Regarding the domicile of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates by region, the region with the highest number of internationally domiciled students (3,275) and the highest proportion (30%) studying at its HEIs was London. The next highest were the North East (21%) and East of England (19%), while the lowest were the North West and South West (both at 9%) and Northern Ireland (4%).

This gives a flavour of the varying proportions of international Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students studying in the different areas of the UK, with the possibility that an individual undertaking a Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduate degree in London may be part of a rather different cohort profile on this indicator than someone studying in Northern Ireland. The region in 2021/22 with the highest proportion (11%) of EU domiciled Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates was Scotland, though this figure has fallen from 15% in 2019/20, which may reflect historic high levels of EU domiciled students in Scotland as EU nationals did not have to pay tuition fees until 2021/22.

Domicile of postgraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students

At postgraduate taught level in 2021/22, there were fewer UK domiciled students (46%) than internationally domiciled students (54%). 49% of the total postgraduate taught students were non-EU domiciled and 5% were EU domiciled. The corresponding figures across SHAPE courses at postgraduate taught levels were 51% UK domiciled, 45% non-EU domiciled, and 3% EU domiciled.

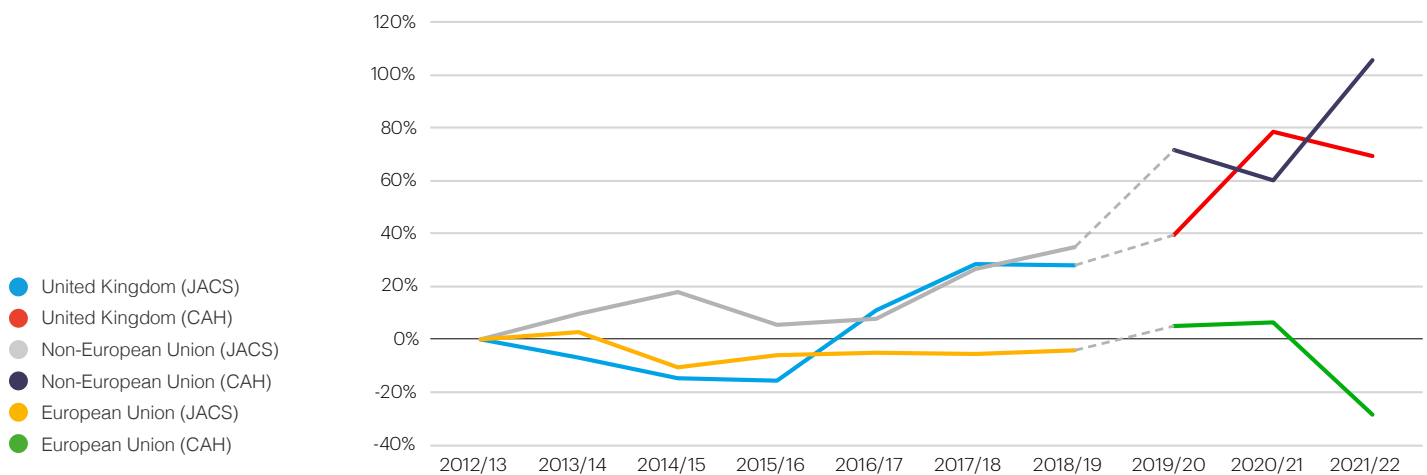
Both UK and non-EU domiciled categories for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students have seen significant growth, particularly between 2019/20 and 2021/22 as demonstrated in Figure 14 - an expansion of 21% for UK domiciled postgraduate taught students and a 20% increase for non-EU domiciled students over this three year period. The high proportion of internationally domiciled students at postgraduate taught level, who are more likely to be paying higher fees, could put the field at risk if the UK government seeks to limit the numbers of international students.⁴³ EU domiciled students saw little change up to 2021/22 when student numbers fell by 33% on the previous year from 935 to 630 – with the latter substantially lower than the EU domiciled postgraduate taught

⁴³

The government announced new rules in 2023 to restrict international students bringing dependants to the UK.

students in 2012/13. This was a slightly higher percentage fall than the 29% drop for the SHAPE postgraduate taught aggregate for 2020/21 to 2021/22. As Figure 14 shows, the fall in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies EU domiciled in 2021/22 is closely mirrored and partly offset by a 28% increase in non-EU domiciled students over the same period. As a proportion of all Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students, EU domiciled students declined from 13% in 2012/13 to just 5% in 2021/22. In the context of the UK's departure from the EU and the resulting increase in fees for EU nationals, this may indicate a significant reduction in the appeal for EU nationals to study in the UK.

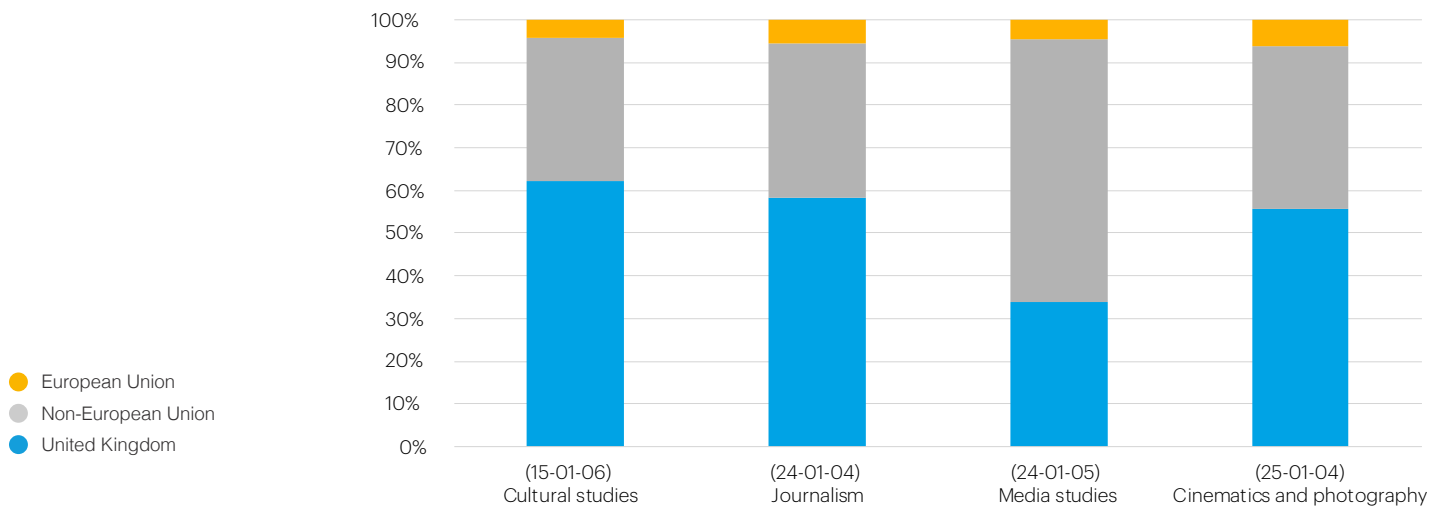
Figure 14. Percentage change of postgraduate taught students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by domicile, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

An analysis of postgraduate taught students' domicile by individual codes within the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate, as shown in Figure 15, shows that (24-01-05) Media Studies has a significantly higher portion of non-EU students (62%) than the other three codes. It is also the only code in the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate to have more internationally-domiciled students than UK domiciled. All four HESA codes contrast with the SHAPE aggregate for postgraduate taught students which has 48% internationally domiciled – with (24-01-05) Media Studies much more international and the other three codes having a higher proportion of UK domiciled. The (24-01-05) Media Studies code's proportion of internationally domiciled at this level is similar to disciplines such as Management Studies and Linguistics. This also links to the earlier analysis of Russell Group HEIs that are seeing success in expanding their Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught provision, the implication being that expansion is being driven partly by international fees.

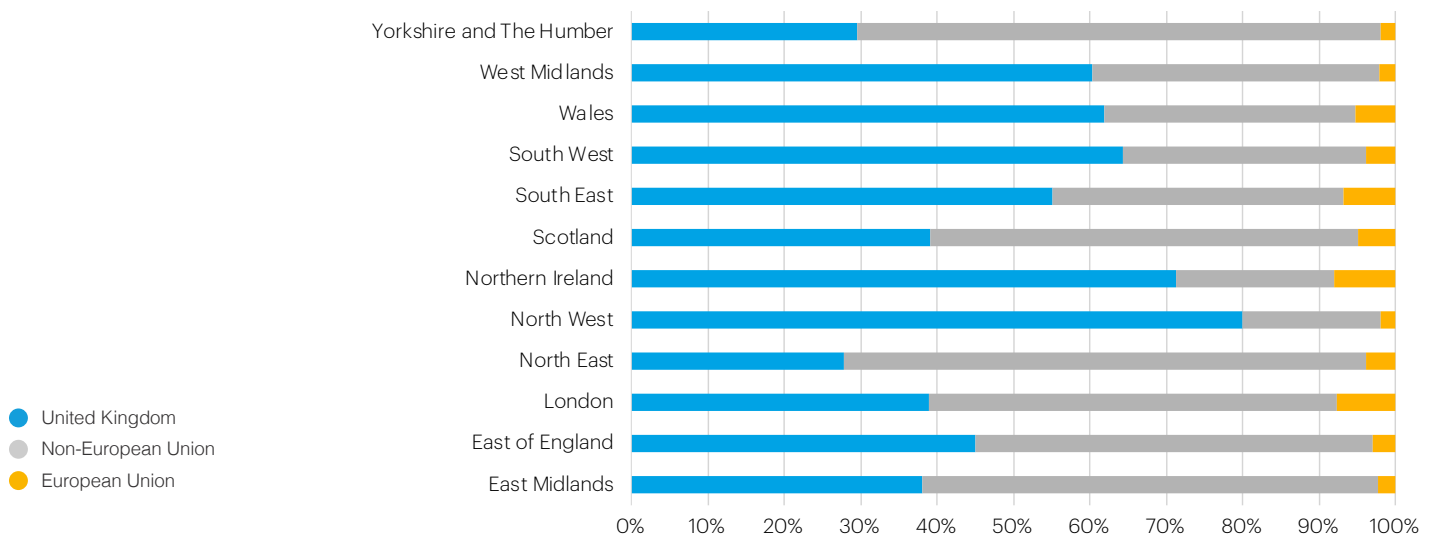
Figure 15. Domicile of postgraduate taught students by Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies subject code, 2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

The proportion of postgraduate taught Media Studies aggregate students varied by the nation and region in the UK as shown in Figure 16. Just over three-fifths of the 3,930 students at London based HEIs were internationally domiciled. In contrast to the analysis of undergraduate Media Studies students, at postgraduate taught level six of the 12 regions had at least 50% of students with an international domicile. The North West and Northern Ireland were similarly two of the regions with the lowest proportion of international students. The highest proportions of international students were in Yorkshire and the Humber and the North East.

Figure 16. Postgraduate taught students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by region of study and domicile, 2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

As listed in Table 3, the ten HEIs with the highest numbers of internationally domiciled Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students accounted for 47% of all internationally domiciled students. These HEIs were largely in major cities, with four in London, two in Scotland and two in Yorkshire and the Humber, indicating that HEIs outside of major cities may face a challenge in attracting international students at postgraduate level. Some major UK cities were not well represented in the data on this indicator, such as Birmingham and Manchester.

Table 3. Higher Education Institutions with the largest number of postgraduate taught students domiciled outside of the UK in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2021/22 (FPE).

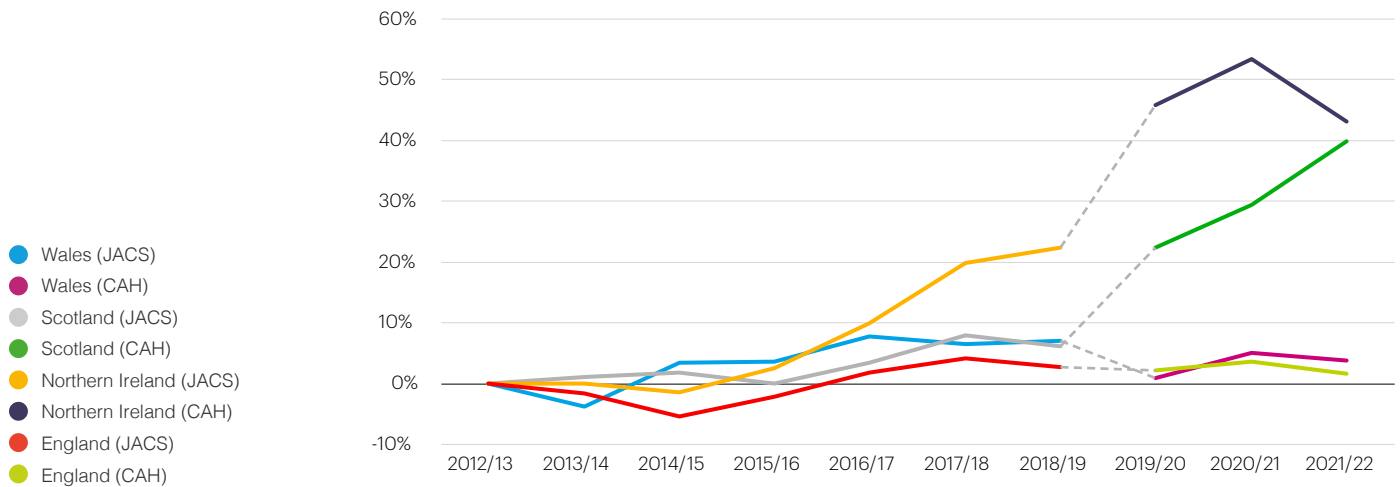
HEI	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students domiciled outside the UK
University of the Arts, London	585
London School of Economics and Political Science	360
Goldsmiths College	335
The University of Leeds	305
The University of Sheffield	290
The University of Westminster	280
The University of Southampton	245
The University of Edinburgh	230
The University of Leicester	210
The University of Glasgow	190

Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

In 2021/22, 65% of postgraduate research students were domiciled in the UK; a lower proportion than undergraduate, but a higher proportion than postgraduate taught. 28% were non-EU domiciled, while 7% were EU domiciled. EU domiciled postgraduate research students decreased by 30% on the 2012/13 figure. The growth for the same period for UK domiciled students (40%) and for non-EU domiciled students (37%) was not as substantial as the percentage change for postgraduate taught students.

Domicile by constituent UK nations

HESA data provides for analysis of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students domiciled in the UK by the four constituent parts of the UK. In 2021/22, 85% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students at all levels were domiciled in England, 7% in Scotland, 5% in Wales and 3% in Northern Ireland – it should be noted that this does not mean that someone domiciled in England was studying at an English HEI. Figure 17 demonstrates that strong percentage increases in recent years occurred in Northern Ireland and Scotland. The total number of students domiciled in Northern Ireland is small (at 1,605 in 2021/22) and changes appear to be more striking; by coding periods there was an increase of 22% between 2012/13 and 2018/19 but a fall of 2% from 2019/20 to 2021/22. The proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students from Scotland rose by 14% between 2019/20 and 2021/22 (from 3,220 to 3,680), above the percentage increase of 10% for SHAPE aggregate Scottish domiciled students. This increase may be associated with rising enrolments at Levels 2 and 3 in Scottish schools. The data for students from England and Wales has been below the growth at all levels for SHAPE aggregate courses between 2019/20 and 2021/22 – English domiciled Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students fell by 1%, while the SHAPE aggregate had an increase of 9%; Welsh domiciled Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students increased by 3%, below the 6% increase for the SHAPE aggregate. This may be associated with the long-term fall in enrolments in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies related courses at GCSE and A level in these three parts of the UK.

Figure 17. Percentage change of UK domiciled students across all levels of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)

Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Ethnicity of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students

The ethnicity data on HESA about UK students is restricted to UK domiciled students. This section analyses HESA's six detailed ethnicity categories: Asian, Black, Mixed, Other, Unknown/not applicable, and White.

Table 4. Proportion of UK domiciled undergraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by ethnicity, 2021/22 (FPE)

Ethnicity	Proportion of UK domiciled undergraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies	Proportion of UK domiciled undergraduate students across SHAPE
Asian	5%	11%
Black	6%	7%
Mixed	6%	5%
Other	1%	2%
Unknown/not applicable	2%	2%
White	80%	73%

Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

As seen in Table 4, the proportions of UK domiciled undergraduate students in the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies differs on several indicators with the data across the SHAPE course codes. Undergraduates who identify as White are a higher proportion in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies with a difference of seven percentage points, while those identifying as Asian make up a larger proportion by six percentage points across the SHAPE disciplines. It is beyond the scope of this report to investigate courses across the SHAPE data, but there is wide variance in the ethnicity data across different course codes with Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies figures more comparable to the humanities than to the social sciences. Over time we are seeing the ethnic identification of students from the field moving closer towards the pattern across SHAPE disciplines. Between 2012/13 and 2021/22, first degree Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students who identified as Asian rose by a percentage point from 4% to 5%. Students who

identify as Mixed rose from 4% in 2012/13 to 5% by 2019/20, and rose to 6% between 2019/20 and 2021/22. The proportion of students identifying as White fell from 83% to 81% from 2012/13 to 2019/20 and declined by another percentage point from 2019/20 to 2021/22. Students identifying as White was the only category to fall in absolute terms between 2019/20 and 2021/22, decreasing by three percentage points during this period. There was an increase of 76% during 2019/20 and 2021/22 for those who selected Unknown/not applicable which suggests either that the identifiers are increasingly unsuitable or a reluctance to self-identify.

Table 5. Proportion of UK domiciled postgraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies by ethnicity, 2021/22 (FPE)

Ethnicity	Proportion of UK domiciled postgraduate students across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies	Proportion of UK domiciled postgraduate students across SHAPE
Asian	5%	8%
Black	4%	7%
Mixed	6%	4%
Other	2%	2%
Unknown/not applicable	2%	3%
White	80%	76%

Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

As shown in Table 5, those who identified as Asian or Black made up a lower proportion of postgraduate students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies when compared to postgraduate students across SHAPE, although those identifying as Mixed was higher in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies than across SHAPE. The proportion who identified as Black at postgraduate level was also two points lower than at undergraduate level. The number of postgraduate students who identified as Black rose from 4% to 5% between 2012/13 and 2020/21, but fell by a percentage point in 2021/22, reflecting a decrease of 5% in absolute terms between 2019/20 and 2021/22. Postgraduate students who identified as Mixed rose from 4% to 5% between 2012/13 and 2019/20, and then to 6% between 2019/20 and 2021/21. Those who identified as White fell from 82% in 2012/13 to 81% in 2019/20 and then fell by an additional percentage point by 2021/22. There are some signs of increasing ethnic diversity at postgraduate level but the decrease in those identifying as Black indicates that there are different challenges for student diversity among these groups.

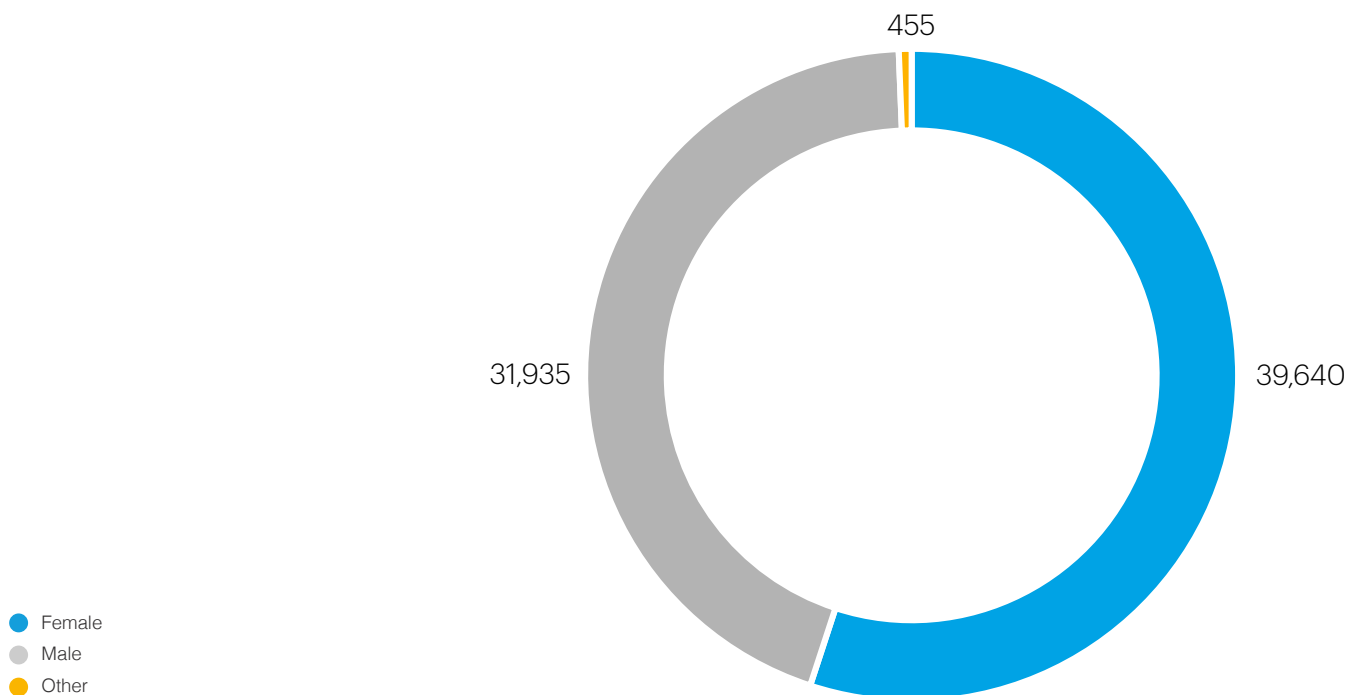
In the Census 2021 for England and Wales, 9.3% of people identified as 'Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh'; 4% identified with 'Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African'; 2.9% identified with 'Mixed or Multiple ethnic group'; and 81.7% identified as from a 'White' ethnic group.⁴⁴ This suggests, though the data is only for England and Wales, that at both first degree and postgraduate level, those who identify as 'Asian, or Asian British' are significantly underrepresented in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. The representation of people who identified as 'Black, Black British, Caribbean or African' at first degree level was two percentage points higher than the proportion of the population in England and Wales, though the share was more closely aligned at postgraduate level. At both first degree and postgraduate levels, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies had a considerably larger representation of people identified as 'Mixed or Multiple ethnic group' when compared to census data. The data also suggests that Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies at first degree and postgraduate levels was slightly under representative of people who identify as White.

⁴⁴ Office for National Statistics (2022), 'Ethnic group, England and Wales: Census 2021' [Accessed January 2024].

Sex and gender of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students

In 2021/22, across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies disciplines and levels, a larger proportion of students were female than male, with female students making up 55% of the total. Male students accounted for 44% and Other students 1%, as shown in Figure 18. Postgraduate taught courses had the highest proportion of female students (64%) in comparison to postgraduate research (55%) and undergraduate (53%). Looking across the four HESA codes at all levels of study, (15-01-06) Cultural Studies had the highest proportion of female students at 76%, (24-01-05) Media Studies was 59%, (24-01-04), Journalism 53%, and (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography was more evenly spread with 51% female students. While female students are over-represented on Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies courses based on these indicators, the figure of 55% at all levels is lower than the equivalent for the aggregated SHAPE disciplines which is 61%.

Figure 18. Number of male, female and 'other' students across all levels of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2021/22 (FPE)

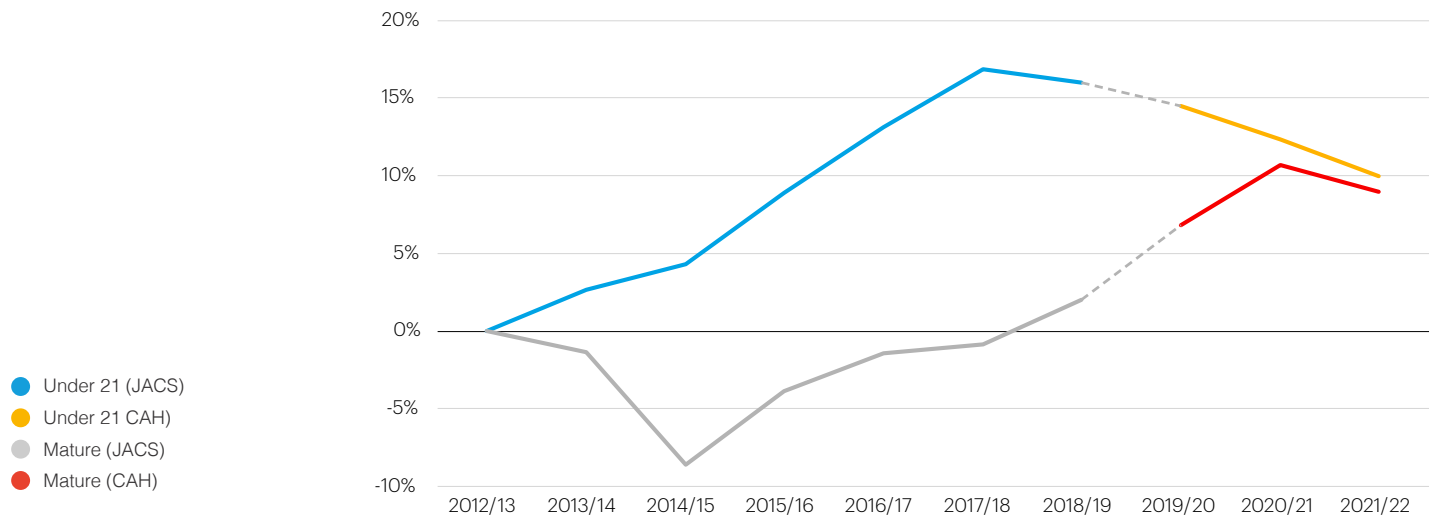


Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Age of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students

Under 21 year olds made up 66% of first degree Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies undergraduates in 2021/22, while 21-24 year olds comprised 28%, and those over 25 contributing the remaining 6%. The first degree undergraduate age data, presented in Figure 19 uses the categories under 21 and 'mature' for students over 21. Under 21 student numbers rose consistently between 2012/13 and 2017/18 but decreased in every year since. Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, under 21 student enrolments fell by 4%, while mature first degree Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students increased by 2%. Overall across first degree Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, mature students made up 33% of all students, with students under 21 at 66%. These proportions were the same in 2012/13, although there were small changes in the interim years, indicating that mature student numbers are robust.

Figure 19. Percentage change in first degree undergraduate under 21 and mature students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, 2012/13-2021/22 (FPE)



Source: HESA Student Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Reported disability in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students

In 2021/22, 23% of students across all levels of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies self-reported a disability with different proportions across the four HESA codes that make up the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. In (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography 27% of students at all levels reported a disability, while 26% reported the same in (15-01-06) Cultural Studies, 20% in (24-01-05) Media Studies and 18% in (24-01-04) Journalism. This represents a greater proportion than across the SHAPE disciplines where 16% reported a disability in 2020/21. The proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students reporting a disability was also higher than the population across England and Wales in the 2021 census which was 17.8%.⁴⁵

Summary

This chapter has demonstrated that undergraduate recruitment onto Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies courses has remained stable over the last decade with the analysis indicating an overall increase in numbers, with the last reporting year witnessing a small dip. This may be associated with an overall decrease in EU domiciled students which has been particularly pronounced in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. At postgraduate taught level the trend has been one of strong growth in provision, particularly in the HESA codes (P3) Media Studies and (24-01-05) Media Studies, with a large and growing proportion of non-EU domiciled students. London and the South East have particularly high proportions of postgraduate students. On diversity, the picture is mixed with Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies being more representative on sex and gender than the SHAPE disciplines but having less diversity in relation to students' ethnic background.

⁴⁵ Office for National Statistics (2022), 'Disability, England and Wales: Census 2021' [accessed 22 January 2024].

3. Academic staff

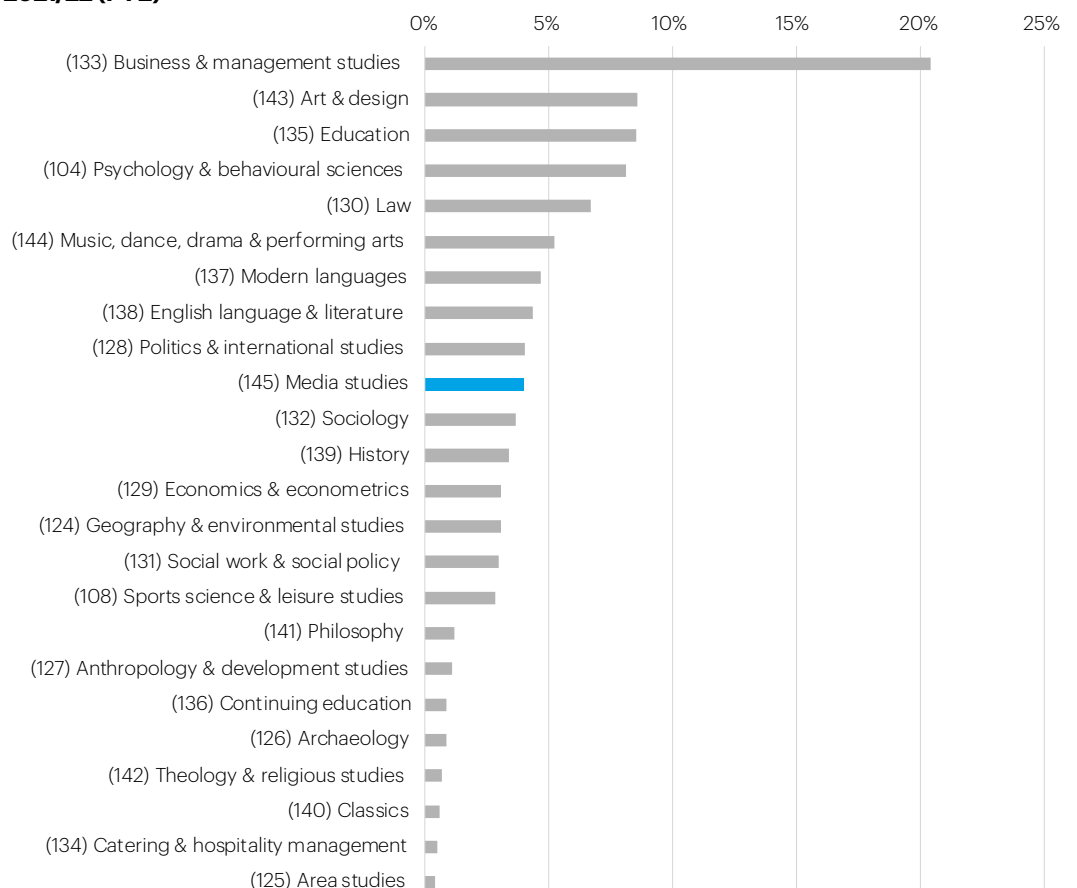
This chapter turns to academic staff in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. Where possible, the data is contextualised within changes to academic staff across the SHAPE disciplines. Here, we analyse changes in staff numbers, types of academic contract, and the nationality, ethnicity, sex, age and disability status of staff.

The HESA staff record provides a breakdown of academic staff in higher education institutions by the cost centres to which their contracts are assigned. HESA staff cost centres cannot be broken down by subject area of staff, so the analysis in this section may not include staff who teach and research in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies but were submitted to other cost centres by their institution. This limits our analysis of the health of the discipline at staff level. Here, the report focuses on cost centre '145 Media Studies' and uses the term 'cost centre' whilst acknowledging that HESA cost centres are not directly representative of departments.

Academic staff in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies

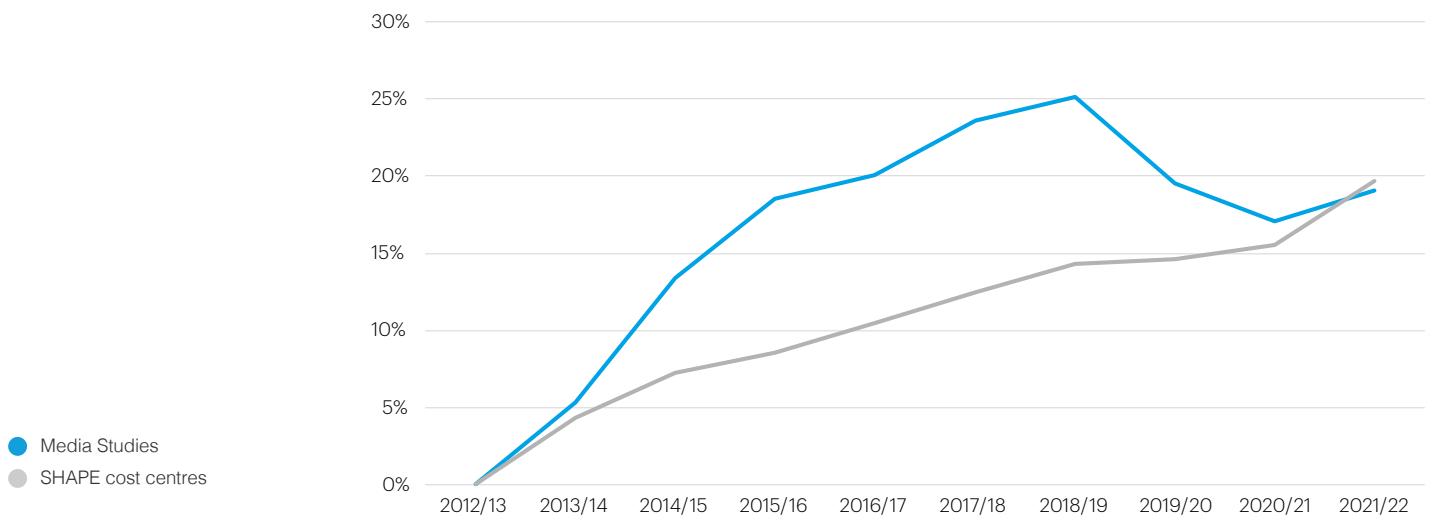
In 2021/22 4,035 academic staff were reported to the Media Studies cost centre, employed at a total of 102 UK HEIs. This represented 4% of total academic staff across the SHAPE disciplines, a proportion that has been stable since 2012/13. As displayed in Figure 20, the Media Studies cost centre was the tenth largest SHAPE cost centre by academic staff with a total number of staff similar to Politics & International Studies and Sociology.

Figure 20. Proportion of academic staff by cost centres submitted to SHAPE disciplines, 2021/22 (FTE)



Between 2012/13 and 2021/22, the overall number of FTE academic staff returned under Media Studies increased by 19%, as shown in Figure 21. A peak of 4,240 staff in 2018/19 followed several years of sharp growth in academic staff numbers. However, after 2018/19 the cost centre returned two years of declining staff numbers. While the difference in the 2018/19 and 2021/22 figures is relatively small (a decrease of 205), there was a small increase on the previous year in 2021/22. The fall in numbers since 2018/19 may be a concern for the field insofar as it results in a potentially higher staff to student number ratio, particularly with postgraduate taught level student numbers trending upwards, as illustrated in the previous chapter. Figure 21 also shows that for every reporting year, except for 2021/22, the proportional increase in Media Studies academic staff was larger than the proportional increase in staff across the SHAPE disciplines. The trend in staff numbers across the SHAPE cost centres has been less volatile than the Media Studies cost centre. An uptick in both SHAPE aggregated and Media Studies staff numbers in 2021/22 suggests that the recent plateau in the former and decline in the latter may have ended.

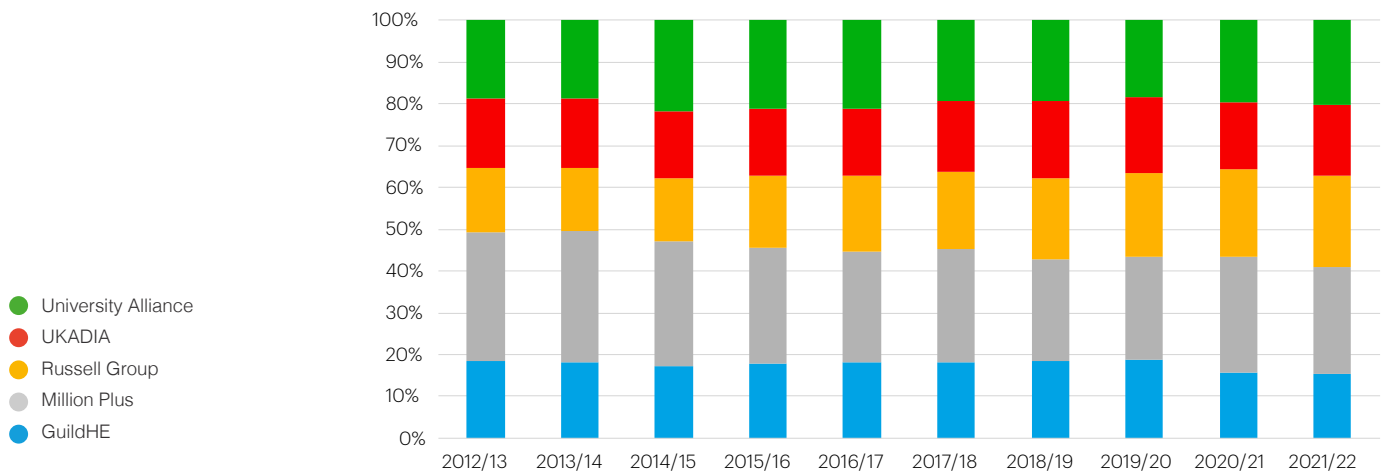
Figure 21. Percentage change in staff numbers submitted to cost centre 145 Media Studies and SHAPE cost centres, 2012/13-2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

The growth in FTE academic staff returned under Media Studies is not evenly spread amongst institution types. The data in Figure 22 captures only HEIs in a mission group and a small number of institutions are in more than one of the five mission groups available for analysis in the HESA data. The mission group with the largest share of staff in 2021/22 was MillionPlus with 26% - down from a share of 31% in 2012/13. Two mission groups increased their share over this period – University Alliance by one percentage point to 20% and the Russell Group, whose share grew more substantially from 15% to 22%. From 2012/13 to 2021/22, the number of staff at a Russell Group HEI increased by 77% (from 325 to 570).

Figure 22. Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by mission group, 2012/13-2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

All other mission group FTE staff grew in absolute terms over the same period, but by smaller proportions as compared to the Russell Group, as highlighted in Figure 22. Relatively high percentage growth was experienced by University Alliance (36%, from 390 to 530) and UKADIA (25%, from 350 to 440), but growth was much lower for GuildHE (4%, from 385 to 400) and Million Plus (2%, from 655 to 665). This may reflect the expanding provision at Russell Group universities identified at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the previous chapter. Some HEIs joined or left a mission group during this period, impacting the analysis. The relative institutional diversity of Media Studies FTE academic staff is notable with the smallest mission group, GuildHE, still counting for 15% of staff in 2021.

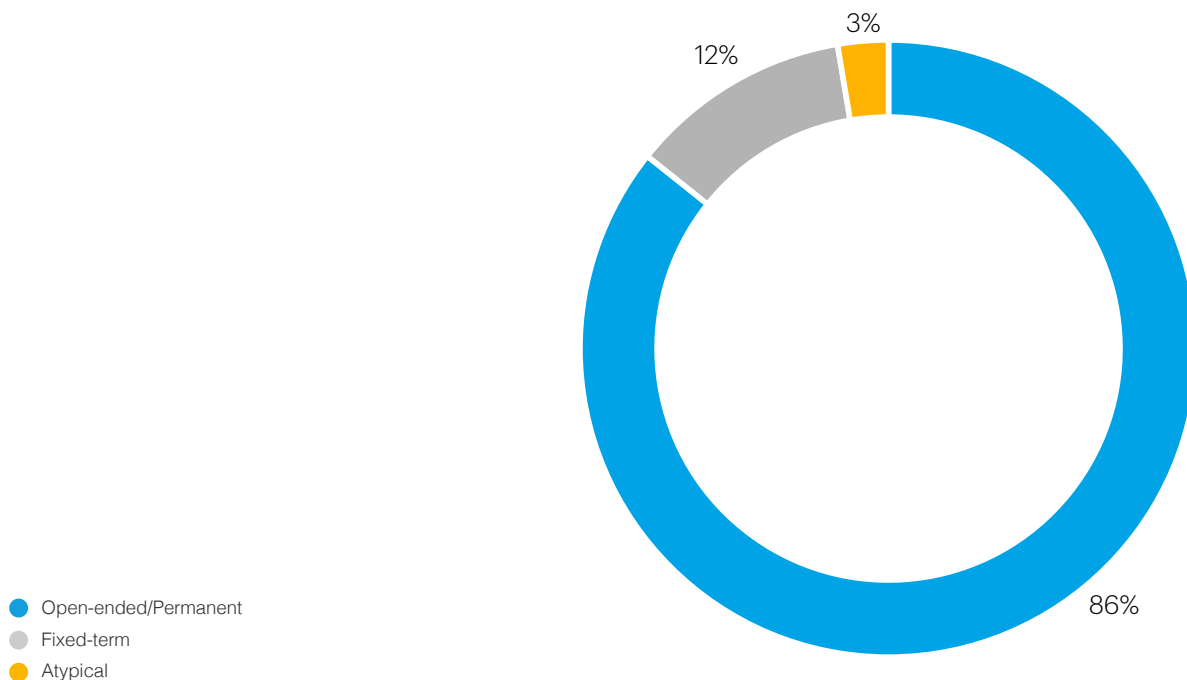
Media Studies academic staff contracts

Figure 23 shows that 86% of academic staff submitted under Media Studies in 2021/22 were on open-ended or permanent contracts. 12% were on fixed-term contracts with the remaining 3% on atypical contracts. HESA defines fixed-term contracted staff as ‘those employed for a fixed period of time or with an end date on their contract of employment’, including ‘staff on rolling fixed-term contracts’.⁴⁶ Atypical contracted staff are defined as those ‘whose working arrangements are not permanent, involve complex employment relationships and/or involve work away from the supervision of the normal work provider’.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ HESA, ‘Terms of Employment’, *Definitions: Staff* [accessed 22 January 2024].

⁴⁷ HESA, ‘Terms of Employment’.

Figure 23. Percentage of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies on open-ended/permanent, fixed-term and atypical contracts, 2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

A lower proportion of academic staff (12%) in Media Studies was on fixed-term contracts than the aggregated SHAPE cost centres (18%) in 2021/22. A larger proportion (86%) was on open-ended/permanent contracts than the SHAPE cost centres (79%). For Media Studies the proportion of open-ended/permanent contracts gradually increased from 83% in 2012/13 to 86% in 2021/22. Across the SHAPE cost centres the proportions of staff on different contract types have stayed broadly the same since 2012/13.

Diversity and protected characteristics of Media Studies academic staff

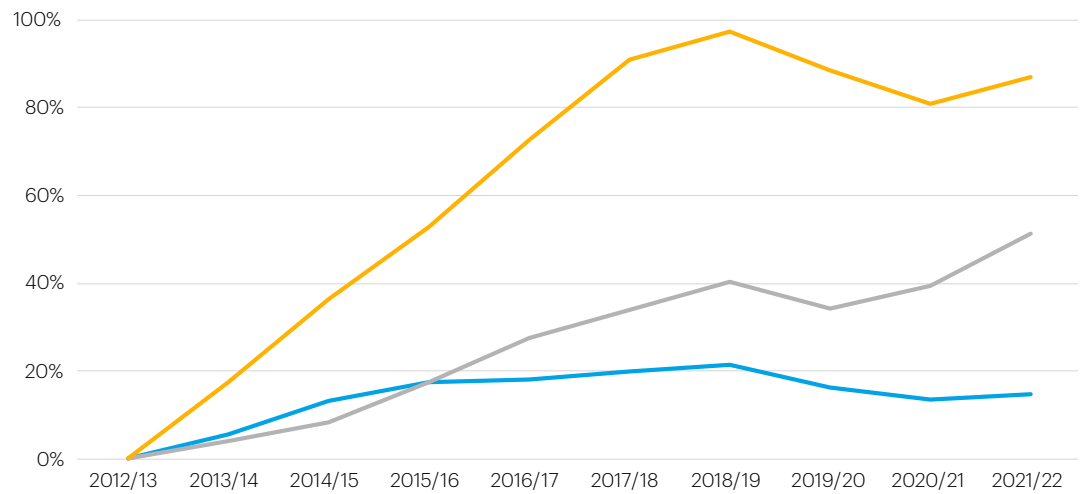
Nationalities of Media Studies academic staff

In 2021/22, 81% of Media Studies academic staff recorded their nationality⁴⁸ as British, while 11% were reported as being EU nationals and 8% non-EU nationals. Since 2012/13, the proportion of British staff declined from 86%, while EU nationals grew from 8% and non-EU from 6%. For the aggregate SHAPE cost centres in 2021/22, 72% were British nationals, 15% EU nationals and 13% non-EU nationals. Of the 24 SHAPE cost centres, Media Studies had the sixth highest proportion of academic staff who were British nationals, indicative of a comparatively lower proportion of international staff.

Figure 24 shows the change in the nationalities of Media Studies academic staff by the three groupings since 2012/13. All three groupings increased over the previous year in 2021/22 but this followed two years of declining or fluctuating numbers. The growth in EU national staff is striking – with an 87% increase in 2021/22 on 2012/13, or 245 to 460 in absolute terms – and above the equivalent growth across SHAPE cost centres (49%). It is possible that the change in status of EU nationals may be a factor in the dip between 2018/19 and 2020/21. Non-EU staff rose by 49% from 200 to 305, though this increase was not as large as the SHAPE cost centres (76%). These generally upward trends indicate a consistent pull factor for international staff to work in Media Studies in the UK and the increase in UK national staff has not recovered from the dip in 2018/19.

⁴⁸ HESA use of nationality is defined as the country of legal nationality. This is not necessarily the domicile – HESA do not collect data on staff domicile. The HESA guidance recommends that 'where staff have a dual nationality including British, they should be coded as British'. HESA, 'Staff 2020/21' [Accessed January 2024.]

Figure 24. Percentage change in academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by nationality, 2012/13-2021/22 (FTE)



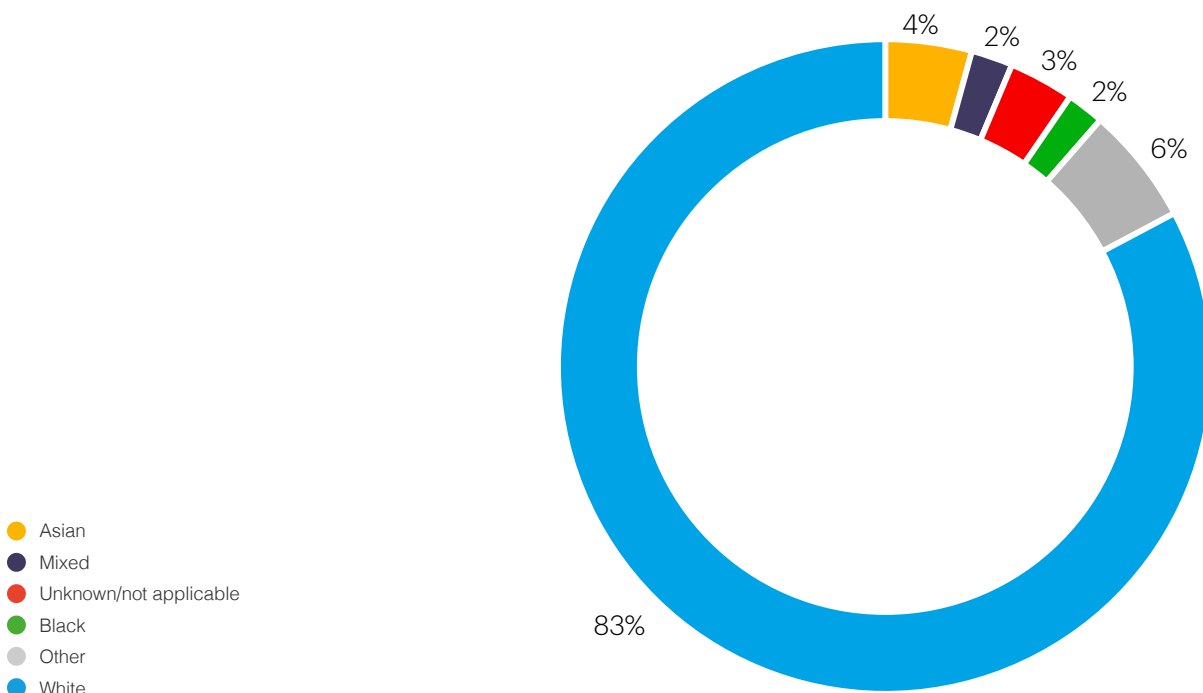
Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

- United Kingdom
- Non-European Union
- European Union

Ethnicity of Media Studies academic staff

As shown in Figure 25, in 2021/22, around 83% of Media Studies staff identified as White, 6% of staff’s ethnicity was unknown, 4% identified as Asian, 3% as Mixed, 2% as Black, and another 2% as Other. In comparison, 77% of SHAPE staff identified as White, 8% as Asian, 3% as Black, 3% as Mixed, and 2% as Other. Some gradual diversification of ethnicity identities has occurred relative to 2012/13 Media Studies staff, when a higher proportion of 87% identified as White. Media Studies staff identifying as being from a Mixed ethnic background has increased by 138% over the period to 2021/22; growing on a small base in absolute terms from 55 to 130. Those identifying as Asian in Media Studies in 2021/22 increased by 81% over 2012/13 (from 95 to 170), while the increase across SHAPE was 99%. Among the 24 SHAPE cost centres, Media Studies had the sixth highest proportion of staff who identified as White, a similar proportion to 126 such staff in Archaeology and 135 in Education.

Figure 25. Proportion of cost centre 145 Media Studies academic staff by ethnicity, 2021/22 (FTE)



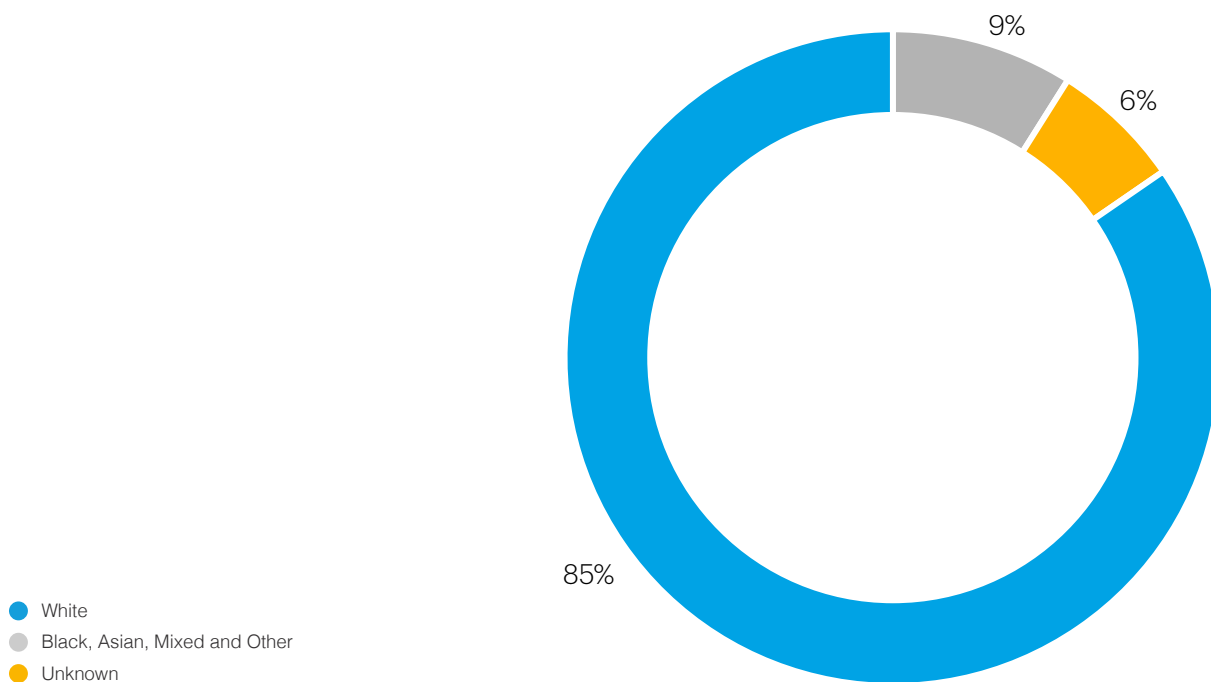
- Asian
- Mixed
- Unknown/not applicable
- Black
- Other
- White

Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Comparing cost centre 145 Media Studies data with the 2021 census for England and Wales suggests that the Media Studies staff distribution may not be representative of the wider UK population. In the census, 81.7% of the population in England and Wales identified as White, while 9.3% identified as 'Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh'; 4% identified as 'Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African'; 2.9% identified as 'Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups'; and 2.1% identified as being from 'Other ethnic' groups. This suggests that Media Studies staff may slightly under-represent people identifying as Black and Asian, although the levels of those identifying as Mixed or from Other ethnic groups are similar. It should be noted that in 2021/22, the ethnic identity of 6% of staff in Media Studies was Unknown — this category is not included in census questions and a direct comparison between datasets is not possible.

Staff ethnicity varied by level of seniority and type of contract, as highlighted in Figure 26. The proportion of Media Studies staff identifying as White in 2021/22 was 83%, rising to 85% at professor level. Although this decreased from 87% in 2012/13, indicating greater representation of other groups, only 9% of professors identified as Black, Asian, Mixed and Other groups (aggregated in Figure 26).

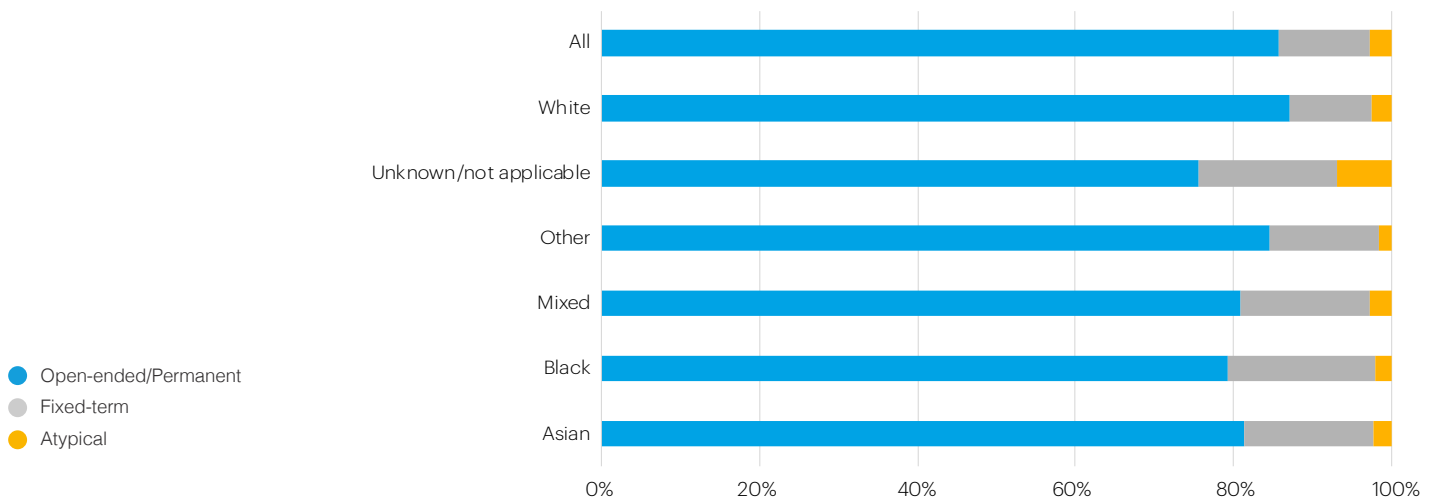
Figure 26. Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies contracted at Professor level by ethnicity, 2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Figure 27 shows an uneven spread of contract type in Media Studies by ethnic identification. Media Studies academic staff who identified as White in 2021/22 had the highest proportion of categories listed on open-ended/permanent contracts which generally offer more stability than other contract types. Media Studies staff who identified as Black or Asian had higher proportions on fixed term contracts at 19% and 17%, respectively. This indicates that Media Studies staff reporting minority ethnic identities are more likely to be on fixed term contracts and are less well represented at professor level.

Figure 27. Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by ethnicity and contract type, 2021/22 (FTE)

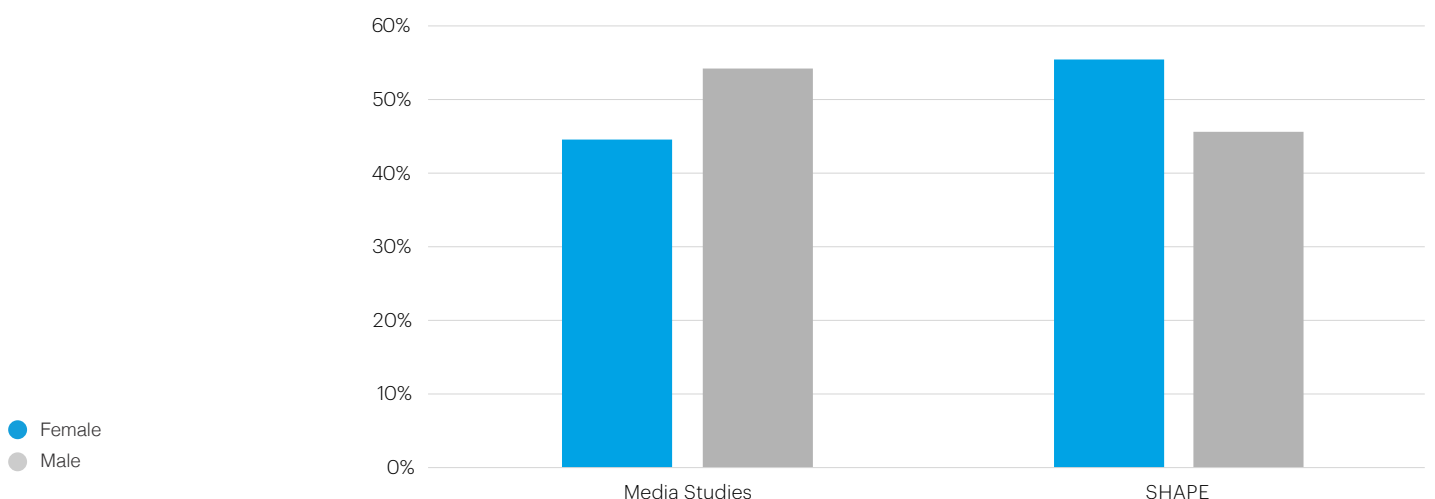


Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Sex and gender of Media Studies academic staff

As shown in Figure 28, in 2021/22 male staff made up 55% of Media Studies staff and female staff, 44%. It is not possible to publish information about staff identifying with HESA's category 'Other' due to their small population. In contrast, across the SHAPE disciplines female staff made up 54% and male staff 46%, indicating that Media Studies reverses the typical pattern amongst SHAPE subjects.

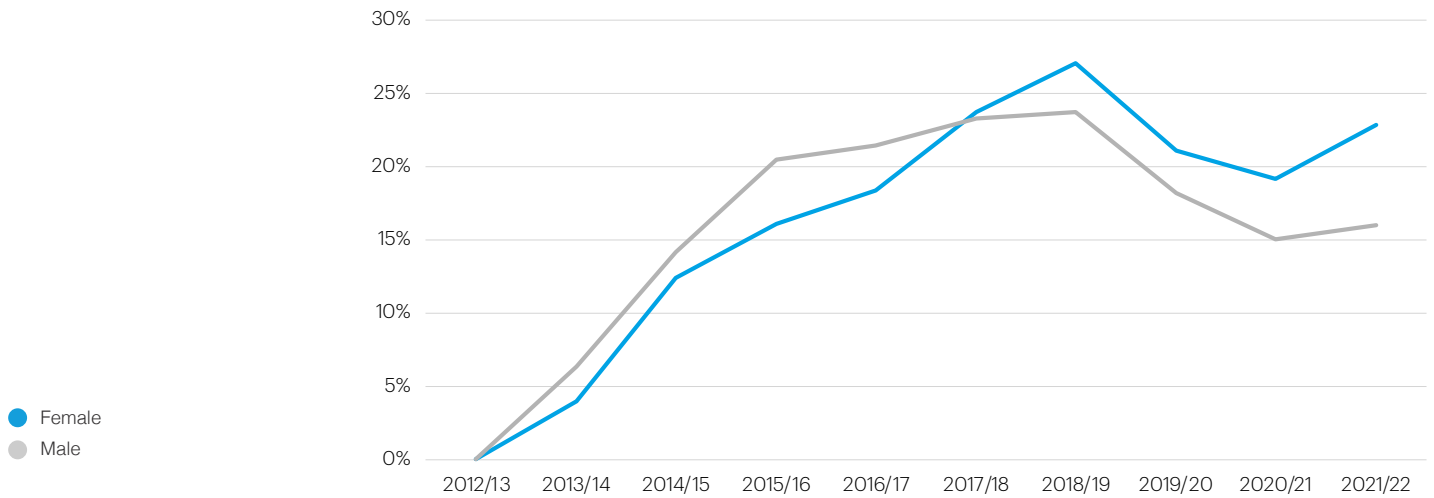
Figure 28. Academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies and SHAPE aggregate cost centres by sex, 2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Female staff numbers rose as a proportion of Media Studies staff by one percentage point from 43% in 2012/13, while male staff fell by two points from 57% in 2012/13. The growth in numbers of female academic staff in Media Studies outpaced that of male academic staff in the field in 2017/18, as demonstrated in Figure 29. The growth rates for both male and female staff in Media Studies were very similar to growth rates across the SHAPE disciplines – with female staff increasing at a faster rate than male staff since 2012/13 across SHAPE. The dips in numbers for both groups in 2019/20 and 2020/21 reflect the decrease in numbers for the Media Studies cost centre in these years as highlighted earlier in Figure 21 with female staff growing at a sharper rate in 2021/22.

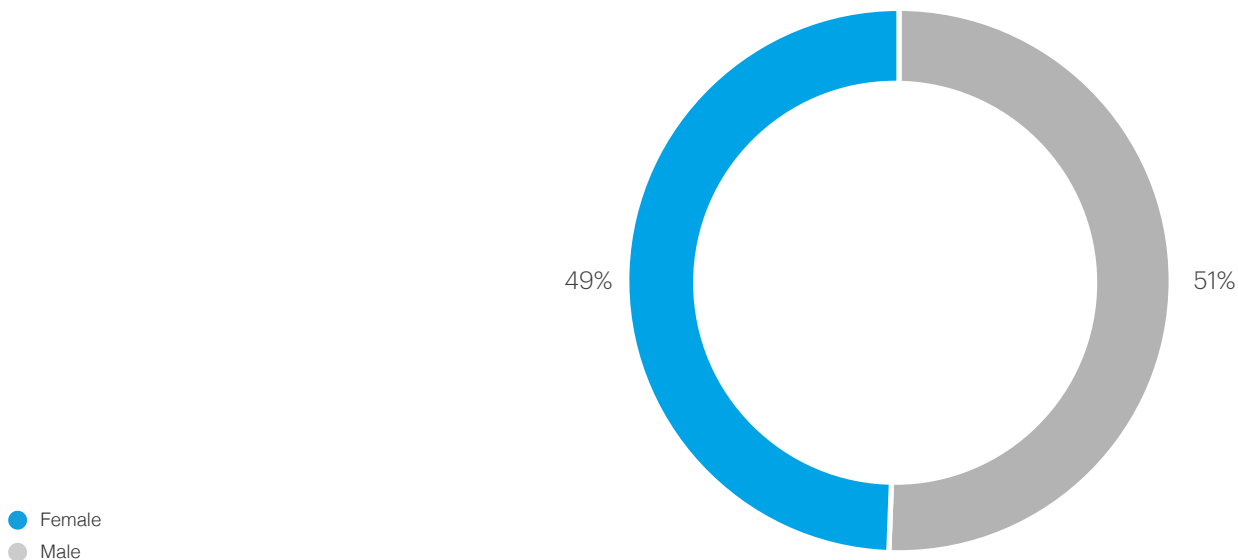
Figure 29. Percentage change of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by sex, 2012/13-2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

While male staff make up a higher proportion of Media Studies academic staff, at professor level their presence is reduced. Of the 225 professors in the Media Studies cost centre, 51% were male and 49% female, as shown in Figure 30. This is a significant change on 2012/13 when male staff held 62% of Media Studies professor positions.

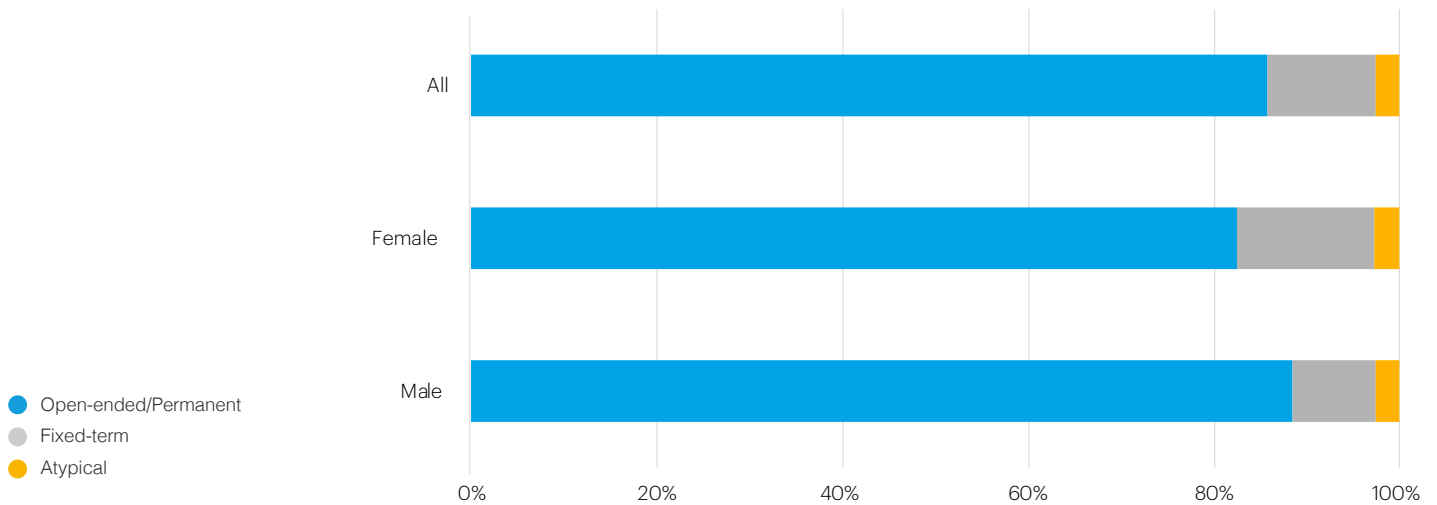
Figure 30. Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies contracted at Professor level, by sex, 2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Figure 31 indicates that a higher proportion of male staff are on open-ended/permanent contracts than female staff. In 2021/22, 88% of male staff were on longer-term contracts in comparison to 82% of female staff. This may be accounted for by the evidence that female staff are a higher proportion of younger staff, as shown in Figure 32, but it also suggests that female staff are more likely to be in less stable forms of employment.

Figure 31. Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by sex and contract type, 2021/22 (FTE)

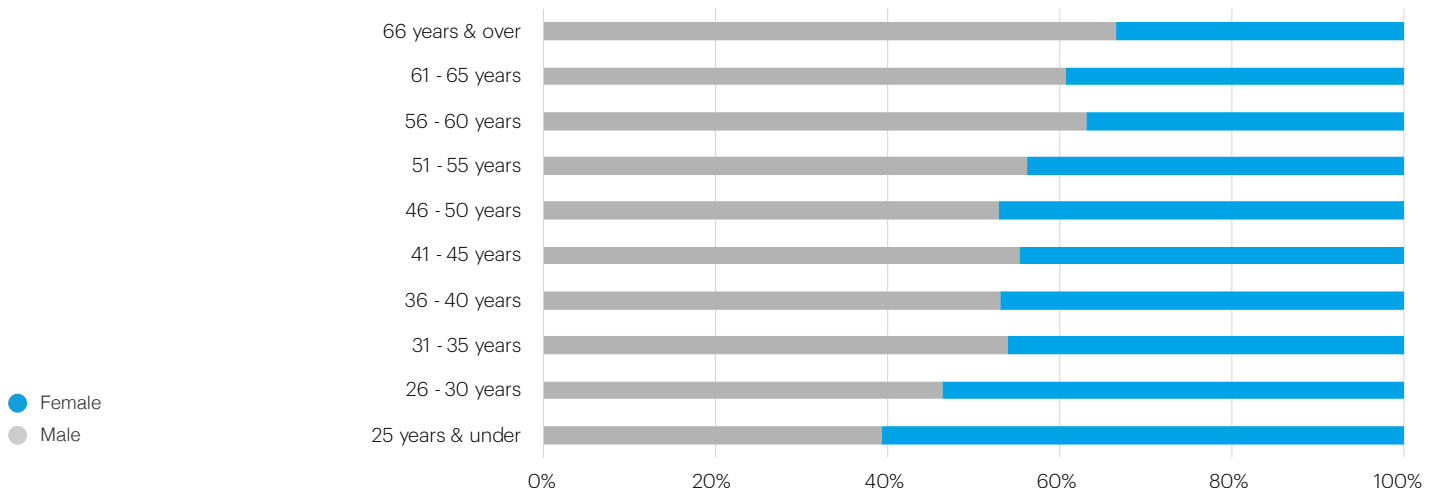


Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Age of Media Studies academic staff

In 2021/22, the spread of Media studies staff was fairly even across all age categories from 36-55, indicating relative stability in employment. The highest proportion of academic staff in the Media Studies cost centre was aged between 41 and 45 years, with 16% in this age bracket. Both 46 to 50 years and 51 to 55 years each had 15% of staff, while 36 to 40 years had 14% of staff. However, this picture is complicated when examined by gender and ethnicity, as seen in Figures 32 and 33.

Figure 32. Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by age bracket and sex, 2021/22 (FTE)

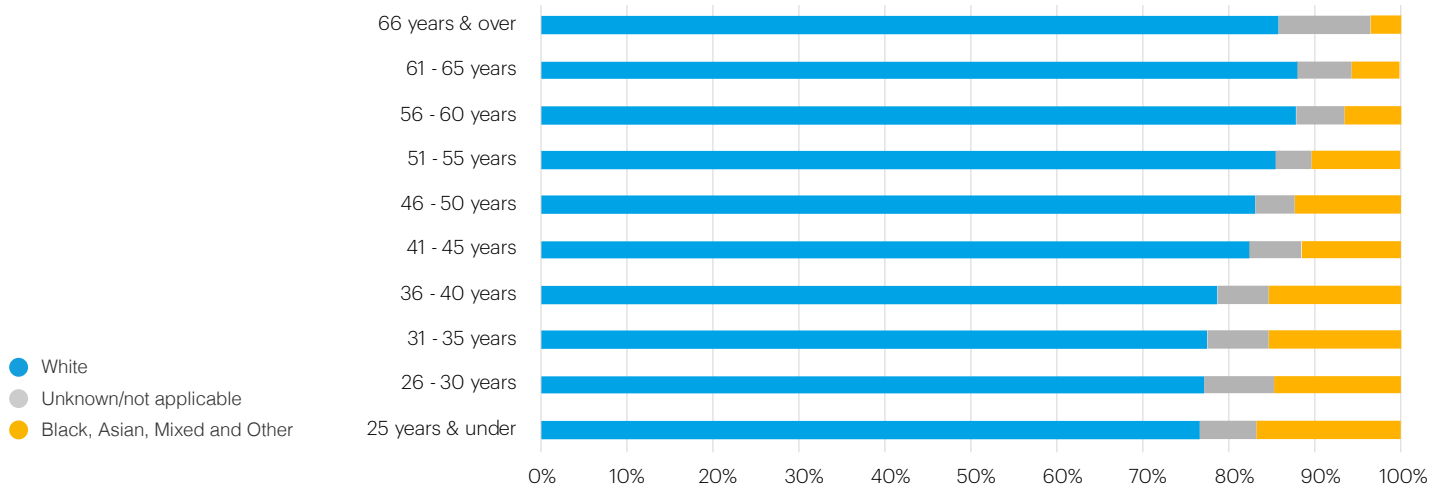


Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

There are strong contrasts among age brackets and the representation of male and female academic staff in Media Studies: the highest proportion of female staff is in the 25 years and under bracket, while the lowest proportion is in the uppermost bracket of 66 years and over. A comparison with the Media Studies staff female:male split by age group for 2012/13 when it was overall 43%:57% shows that there has been a slight reduction in male staff over time. In 2012/13, male staff comprised at least 50% in all age brackets, ranging from 52% for 25 years and under and 77% for 66 years and over. The majority proportions of female staff in the two lower age brackets in 2021/22 may reflect the growth of female staff in recent years, as indicated earlier in this chapter, but female staff remain underrepresented in older age brackets.

While staff who identified as Black, Asian, Mixed and Other represent 11% of all Media Studies staff, there were higher proportions of staff who identified as such in the lower age brackets, as shown in Figure 33. The highest proportion was 17% for staff 25 years old and under, 15% for the next three age brackets, then gradually declined with a few fluctuations through the higher age groups, reaching 3% for 66 years and over. This data indicates that cohorts of younger staff in Media Studies may be more diverse in their sex and ethnicity than older cohorts.

Figure 33. Proportion of academic staff in cost centre 145 Media Studies by age bracket and ethnicity, 2021/22 (FTE)



Source: HESA Staff Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Reported disability in Media Studies academic staff

In 2021/22, 8% of Media Studies staff reported a disability. This figure increased from 5% of Media Studies staff reporting a disability in 2012/13. This is considerably fewer than the 23% of Media Studies students at all levels who reported a disability (see the previous chapter) and less than the 17.8% who reported a disability in the 2021 census in England and Wales. The 2021/22 figure for Media Studies was slightly higher than the 7% of staff who reported a disability across the SHAPE disciplines. In 2012/13, 4% of staff across SHAPE reported a disability.

Summary

In summary, the Media Studies cost centre is a mid-sized SHAPE field which saw strong growth over most of the last 10 years with two years of decreasing staff numbers before a recent recovery. There has been upward growth in staff numbers at Russell Group HEIs, although staff work across a broad and diverse range of institutions. Some indicators of diversity for Media Studies academic staff indicate progress which is seen particularly in the diversity figures for staff in younger age brackets. While male staff remain an overall majority and are more likely to be on open-ended/permanent contracts, the analysis indicates that in recent years greater numbers of female staff are entering the field and the ratio of female to male staff at professor level is nearly equal. This may be as the result of an increasing focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion practices. There are challenges for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies representation as there is less diversity in the upper staff age cohorts in Media Studies cost centre which carries implications for staff progression and retention. The next chapter explores academic research across the REF and the research funding landscape in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies.

4. Academic research

Building on the overview presented earlier in the ‘key characteristics’ section, this chapter aims to capture the vitality, diversity and impact of academic research in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. The first part examines the results from the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 cycle. There are some limitations when attempting to distil and measure the health of research activity and impact of the field as presented in the REF, which is caveated below. This section will then draw upon a qualitative exploration of REF impact case studies across the field. The second part follows with a focus on research funding, covering the main research income sources for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, as well as further contextual detail within SHAPE subjects more broadly.

Research Quality: REF 2021

Measuring academic research in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies

Submissions to REF are assessed by expert sub-panels for 34 disciplinary units of assessments (UOAs) under the guidance of four main panels.⁴⁹ Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies engages with and draws on a nexus of methodologies, traditions, and techniques, meaning that submissions do not always fit neatly into one UOA. Overall, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies submissions reside largely within Main Panel D, which covers UOAs 25 to 34, and particularly within UOAs 33 (Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies) and 34 (Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management). To produce an effective analysis this chapter will focus primarily on UOAs 33 and 34, their quality profiles and sub-profiles, and the diversity in the types of research output.

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies represents an important and growing research domain within these sub-panels. In UOA 33, around 16% of submissions in the 2021 cycle corresponded to Film and Screen Studies. This is an increase by five percentage points from 2014.⁵⁰ This is largely attributable to the inclusion of Film and Screen to the UOA title in the latest REF exercise, giving greater visibility to the field.⁵¹ Meanwhile, the sub-panel for UOA 34 notes that significant submissions came from large sub-fields such as Film, Television, and Screen Studies, Cultural Studies, Journalism and News, Media and Cultural Theory, Creative and Cultural Industries. Submissions located within smaller-sub fields such as Radio and Sound Studies are also highlighted.⁵²

The deployment of cross-referrals and joint assessments within and beyond UOAs 33 and 34 is notable here, given that so much of the research activity sits at the borders of, or interacts directly with, other disciplinary traditions. Both UOAs 33 and 34 have above-average cross-referrals of research outputs to other sub-panels within and beyond Main Panel D. Both UOAs also have the highest number of outputs jointly assessed by experts in other sub-panels. The number of joint assessments is higher than the average for other Panel D UOAs, demonstrating a high level of research interdisciplinarity.

⁴⁹ REF2021 (2022) ‘What is the role of expert panels?’ [Accessed November 2023].

⁵⁰ REF2021 (2022) *Overview Report for Main Panel D and Sub-Panels 25-34*, p. 19.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid, p. 209.

Both UOAs 33 and 34 contain research from disciplines that have not been included and quantified in earlier chapters. The REF sub-panels captured here present broader research categories than what is measured or referred to in this report's findings concerning higher education trends for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies; however, attempting to distil the individual disciplinary threads within REF sub-panels is beyond this chapter's quantitative scope. For example, quantitative analyses of student and staff HESA data as presented earlier in the report do not include the relevant codes for Library and Information Management, Drama, Dance, or the Performing Arts – the areas of research also contained within UOAs 33 and 34. As such, the conclusions that we can draw from an analysis of REF results for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies are currently limited by the way data is collected and published.

In the REF 2021 cycle, 39% and 38% of submissions from UOAs 33 and 34 respectively were awarded 4* (world-leading) for overall research quality. Both UOAs saw increases in their overall quality determined to be of a 'world-leading' standard from the REF 2014 results (see footnote 49).⁵³ For UOA 33, originally UOA 35 in 2014, this rose by 10 percentage points to 39%.⁵⁴ Meanwhile UOA 34 (UOA 36 in REF 2014) increased its proportion of 4*-rated submissions by nine percentage points to 38%.⁵⁵

Breaking down the quality sub-profiles shows that UOA 34 scored above the Panel D average for 'Impact', with 47.6% of submissions rated as world-leading compared with 46.5%. For UOA 33, 43.8% of submissions were rated as world-leading. On the whole, both UOAs 33 and 34 have slightly below average ratings for the 'Output' and 'Environment' sub-profiles in comparison with Panel D. Nevertheless, the increased proportion of submissions judged to be world-leading or internationally excellent may correspond to a rise in quality-related (QR) funding between 2021/22 and 2023.⁵⁶ UOA 33 received a 15% increase in funding from £21 million in 2021/22 to £24 million in 2022/23. Both rounds of funding were higher than the QR-funding average for Panel D for each of those years. UOA 34 saw a 21% rise to £16 million in 2022-23, higher than the 20% increase for Panel D overall.

At the institutional level, the overall proportion of world-leading submissions is impressive and has remained broadly stable for both REF cycles: world-leading research was found in 96% of institutions for their overall quality profile for submissions to UOA 33 (UOA 35 in 2014). 100% of submitting institutions to UOAs 34 (formerly UOA 36 in 2014) in both REF cycles achieved an element of 4*-rated research quality. For UOA 33, the majority of submitting institutions increased their percentage of 4*-rated research between 2014 to 2021, with the greatest increase being 20 percentage points. An average of 34% of submissions per institution were judged to be of a 4* standard in 2021, compared with 26% in 2014. Of the submitting institutions with 4* overall ratings, almost 40% exceeded the Panel D average proportion for 2021. For UOA 34, there was less variation between 2014 and 2021 when compared to UOA 35 and UOA 36. The highest increase in 4*-rated research quality for an institution was by 26 percentage points.

⁵³ The REF2021 exercise assessed submissions for three elements - impact, output and environment - using the following scale: 4* (world-leading), 3* (internationally excellent), 2* (recognised internationally), 1* (recognised nationally) and Unclassified. The overall quality profile is calculated from the weighted proportion of the three sub-profile scores.

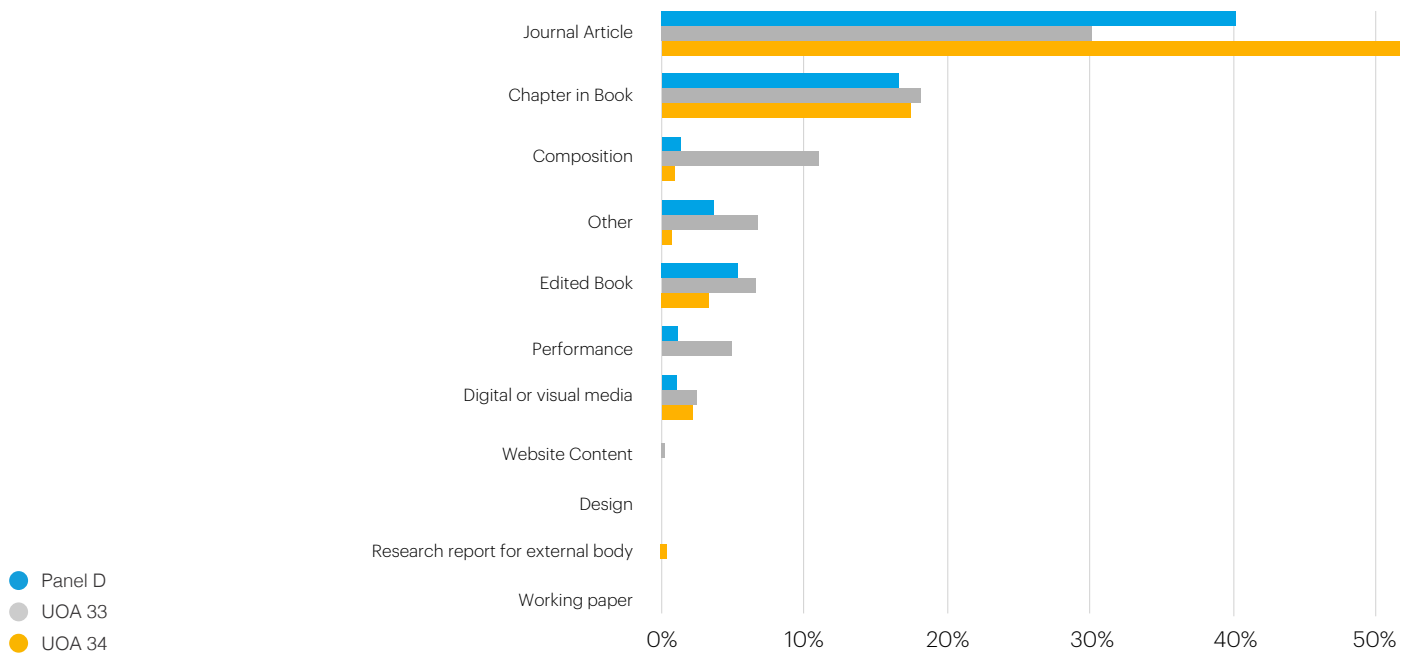
⁵⁴ REF2014 (2015), 'UOA 35: Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts', *Main Panel D and sub-panels 27-36*, pp. 92-94 [Accessed April 2024].

⁵⁵ REF2014 (2015) 'UOA 36: Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management', *Main Panel D and sub-panels 27-36*, pp. 110-13 [Accessed April 2024].

⁵⁶ Grove, J. (2023), 'Leading departments face cuts under "unnoticed" REF funding shift', *Times Higher Education* [accessed 24 November 2023].

What is striking about Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is the diversity in outputs and research formats, indicative of its interdisciplinary and creative body of scholarship. In comparison with the Panel D average, together UOA 33 and 34 display a considerable breadth in the types and sizes of research output submitted to REF 2021. A combined average of their quality score shows that over 70% of their research outputs were judged as world-leading or internationally recognised. This is evidenced when looking at the proportion of outputs produced and how this compares with other sub-panels, indicating extensive research activity that interacts with multiple and wide-ranging contexts, as seen in Figure 34.

Figure 34. Proportion of UOA 33 and 34 output types compared with Panel D average, REF 2021



Source: REF21 Panel D Report [October 2023]

UOA 33 accounted for 11% and UOA 34 for 9% of the research outputs submitted to Main Panel D. Owing to procedural changes between the 2014 and 2021 cycles, the minimum number of outputs per full time equivalent (FTE) staff expected for submitting units decreased, whilst the number of submitting staff included in submissions increased. As such, the number of research outputs per 1.0 FTE staff for UOA 33 decreased from 3.23 to 2.43, and from 3.76 to 2.46 for UOA 34, broadly consistent with the average sub-panel in D.

Like other UOAs in Panel D, both 33 and 34 produced more shorter-form textual outputs (such as journal articles and book chapters) than other types. However, these procedural changes encourage longer-form or more complex research outputs. Indeed, sub-panel 33 recognised the “significant number of outputs that demonstrated sustained research effort, extended or complex research, the collection and analysis of a large body of material, a complex, extended and/or multi-layered process of creative investigation” that were submitted to REF2021.⁵⁷ Whilst both UOAs produced a significant proportion of their overall output types as authored books (UOA 33 at 15.77% and UOA 34 at 21.24%), their respective sub-panels commended other longer-form outputs such as multi-component creative practice research as notable.

Around 29% of UOA 33's outputs were practice research. A significant portion of these outputs will fall under interrelated but separate disciplinary traditions from Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. For example, 'Performance'-based outputs were five times higher for UOA 33 than the panel average, but as a type of creative practice may be subsumed by other fields or disciplines. Of those practice-based submissions that can be more neatly aligned to Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, examples include:

*“archives, artefacts...CDs...devices, digital and visual media, DVDs...exhibition, fiction, films, hardware, installations...multichannel works, poetry, podcasts, recordings, scores...software, video essays, websites”*⁵⁸

Although the 'practice research' label appears as a homogeneous category, these non-exhaustive examples illustrate both the breadth and significance of output types. The evolving currents of creative practice research can be described as those which combine and explore “the possibilities of the technical languages and cultural ideas at their disposal”.⁵⁹ Practice research moves knowledge production and presentation beyond the traditional academic text. Here instead, creative practitioners explore a research question or hypothesis through artistic techniques and approaches. Practice research resists neat disciplinary categorisation, but it nevertheless resides within a long tradition of multi-modal research within the visual arts, performance arts, filmmaking and music.

The sub-panel for UOA 33 highlighted the “outstanding” level of research practice outputs submitted, as well as “world-leading practice research that demonstrated originality, rigour, and significance in aesthetic or formal terms alone”.⁶⁰ Meanwhile for UOA 34, the most common outputs for practice-research came as digital or visual media. Although the sub-panel notes that there were proportionally fewer practice research outputs to UOA 34 than others, a significant number were judged as “world-leading and innovative” and “scored extremely well”.⁶¹

The REF 2021 Main Panel D report raises an important point that Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies related scholarship impact is “not always linear or one-way” and engages in a significant degree of co-participatory research.⁶² Impact case studies submitted to UOAs 33 and 34 demonstrate how practice or non-textual formats cultivate co-participatory modes of knowledge production and exchange. Examples include a series of research-led civic projects that equipped marginalised communities in Northern Ireland with media and technical production skills. Also submitted are practice outputs that “coalesced around narrative filmmaking, autoethnographic filmmaking (the essay film), and participatory filmmaking engaging with diverse cultures, with distinctive examples of decolonising, ethnographic or anthropological filmmaking strongly in evidence”.⁶³

Non-traditional outputs interrogate old and emerging modalities of experiencing and articulating media. This encourages a significant degree of digital innovation in practice research across outputs. Game Studies scholarship in the UK exemplifies this, having gained traction at the turn of the millennium “to advance an understanding of the structural and mediated culture of digital games”.⁶⁴ UOA 33's sub-panel emphasises the increase in Game Studies submissions it received in REF 2021, which may correspond to an uptake in experimental and innovative research outputs.

⁵⁸ REF2021, *Overview Report for Main Panel D*, p. 184.

⁵⁹ Long, P. (2012) *Media Studies: Texts, Production, Context* (Routledge), p. 12.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 210.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁶³ REF2021 (2022) 'Empowering Marginalised Communities in Contemporary Northern Ireland', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁶⁴ Crawford, G., MacCallum, E., and Stewart, P. (April 2018) 'British Digital Game Studies', *Transactions of the Digital Games Research Association*, 3(3), p. 3

Scope, impact and value of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies scholarship

This section reviews the impact of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research through a selection of case studies submitted to REF 2021. Impact is defined in the REF exercise as “an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services or health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia”.⁶⁵ These case studies are largely those recommended by the project Advisory Group as examples of research excellence that have made – and continue to make – profound contributions to society and culture.

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies opens up an expansive scope of study due to the breadth across its thematic and methodological coverage. The spread of higher education programmes offered in the UK are woven by overlapping yet distinctive research pursuits. This is where the field takes its strength: a process of adapting, reviewing and responding to changing social and cultural phenomena. In recognition of the wide spectrum of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, the case studies drawn upon here will include activity submitted to other sub-panels, such as UOA 27 (English Language and Literature) and UOA 32 (Art and Design: Theory, History and Practice).

Many of the impact case studies explored below broadly share the same research subjects even if they belong to different sub-panels. For example, ‘Film, Television and Digital Media’, ‘Communication and Media Studies’, ‘Literary Studies’, and ‘Historic Studies’ were some of the most common subject areas as identified in the REF in these collected case studies. By no means exhaustive, looking further afield than UOAs 33 and 34 captures a fuller range of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research and its impact on creative and cultural life, society, education, governance, legislation and policy, and health and wellbeing.

Creative and cultural impact

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies scholarship is the cornerstone to the vibrant creative and cultural sectors across the UK. There is strong evidence of impact that is particularly salient for local creative economies. For example, there is distinct hyperlocal impact benefitting Cornwall’s creative sector through a multi-component project submitted by Falmouth University to UOA 32.⁶⁶ The Sound/Image Cinema Lab, launched by the University, has delivered impressive impact in both its support for student and graduate career trajectories in the film sector, but also for local film production. This film lab has produced and co-produced 14 commercial films between 2015 and 2020, working in partnership with the local and UK-wide film industry. Crucially, the lab has sought a “self-produced and meaningful representation of Cornish communities”. One such project was the film *Bait*, a feature length film on Cornish fishing life that won a Bafta in 2020.

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research has made vital contributions to the creative workforce and skills supply. An example submitted to UOA 33 on the preservation of twentieth century colour films for new audiences supports and safeguards colour skills through researching patented methods of colouring film and interviewing cinematographers, film laboratory workers and specialists working in film preservation.⁶⁷ This constituted three major projects submitted by the University of Bristol which have produced important sources for sector best practice. For instance, one of the submitted outputs, a monograph *Colour Films in Britain*, influenced the British Film Institute’s decision to restore and exhibit the film *This is Colour*.

⁶⁵ UKRI (2022), *How Research England supports research excellence*. [Accessed October 23].

⁶⁶ REF2021 (2022) ‘The Sound/Image Cinema Lab: Promoting UK Film Production and Career Development for Filmmakers’, *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁶⁷ REF2021 (2022) ‘Preserving and Presenting 20th Century Colour Films for New Audiences’, *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

Areas of cultural impact include research that has shaped culture policy and industry practice. The Media Reform Coalition at Goldsmiths' College brings together the research and advocacy expertise of academics, civil society groups and media campaigners to advance media reform.⁶⁸ Submitted to UOA 34, the research interrogates media ownership and power, the implications of digital media growth, and media distrust among social groups. This multi-actor research project has informed policy debate and party policy on issues of press regulation and ownership through an initiation of a major public inquiry into the future of public service television, as well as changing industry practice for telecommunications.

Social impact

Scholarship from these disciplines feeds our understandings of democracy and civic participation; this can span from critiques of institutional hegemony within the creative industries; the history of political communication through to the 'Fake News' era; and how social ideologies are reinforced or manipulated through media practice and policy. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research has a central role in developing our understanding of digital democracy. Using the political economy of digital media as its theoretical basis, a project submitted by the University of Westminster to UOA 34 examines online spaces as digital public spheres.⁶⁹ This work looks at how these spaces are navigated or shaped by social structures. The findings from this research have had an impact on public and policy understandings of the democratic implications of increasing digitalisation. For example, the research has fed into the Speaker's Commission on Digital Democracy as set up by the UK Parliament.

Elsewhere, creative practice research can promote community self-realisation (as in the case study provided above by Falmouth) or appeal to social cohesion and inclusion (such as the Ulster University photography case study detailed in the previous section on outputs). As raised earlier, participatory research shifts the traditional subject/object relationship, with participants taking an active role in studies, increasing its civic value. A project submitted also to UOA 34 from the University of Sunderland – *Amplifying Voices: Connecting Communities and Cultures through Participatory Action Research* - showcases the relationship between identity and shared experiences of culture, examining the role that community radio plays. The research underpins the popular global radio streaming platform Radio Garden and fed into 'Putting Southwick on the Map', described as a "hyperlocal community culture project".⁷⁰

The social impact of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research also concerns how structural injustices present in the creative industries themselves. Coming from a wider AHRC-funded project looking at women and the contemporary film industry, a UOA 27 submission from the University of Southampton produced two strands of primary research⁷¹: first, the project undertook an exercise in data collection of many women working in key production roles in the industry; secondly, the researchers carried out recorded interviews with women filmmakers to share their voices and gendered experiences of the industry. This work demonstrated a tangible impact and influence upon British film policy. The publication of datasets raised awareness and facilitated discussion of inequalities faced by women working in the industry, promoting advocacy of film industry reform.

⁶⁸ REF2021 (2022) 'Advocating for Media Reform', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁶⁹ REF2021 (2022) 'Advancing the Digital Public Sphere', *Impact Case Study Database* [accessed 24 November 2023].

⁷⁰ REF2021 (2022) 'Amplifying Voices: Connecting Communities and Culture Through Participatory Action Research', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁷¹ REF2021 (2022) 'Calling the Shots: Pushing for Gender Equality in the British Film Industry', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

Governance and policy impact

Scholarship also displays impressive impact on both domestic and global governance and humanitarian issues. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies scholars have influenced changes in policy and legislation through their research, crystallising the high-level impact and recognition of the field's importance. Main Panel D notes that as intrinsically "outward-facing disciplines", its UOAs have particular strengths in joint work and partnership building with a range of actors, both domestically and overseas.⁷²

For example, a submission by the London School of Economics and Political Science to UOA 34 saw the creation of an evidence-based framework and comparative research on children's rights and digital technologies through a joint project with UNICEF.⁷³ The project established a free toolkit including expert guidance, survey questionnaire tools and qualitative resources to help country partners plan, conduct and monitor the research impact. The research led to improvements in thinking, policy and practice in a range of different countries embedding the work in their own children protection, data and digital strategies, with legislation based off research and findings in the report. Furthermore, this research has informed the Council of Europe's Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child UNICEF regularly draws on this research in international policy and agenda-setting, notably the *State of the World's Children* report in 2017.

Research across the field has a strong impact on areas of human rights, conflict and crisis. *Advancing Truth, Reconciliation and Justice for the Indonesian Genocide*, submitted to UOA 32, uses research-based creative practice through two films "as a truth commission" into the 1965-66 genocide in Indonesia.⁷⁴ The impact of the work is multi-layered. The research has mobilised domestic activism in Indonesia and created shifts in political discourse of the killings. It has also led to recognition at the International People's Tribunal at the Hague, where evidence from the films was cited. Furthermore, the lead researcher has worked with key NGOs and with a US Senator looking further into the contents and context of documentary films to push for greater recognition of what happened in Indonesia within the Senate.

Similarly, impact is notable for research into crisis reporting and journalism. A UOA 34 submission by researchers at Bournemouth University examined and improved disaster reporting in Nepal in the wake of the 2015 earthquakes.⁷⁵ Outputs include a world-first dedicated disaster journalism policy at Kamana Group (a Nepali media organisation), a practice-based journalism website, and a book, written in partnership with UNESCO Kathmandu. The research contributed to policy and practice changes of media organisations, the Nepal government and UNESCO – strengthening the latter's disaster journalism capacity-building.

Public Engagement and Awareness Impact

Research from Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has made a profound impact on public understanding and awareness of cultural and aesthetic events, practices and histories. A King's College London project, *Intersections of Cinema and Art: Creating and Shaping Reception Contexts*, sits at the intersection of Film Studies and Art History (amongst other disciplinary traditions) to theorise and historicise documentary and experimental

⁷² REF2021, *Overview Report for Main Panel D*, p. 30.

⁷³ REF2021 (2022) 'Realising Children's Rights in a Digital World', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁷⁴ REF2021 (2022) 'Advancing Truth, Reconciliation and Justice for the Indonesian Genocide', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁷⁵ REF2021 (2022) 'Strengthening disaster preparedness and resilience of news media in Nepal', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

filmmaking.⁷⁶ Submitted to UOA 33, the research has changed programming policies, performance and practice through curatorial work, and significantly contributed to public engagement and understanding of cinema and moving image art across the world.

Also to UOA 33, a submission from the University of St. Andrews examines the political potential of film festival studies, advancing recognition of the field.⁷⁷ *Mapping the Festival Ecosystem: Informing the Practice of Programmers, Filmmakers, and Archivists* has provided mentorship for filmmakers, supported preservation efforts for archivists, and contributed to a public and cultural understanding of film festivals.

Scholarship further uncovers and challenges accepted assumptions about public institutions. For example, submitted to UOA 34, the University of Sussex's *Bringing the BBC's Hidden History into the Public Realm* moves away from policy, institutional or governance-based appraisals of the BBC's development to instead shed light on the ideas, values and memories and human agency.⁷⁸ The research has changed BBC practices on oral history and perceptions within the BBC itself on diversity, as well as public perception.

A Million Pictures, submitted to UOA 27 and led by the University of Exeter, welds together "mixture of scholarly and public-facing research...on the importance of the magic lantern".⁷⁹ The project has improved public awareness of the global magic lantern's heritage, increasing the visibility of research within this area and creating the largest digital archive of lantern slides. This regionally driven project has led to a series of exhibition-based histories of media to also increase museum and public access to these artefacts.

Educational impact

As part of the *From Digital Skills to Tangible Outcomes* project led by the London School of Economics and Political Science submitted to UOA 34, this body of scholarship has made led to significant changes in institutional practices, metrics and benchmarks used to measure digital skills.⁸⁰ For example, the research's emphasis on soft skills as part of digital skills inclusion frameworks were included in the European Commission's DigComp framework. The research has changed the way public, private and third sector organisations conceive digital inclusion so that it is not thought of simply as access and skills, but also in its wider impact and outcome for wellbeing, and in socio-economic indicators.

Further, the educational impact of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research is integral to improving internal editorial and broadcasting practices. Researchers at Cardiff University have sought to improve news accuracy and impartiality through large-scale content analyses.⁸¹ This work, submitted to UOA 34, has led to major changes in the BBC's editorial guidelines and recommendations for future practice for how journalists report statistics. For instance, the research led to the introduction of a 'Reporting Statistics' section in the BBC's editorial guidelines as further guidance for journalists.

⁷⁶ REF2021 (2022) 'Intersections of Cinema and Art: Creating and Shaping Reception Contexts', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁷⁷ REF2021 (2022) 'Mapping the Festival Ecosystem: Informing the Practice of Programmers, Filmmakers, and Archivists', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁷⁸ REF2021 (2022) 'Bringing the BBC's Hidden History into the Public Realm', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁷⁹ REF2021 (2022) 'A Million Pictures: Enhancing the Curation, Dissemination and Re-use of Neglected Magic Lantern Media Heritage', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁸⁰ REF2021 (2022) 'From Skills to Outcomes: Improving Digital Inequalities Metrics, Policy and Interventions', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁸¹ REF2021 (2022) 'Enhancing the accuracy and impartiality of journalism: reshaping broadcasters' editorial guidelines and practices', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

Elsewhere, the University of Leicester has championed digital skills and leadership for the museums sector.⁸² The research has formulated a nuanced model of digitalisation for museums and a roadmap for digital skills integrations, that has been deployed by the UK museums sector. This work has informed and fed into cultural policy, such as the UK government's Digital Culture Compass in 2020, described as adding academic rigour and credibility.

Health and wellbeing impact

Health and wellbeing are complex areas that are shaped by an individual or group's social, economic, cultural and political experiences. This is a key domain of research for SHAPE disciplines, where a significant body of work influences healthcare sector practices and public understanding of health that can complement STEM research and innovation in this area. Knowledge or lived experiences around health – such as those surrounding health inequalities, the relationship between culture and wellbeing, or depictions of chronic illness and disabilities – are driven by SHAPE research, with crucial insights derived by Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies scholars.

An example of practice-led research is a multi-component submission to UOA 33 from the Queen Mary University of London.⁸³ Outputs include a feature-length film documentary – ISLAND – and multiscreen gallery video installations - *The Interval and The Instant* - supplemented by an education toolkit. The impact of this is substantive: the toolkit has been licensed by NHS trusts and hospices for staff and student training. It has also provided a delicately balanced and sensitive portrayal of a challenging subject area for both a general audience, and to professionals and medical students within the field of palliative care, creating "opportunities for engagement and increased familiarity with a challenging subject".

Researchers at the Royal College of Music have developed transformational insights into the relationship between music and maternal mental health, a project submitted to UOA 34.⁸⁴ The findings from the project directly contributed to a 10-week programme at Guys and St Thomas NHS Foundation Trust for women exhibiting symptoms of postnatal depression, with 300 women having benefitted from the service. The research has been cited by the World Health Organisation on how arts improve health and wellbeing, whilst also informing the development of professional services led by both music and healthcare practitioners that combine music benefits with better health and wellbeing outcomes.

Research funding

This part of the chapter turns to the research funding landscape by analysing HESA cost centre data for academic year 2021/22. Using cost centre 145 Media Studies, this section will unpack the different research funding sources - including research councils and other income streams – and compare this with all SHAPE disciplines.

Academic funding in the UK operates according to a dual support system. This consists of unhyphenated funding based on quality assessment (such as the Research Excellence Framework) given to institutions as block grants (referred to as Quality Related, or 'QR' funding), and peer-reviewed competition funding, which is usually for specific projects or programmes. As it is not possible to his section breaks down funding that will have been received for specific projects and programmes. These funding streams include: UK Research Councils, charities, the UK central government and local authorities, as well as EU bodies.⁸⁵

⁸² REF2021 (2022) 'Building the Digital Confidence and Skills of International Museum Workforces through Policy and Practice', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

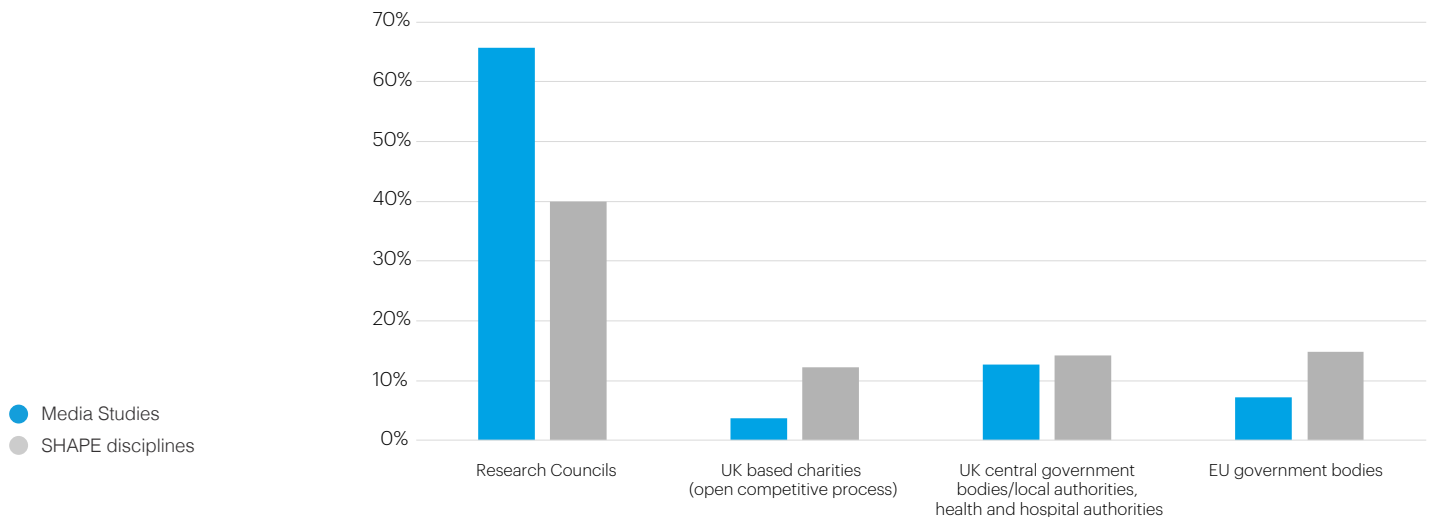
⁸³ REF2021 (2022) 'Increasing Public and Professional Understanding of Death, Dying and Palliative Care through Film', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁸⁴ REF2021 (2022) 'Music and Maternal Mental Health', *Impact Case Study Database* [Accessed November 2023].

⁸⁵ For further information on how QR funding is used, see: Bennett Institute for Public Policy (2021) *Exploring the value of QR in supporting researcher-scale activities* [Accessed March 2024].

In 2021/22, higher education institutions in the UK received £20,917,000 in overall research grants and contracts for Media Studies. Of this, £13,728,000 came from UK research council funding and £7,189,000 from other income sources. Figure 35 compares the proportion of income from different funding sources of Media Studies with all SHAPE disciplines. Media Studies had the highest proportion of research council funding of all SHAPE disciplines. 66% of Media Studies' contracts and grants income came from research councils. By comparison, this was 40% for all SHAPE disciplines.

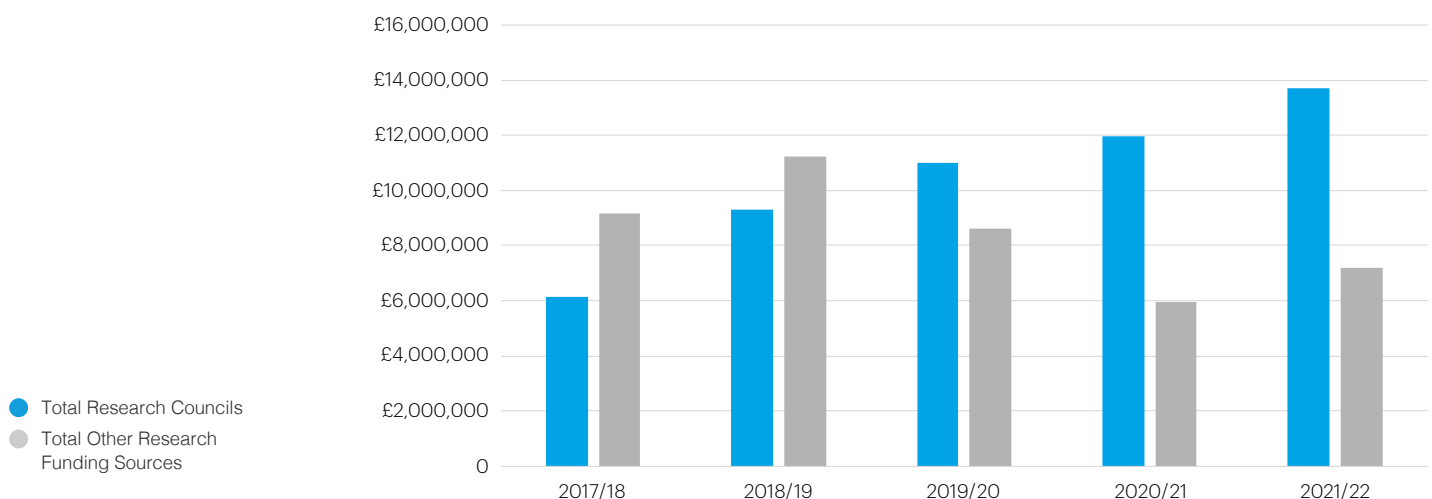
Figure 35. Research grants & contracts income for cost centre 145 Media Studies and across SHAPE cost centres, 2021/22



Source: HESA Funding Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

The amount of research grants and contracts funding received from different sources has changed over a five-year period, as seen in Figure 36. In 2017/18, 60% of total research income for Media Studies came through from non-research council sources. Notably, 30% of all income for that year came from EU government bodies alone, this being £5,068,000. Since 2017/18, funding from EU government bodies has decreased by 22% on average per year. This may be linked to delays with the UK's association to Horizon Europe, the EU's funding programme for research and innovation, in that period. Meanwhile, this coincides with increased funding from the UK central government, which could indicate Horizon replacement funds.

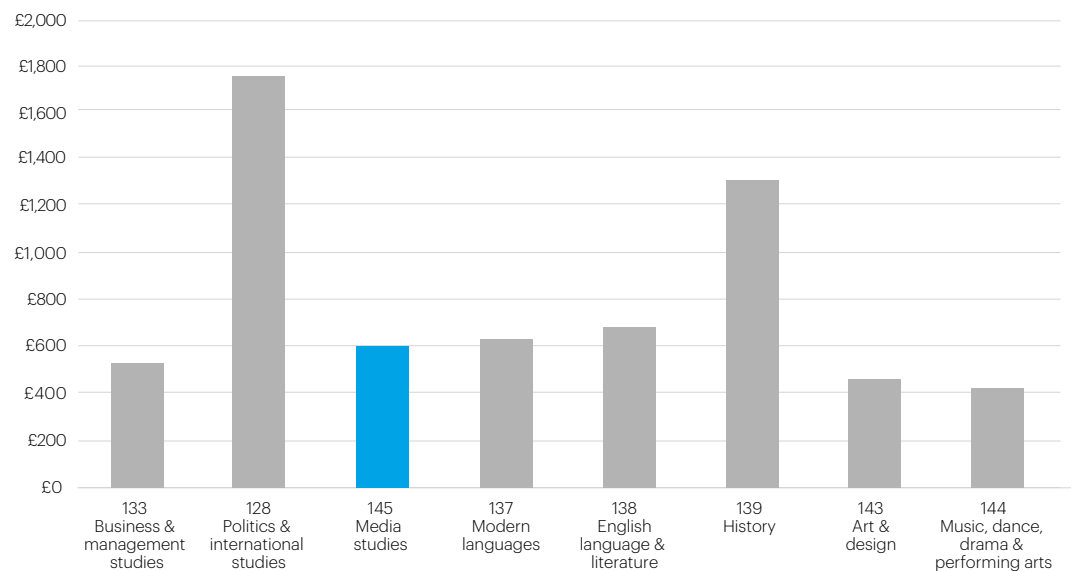
Figure 36. Comparison of research funding sources for cost centre 145 Media Studies, 2017/18-2021/22



Source: HESA Funding Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Figure 37 shows that Media Studies has some of the lowest levels of research funding per FTE research staff member when compared with other SHAPE cost centres. In 2021/22, this came to an average of £588.38 of research grants and income per FTE research staff. The total research income (as recorded in HES data) that Media Studies receives is lower than average for other SHAPE disciplines, while the number of FTE research staff is higher than the SHAPE aggregate. However, further research is needed to understand how this level of funding works at an institutional level. This data also does not correspond to a measure of outputs or longevity and serves as a snapshot rather than a longitudinal trend.

Figure 37. Research grants & income per FTE research staff for cost centre 145 Media Studies and other SHAPE cost centres, 2021/22

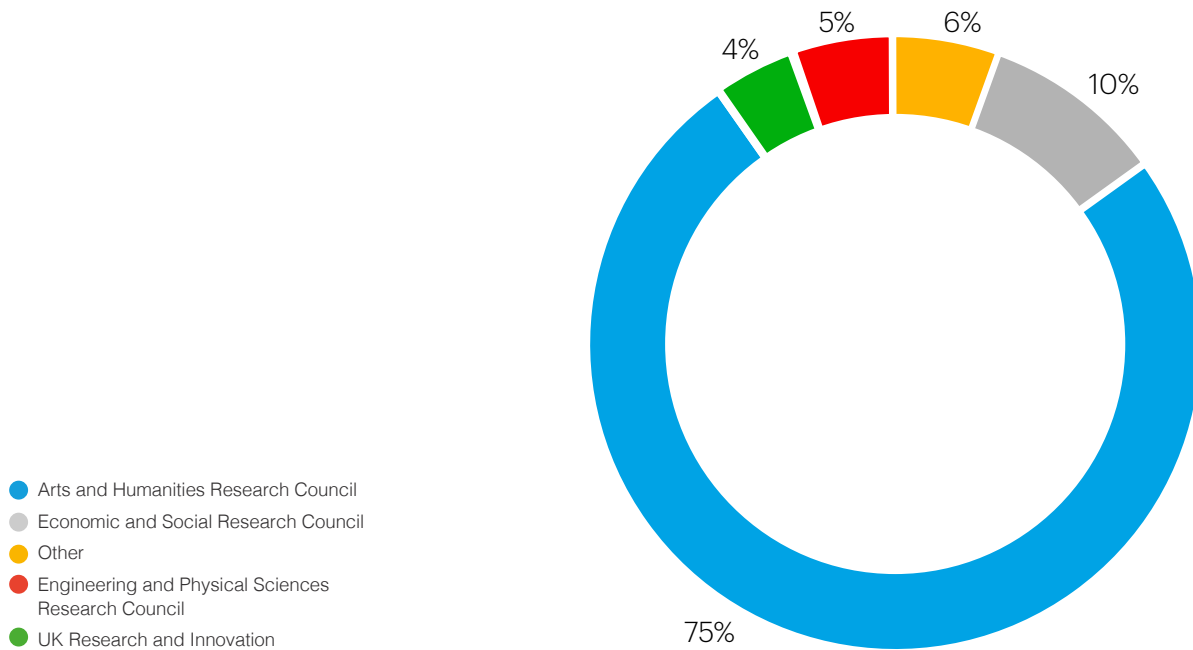


Source: HESA Funding Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

A breakdown of research council funding for the cost centre 145 Media Studies, as presented in Figure 38, reveals that 75% came from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) in 2021/22, a total of £10,320,000. With AHRC accounting for the highest proportion of research council funding, this is followed by 10% from the Economic and Social Research Council, and 6% from 'Other' research funders (such as the British Academy or the Leverhulme Trust).

In 2021/22, £708,000 came from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, representing 5% of council revenue received that year (although this has declined over the past five years). This also marked the first academic year (since 2015/16) where Media Studies received funding from the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. This suggests further cross-pollination of disciplines and sectors across different areas of impact.

Figure 38. Research councils and the National Academies income for cost centre 145 Media Studies, 2021/22



Source: HESA Funding Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Summary

The results from the REF2021 exercise, used to guide a quantitative analysis, has revealed an impressive quality and breadth of research produced by a range of institutions across the country. There is outstanding evidence of the impact and value intrinsic to Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies disciplines, their scope, methods and approaches, for society, communities and multiple sectors and organisations. Research has led to tangible outcomes that bring benefits for marginalised groups from the hyperlocal level, right through to multi-governance policy changes at a global scale.

5. Graduate Outcomes

This chapter analyses the data about Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduate outcomes. The first part explores and identifies the key skills developed by Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates during their degrees. The second part analyses graduate outcomes datasets to better understand the activities and reflections of graduates at certain points after they have completed their degrees. The chapter draws on findings from the Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey and the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data. The GO survey was developed to replace the Destination of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) survey due, in part, to flaws in the latter. The GO and DLHE surveys are different exercises that measure different things. In addition, the introduction of HeCoS and CAH coding from 2019/20 means that it is not possible to compare GO data from 2017/18 and 2018/19 directly with GO data from 2019/20. As such, we have focused our analysis on the latest available data from GO (2020/21).

Skills and Sectors

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies constitutes a diverse curriculum of research, critical thought, creative production and professional practice.⁸⁶ Graduates are equipped with the reflexive tools to engage with a variety of aesthetic and cultural phenomena and are highly literate in media and digital practices. Course structures further prepare graduates for the workplace, through a mix of sustained self-directed projects and collaborative group work. The QAA Benchmark identifies six areas of teaching and learning strategies unique to Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies subjects, as laid out in Table 6.

Table 6. Teaching and Learning Strategies for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies subjects, repurposed from the QAA Benchmark Statement 2023

Awareness raising and knowledge acquisition	Students engage with new areas of knowledge and experience, and broadens and deepens existing knowledge
Conceptual and critical understanding	Students engage in critical analysis of texts, fields of knowledge, concepts, and cultural and production practices, testing their analysis against familiar or preconceived understanding
Practice	Students acquire practical experience, skills and the opportunity for creative expression and/or thinking in a range of activities, from empirical research to production work to work placements
Creativity	Students originate and develop innovative ideas, solving problems, design and aesthetics, fostered through personal development and self-awareness
Literacies	Students develop confidence in reading the representational, technological and cultural significance of media, film, communication and cultural texts and contexts
Critical reflection	Students acquire and reflect on new knowledge and understanding, and on their own learning experiences and performance.

⁸⁶ Quality Assurance Agency (2024) *Subject Benchmark Statement: Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies* [Accessed April 2024]

These skills are transferable to a broad range of industries, which is reflected in the most recently available Graduate Outcomes survey data. The data provides a snapshot of graduate careers 15 months after completion of their degrees. Table 7 shows the top five destinations for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies according to Graduate Outcomes data for 2020/21. Overall, nearly one third of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates in 2020/21 went into the Information and Communication sector, the largest proportion. This is followed by Professional scientific and technical activities at 12% of graduates.

Table 7. Proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates (all levels) by sector, 2020/21

Sector	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates
(J) Information and communication	28%
(M) Professional, scientific and technical activities	12%
(G) Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11%
(P) Education	8%
(R) Arts, entertainment and recreation	7%

Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Breaking this down by codes, (24-01-04) Journalism and (25-01-04) Cinematics and Photography have a higher share of graduates who enter the Information and Communication sector than the proportion for all Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate graduates, at 38% and 30% respectively. In comparison, a smaller proportion of (24-01-05) Media Studies graduates were in the Information and Communication sector (21%); the second highest proportion (14%) for these graduates was in Professional, scientific and technical activities.

These findings are broadly indicative of the skills, education and training developed in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies degree programmes, and the important role of these graduates to the economy and society. Overall, the creative sectors have grown 1.5 times the rate of the UK economy over the past decade.⁸⁷ This is reflected in the spread of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies courses in higher education, signalling the industry's need for "new and diverse talent".⁸⁸ This is further bolstered by the strong ties fostered between academia and industry, such as partnerships with cultural institutions, bodies or organisations within the creative sectors. The QAA Benchmark Statement points to the entrepreneurial acumen amongst Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates as cultivated by their degree programmes. For example, graduates will be able to "apply a high level of entrepreneurial skills, if and where appropriate, in dealing with audiences, users, clients, consumers, markets and sources", in addition to the in-depth subject knowledge of the creative and cultural sectors.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2023) 'Creative Industries Sector Vision: a Joint Plan to Drive Growth, Build Talent and Develop Skills', GOV.UK [accessed 24 November 2023]

⁸⁸ Quality Assurance Agency (2023) Subject Benchmark Statement: Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies [Accessed April 2024]

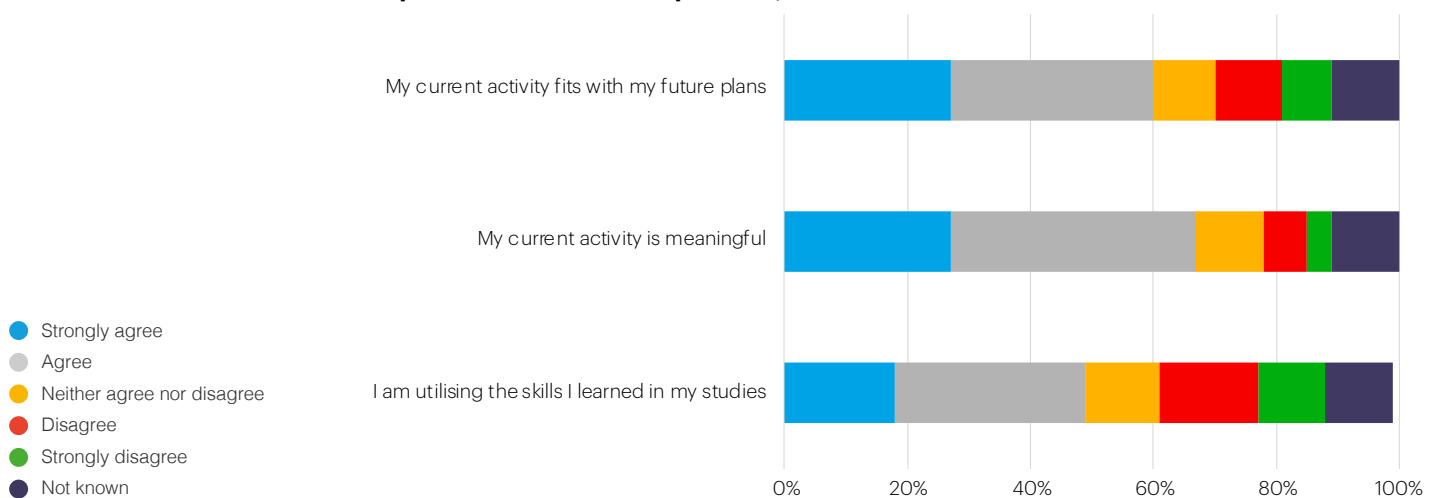
⁸⁹ Ibid, p.9.

As important as it is to emphasise the value of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies to the wider economy, the field prepares students to become engaged citizens with a critical understanding of equality, community, culture, and society. To that end, graduates will develop an understanding of the relationship between the creative industries, cultural institutions and wider democratic implications. The QAA subject benchmark highlights the strengths and abilities of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates, which outlines that these graduates will be able to:⁹⁰

- Apply their critical understanding to ethically and culturally responsible use of communication, media, film and cultural forms, practices and technologies in both professional and everyday contexts;
- Critically appraise socio-cultural and political debates relevant to communication, media, film and culture;
- Consider the ways in which diverse communities and organisations can contribute to the development of media and cultural policies and practices;
- Analyse the role of community and participatory media and communication forms in contributing to cultural and political debates and the contesting of power;
- Consider global sustainability practices and debates in relation to communication and cultural forms.

This is conveyed by the reflections section of the Graduate Outcomes survey. This section invites graduates to reflect on the skills they have developed through their degree programme, how meaningful their current activity is, and how this current activity ensures they are on track with their future plans. In Figure 39, over two-thirds of first degree graduates from Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate programmes agreed or strongly agreed their current activity is meaningful. For graduates from across the SHAPE disciplines, the proportion was 72%. Meanwhile, 49% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates from this cohort agreed or strongly agreed they were currently using the skills learnt from their degrees, and 60% agreed or strongly agreed that their current activity fitted with their future plans. Across the SHAPE disciplines, these figures were slightly higher with 55% of graduates agreeing or strongly agreeing they are currently using the skills learnt from their degrees, and 65% agreeing or strongly agreeing that their current activity fitted with their future plans.

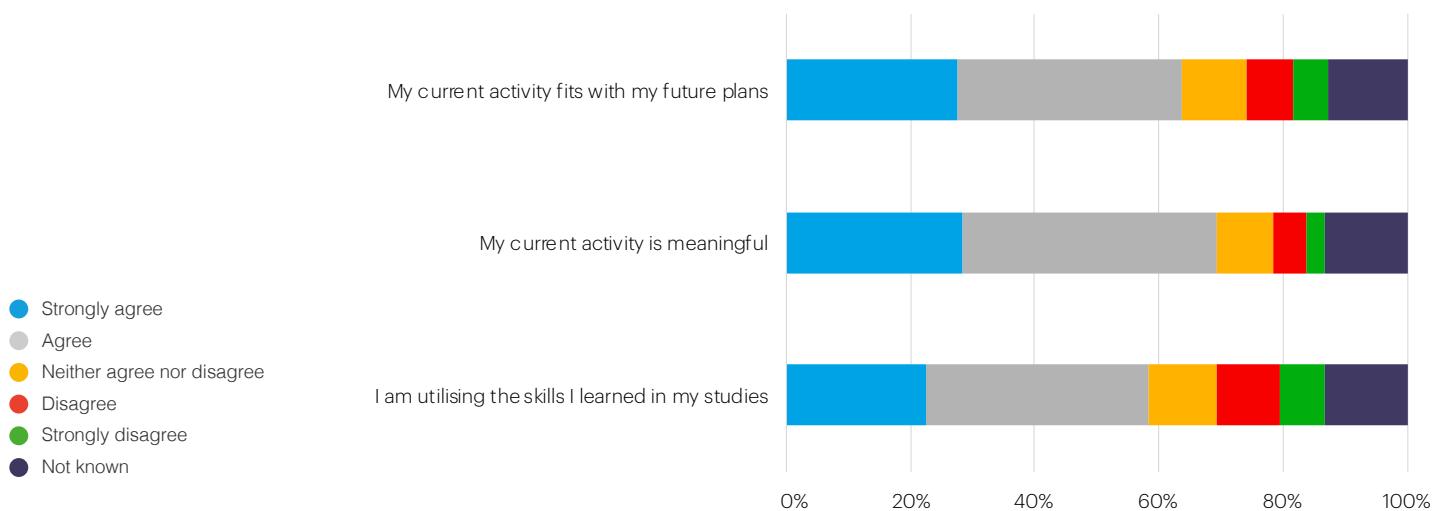
Figure 39. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies first degree graduates, responses to GO reflection questions, 2020/21 (FPE)



Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

For Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate postgraduate leavers, 69% of graduates agree or strongly agree that their current activity is meaningful, as shown in Figure 40. In response to whether Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate postgraduate leavers are using the skills developed in their degree, 58% agreed or strongly agreed. This was at 65% for all SHAPE graduates. Finally, 64% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate postgraduate leavers agreed or strongly agreed that their current activity means they are on track for fulfilling their future plans, while 71% of SHAPE postgraduate leavers agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Figure 40. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate leavers, responses to GO reflection questions, 2020/21 (FPE)

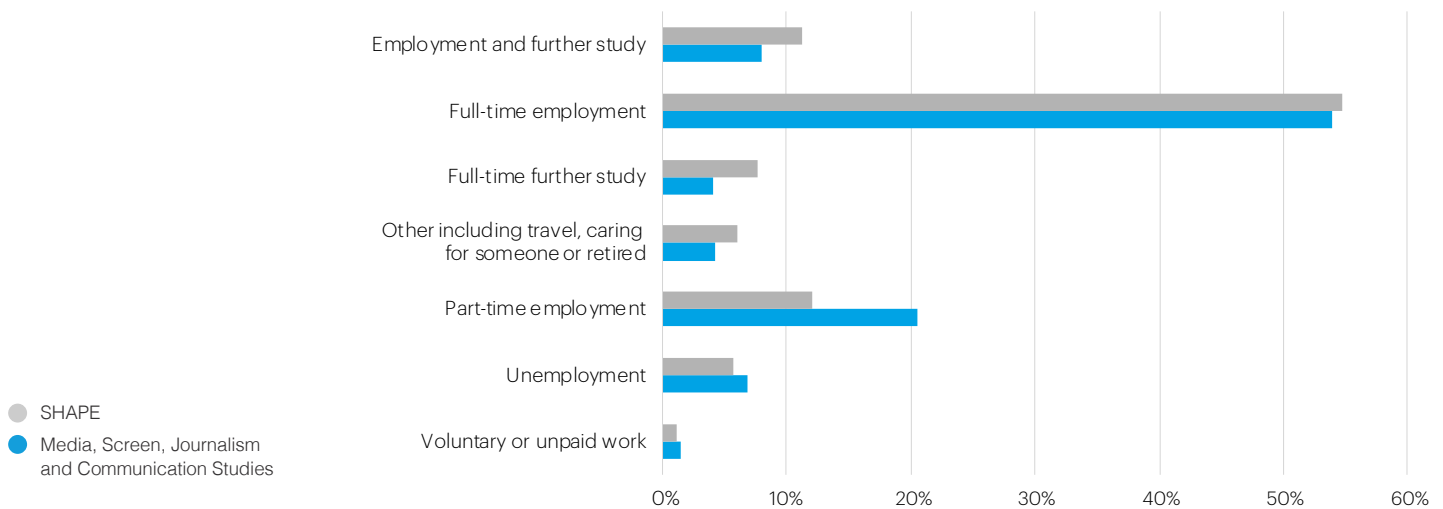


Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Graduate activity

Digging down into graduate activity as displayed in Figure 41, 54% of first-degree Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate graduates in 2020/21 are in full time employment. This proportion was very close to the proportion across the SHAPE disciplines (55%). Of the Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate graduate from the 2020/21 cohort, 7% were not in employment, compared with 6% of SHAPE graduates. However, 20% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates are in part-time employment, eight-percentage points more than all SHAPE graduates. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates were less likely to be in full-time further study, with 4% entering this route compared with 8% for SHAPE graduates. There are several possible factors, such as job precarity in the creative sectors, free-lancing and graduates who are building creative portfolios.

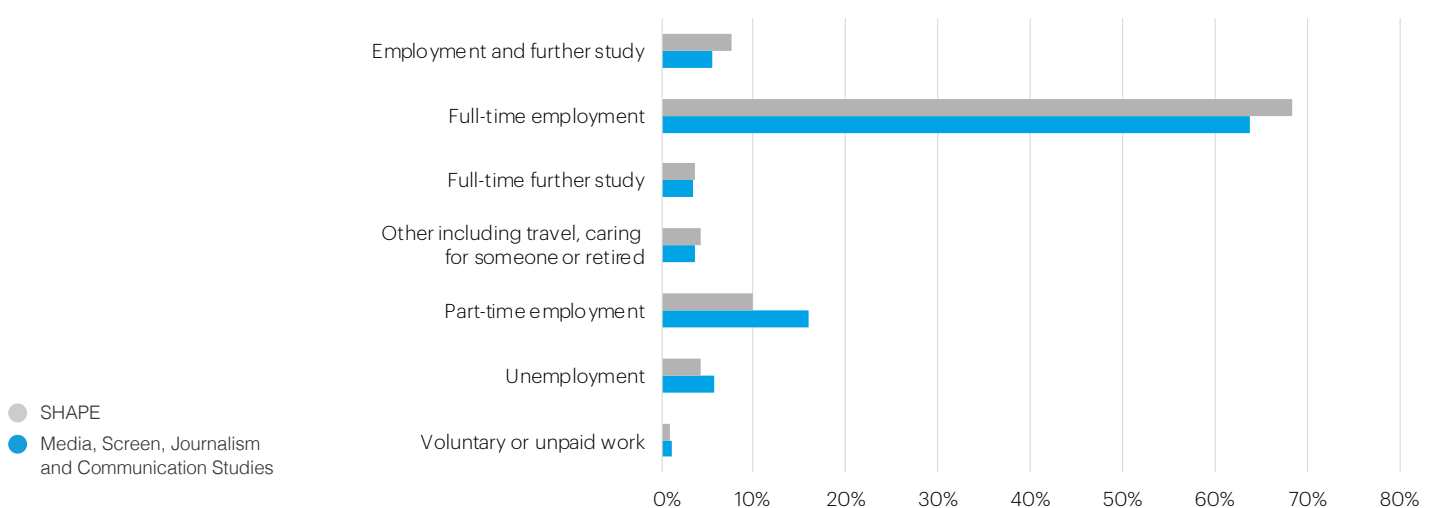
Figure 41. Percentage of first degree graduates across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and all SHAPE graduates by activity, 2020/21 (FPE)



Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Turning to Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate postgraduate taught leavers, over two thirds are in full-time employment, as shown in Figure 42. Although there is still a higher proportion of postgraduate leavers in part-time employment than the SHAPE average, the percentage point difference is smaller than for first-degree graduates: 16% for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and 10% for SHAPE. A higher proportion of all SHAPE graduates were in employment and further study than for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, at 8% and 6% respectively. Both Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and SHAPE had the same proportion of postgraduate taught leavers in voluntary or unpaid work (1%) and Other activities (including travel, caring for someone or retired – 4%).

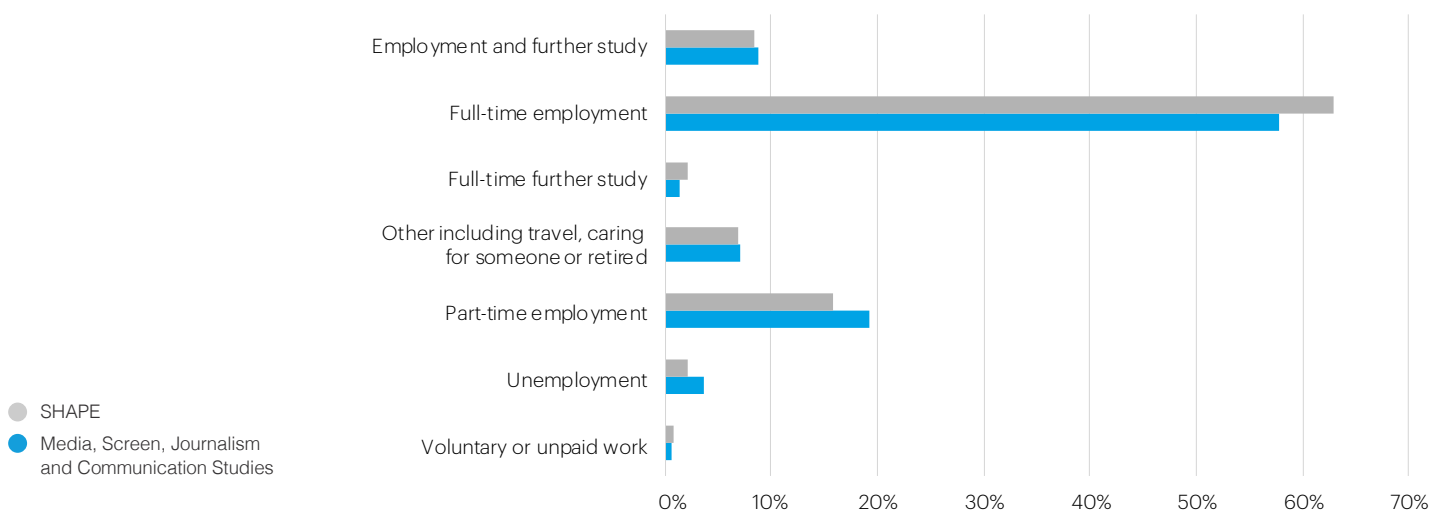
Figure 42. Percentage of postgraduate taught leavers across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and all SHAPE leavers by activity, 2020/21 (FPE)



Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

For Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate research leavers, as shown in Figure 43, 9% were in combined Employment and further study, a higher proportion than for all SHAPE leavers, which was 8%. Across both Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and for all SHAPE graduates, unemployment rates were lower when compared to postgraduate taught or first-degree graduates, where 4% of postgraduate research leavers in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies are unemployed. This was higher than the proportion for unemployment across all SHAPE postgraduate leavers (2%). Continuing the trend with the previous two study levels, 19% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate research leavers were in part-time employment compared to 16% for all SHAPE leavers.

Figure 43. Percentage of postgraduate research leavers across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and all SHAPE leavers by activity, 2020/21 (FPE)

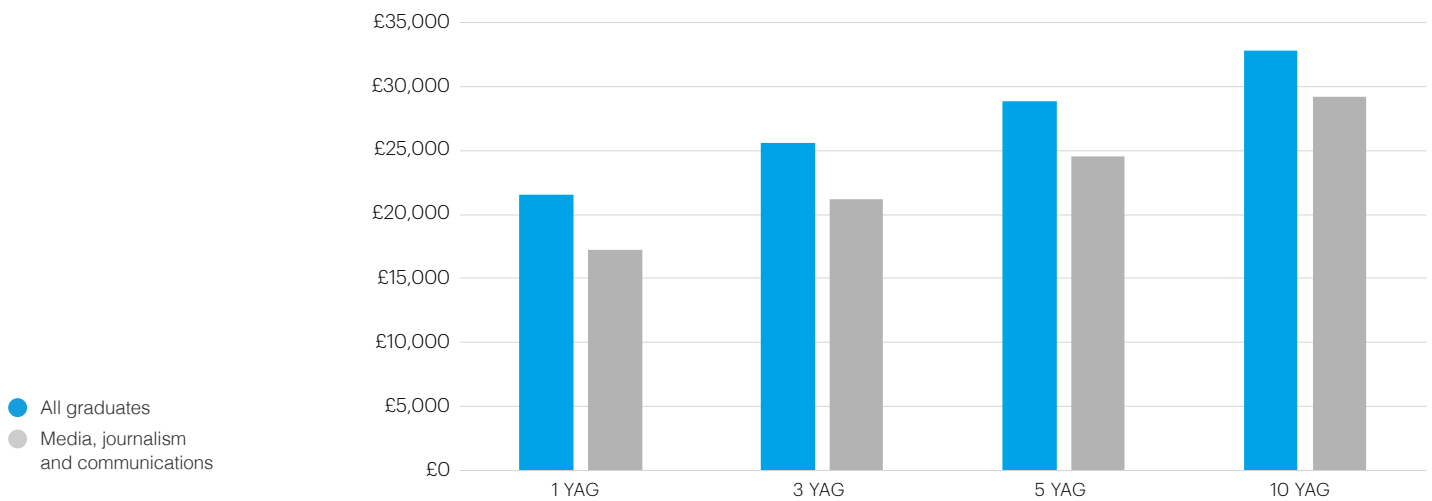


Source: HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey Data 2012/13-2021/22 © Jisc [October 2023]

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduate earnings

There is a clear incremental increase in median salaries of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate graduates according to LEO data. Although the median figures are lower than for all disciplines, this nonetheless corresponds to the general trend in the salary increases at 1, 3, 5 and 10 years after graduation, as shown in Figure 44. As of 2020/21, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies aggregate graduates earned a median salary of £24,500 five years after graduation. This compares with a median salary of £28,800 for all other disciplines. However, the 2020/21 data shows a 70% jump in the first year after graduation and the median salary at 10 years for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, going from £17,200 to £29,200. For all disciplines, this is a smaller percentage increase of 53%.

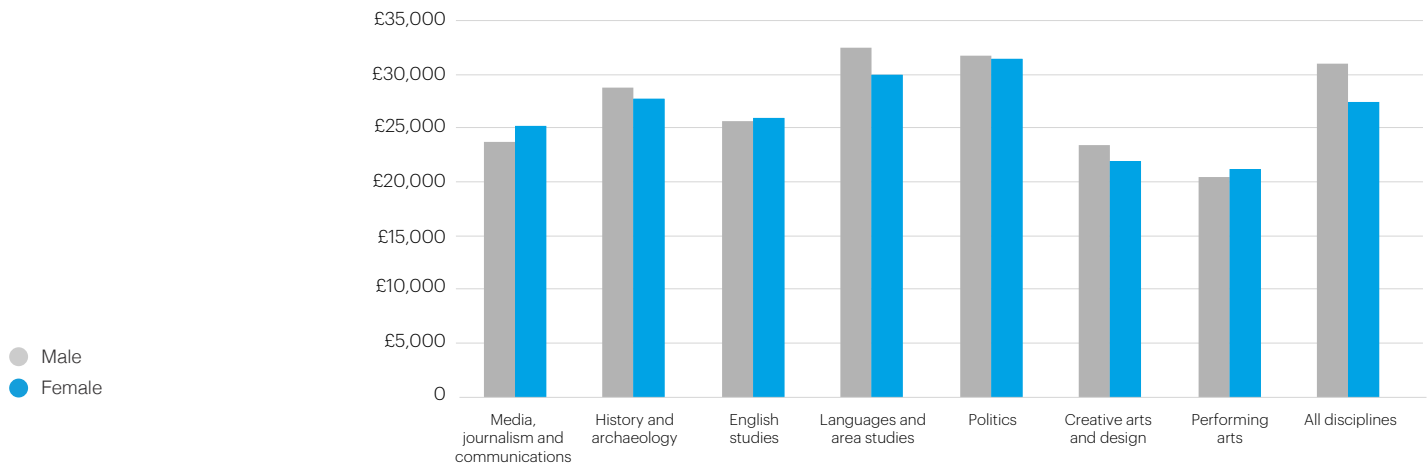
Figure 44. Median earnings of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates and all graduates, 1, 3, 5 and 10 years after graduation, 2020/21



Source: LEO Graduate and Postgraduate Outcomes 2020/21 [October 2023]

Female Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates generally have stronger earning power than their male counterparts. LEO data for 2020/21 shows the median salary for female graduates five years after graduation was £25,200 – this is 6% higher than the figure for male graduates (£23,700). This may reflect the fact that there are more female Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students than male students, as detailed in chapter 2. Figure 45 shows the median earnings of male and female graduates five years after graduation for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in comparison with SHAPE disciplines and for all graduates from all disciplines. Across all subjects, as shown in the graph, there is a £3,600 difference between median earnings, corresponding to £31,000 for male graduates and £27,400 for female graduates. Although the gap for the SHAPE subjects is not as wide, on the whole male graduates earn higher median salaries. For instance, this translates to a 9% higher median salary for Languages and Area Studies male graduates, and 7% for male graduates from Creative arts and design (although this discipline has the lowest median salaries compared to the others). Meanwhile, female graduates from English Studies and Performing Arts had higher median salaries after five years; however, the percentage difference between genders in median earnings is lower than for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. For English Studies, female graduates earned 1% more than their male counterpart; whereas Performing Arts graduates saw a 3% difference in median salaries, with female graduates earning more than their male counterparts.

Figure 45. Median earnings of graduates from Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and other SHAPE disciplines five years after graduation, by sex 2020/21



Source: LEO Graduate and Postgraduate Outcomes 2020/21 [October 2023]

Summary

This chapter has provided a snapshot of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates in the UK, considering the skills that graduates acquire during their degree programmes and the sectors they may enter. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates have strong connections to the digital, technological, creative and technical sectors. These are important to the UK economy and wider society.⁹¹ This chapter has also looked more broadly at the employment activity of graduates, as broken down by study level, which shows that the majority of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates enter full-time employment. Whilst median salaries are comparatively lower than for other disciplines, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates will experience a greater increase in earnings between their first year after graduation and a decade later. Further insights into whether the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted employment activity across all disciplines and including Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies would benefit future analysis.

⁹¹ The British Academy (2020) *Qualified for the Future: Quantifying demand for arts, humanities and social sciences skills*, p. 4

6. Reflections: key themes

This report has shown Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies to be a substantial and popular field in UK higher education with the data analysis highlighting some contrasting trends at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, indications of a transforming staff cohort, and a field of research that is impactful, diverse and dynamic. This concluding chapter draws out the key findings from the data analysis with some observations about the field and UK higher education more widely. Using these findings, we hope to facilitate further discussion, strategic planning and exploration of the provision of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in the sector.

Numbers of international students from outside the EU numbers in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies are expanding, particularly at postgraduate level

The high proportion of international students undertaking Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies courses in the UK demonstrates the pull factor of the field's international reputation. Between 2012/13 and 2018/19, non-EU domiciled undergraduate students in the field grew by 62%, with an increase of 13% between 2019/20 and 2021/22. Postgraduate taught students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies who were non-EU domiciled rose by 35% between 2012/13 and 2018/19, with an increase of 20% between 2019/20 and 2021/22.

While Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has seen higher growth rates in international students than many other fields, there is a wider trend of increasing international numbers across UK higher education. There was a 25% increase in non-EU domiciled students across the SHAPE disciplines in 2021/22 on the previous year.⁹² There are a complex series of factors behind this, the full analysis of which are beyond the scope of the report.⁹³ A key factor is that tuition fees for UK students have been frozen at £9,250 since 2017 and have reduced in real terms due to inflation. This means that universities are increasingly reliant on the higher fees (particularly at postgraduate level) of international students to subsidise their teaching activity and international fees may amount to as much as one-fifth of UK HEI income.⁹⁴

With a high proportion of international students, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies courses would be particularly at risk if international student numbers were restricted or fell. Practitioners in the field may then be concerned about government moves to restrict those on student visas bringing dependants and discussions about limiting or ending the graduate visa.

However, the international picture is not equal. The number of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students domiciled in the EU fell dramatically in 2021/22 – a decrease of 32% at postgraduate taught and 28% at undergraduate level. This drop, which corresponds to the 2021 increase to tuition fees for EU nationals, is likely a significant factor behind an overall decrease in 2021/22 on the previous year for undergraduate students in the field, where UK domiciled student numbers have plateaued in recent years, in contrast to an ongoing increase at postgraduate level. A decrease in EU domiciled students impacted cohorts across all disciplines in 2021/22, indicating a longer-term shift in the profile of student cohorts. This

⁹² The change in 2020/21 on 2019/20 was only 6%.

⁹³ House of Commons Library (2023), 'International students in UK higher education' [Accessed January 2024].

⁹⁴ García, C.A., Weale, S., Swan, L., and Symons, H. (2023), 'Fifth of UK universities' income comes from overseas students, figures show', *The Guardian* [Accessed January 2024].

should be seen as a cautionary tale to the sector as EU domiciled student numbers are a smaller proportion, paid lower fees than non-EU domiciled students, and, to an extent, the shortfall has been made up by increased non-EU domiciled students. A downturn in non-EU domiciled students would have a more severe financial impact.

There are imbalances and contrasts in the profiles of staff and student cohorts, but younger staff and longitudinal analysis of both cohorts indicate ongoing shifts

There are a number of imbalances to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) indicators identified across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in the report's analysis. At undergraduate and postgraduate levels, the body of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students may not be fully representative of England and Wales's ethnic diversity in 2021/22. Those who identified as 'Asian' were underrepresented at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. In contrast, those who identified as 'Black' or 'Mixed' were representative of society at both levels. Female students were overrepresented, making up 55% of the student body in 2021/22.

In contrast to the female student majority, 55% of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies academic staff are male. The report also identified other important imbalances, including that higher proportions of female staff were on fixed-term rather than open-ended or permanent contracts when compared to male staff (though nearly half of those at professor level were female). Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies had a high proportion of staff with British nationality (81%), a figure that has decreased over the last decade but is still higher than many other SHAPE disciplines. This differs to the international diversity identified among the field's student cohort.

Both those who identify as 'Asian' and 'Black' are underrepresented in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies staff when compared to the ethnic diversity of England and Wales. Moreover, alongside those who identify as 'Mixed', these three groups have lower proportions of staff on open-ended/permanent contracts and lower proportions at professor level compared to those who identify as 'White'.

The analysis in the report suggests that the profile of younger staff cohorts is shifting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) indicators. Since 2017/18, female staff have been increasing at a faster rate than male staff. The proportion of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies academic staff identifying as 'Asian', 'Black' and 'Mixed' has increased over the last decade. The shifts in both the profile of younger staff and improvements over the last decade in other protected characteristics could be linked to the success of EDI policies in recruitment, which are working towards making both higher education and the graduate pipeline more representative of the UK's population, though there are other factors at work which are beyond the scope of this report. There are signs then of the field changing, but this must also be better reflected in contract types and senior echelons.

Geographic and institutional trends in student recruitment differ between undergraduate and postgraduate courses indicating unequal growth across the field

Nearly four-fifths of UK HEIs offer courses in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. At undergraduate level in 2021/22, the breadth of HEI providers by institutional mission groups offering courses in the field was markedly broad with all 24 Russell Group HEIs, 22 MillionPlus HEIs, 14 GuildHE HEIs, 12 University Alliance HEIs and 9 UKADIA HEIs, as well as 62 HEIs not in these five mission groups. This wide range links to the historical development of the field which has seen it spread across the full spectrum of the UK's higher education landscape. There was a contrasting trend however at postgraduate taught level, where the Russell Group HEIs were the largest mission group in the field by a considerable margin with strong growth rates over the last decade, increasing from 17% of all Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies postgraduate taught students in 2012/13 to 29% in 2021/22.

While Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is taught and researched in all countries and regions of the UK, the report has highlighted some contrasting regional trends. For instance, in 2021/22, 33% of postgraduate taught students and 21% of postgraduate research students in the field were based at London HEIs. In the same year, 19% of undergraduate students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies were undertaking their degrees at London HEIs. These high proportions, all above the corresponding figures for the aggregate of SHAPE disciplines, may reflect the concentration of much of the UK's media infrastructure and the headquarters of numerous leading broadcasters, news agencies and creative industries in and around London.

These trends point towards more diversity in institutional type and location at undergraduate level but an increasing pull towards London and growing Russell Group dominance at postgraduate taught level. While an increasing proportion of postgraduates at Russell Group HEIs is the norm across the SHAPE disciplines, the appeal of London in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is markedly higher than the SHAPE aggregate figure. A consequence of this unequal growth may be financial and recruitment challenges for HEIs outside of London and outside of the Russell Group if current trends, particularly at postgraduate levels, continue.

There is a growing appetite for postgraduate taught courses in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies. Trends at undergraduate and postgraduate research level have been more mixed in recent years

Between 2012/13 and 2018/19, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies saw an increase of 27% in postgraduate taught students, and an increase of 16% between 2019/20 and 2021/22. This consistent growth over the last decade indicates success in appealing to graduates as they look to further their skillsets and careers. Underpinning the trend in numbers are increases to both UK and non-EU domiciled students, explored in more detail above. However, trends in postgraduate research students in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies showed a different pattern in recent years: with an increase of 14% from 2012/13 to 2018/19 but declining by 4% between 2019/20 and 2021/22.

Turning to undergraduate student number trends, between 2012/13 and 2018/19 undergraduates in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies grew by 7%. From 2019/20 to 2021/22, undergraduates in the field fell by 2% from 60,050 to 58,700. The small drop in the more recent period meant that undergraduate Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies students fell from 6% of SHAPE undergraduates to 5%. Within the different HESA subject codes that make up the field, there were some contrasting trends, with 'Journalism' undergraduates declining from 9,200 in 2019/20 to 8,205 in 2021/22, while 'Media Studies' undergraduates students rose over the same period from 21,970 to 23,045.

There are both risks and opportunities to these trends: the field of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is considerable in size at undergraduate level and there is little sign that numbers will drop dramatically in the near future. At the same time there are indications that some streams in the field are not flourishing at this level. For instance, at postgraduate taught level, growing numbers are graduating with the experience and skillsets of an advanced degree in the field, but there is a risk for the sector of becoming too reliant on the higher fees of postgraduates.

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies equips graduates with the critical and creative skills needed for the UK economy

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates are highly literate in media and digital skills that are transferable to a broad range of industries, not least the creative and communication sectors. Graduate Outcomes data shows that 66% of graduates from the field across all levels of study entered the services industry in 2021/22. The Information and Communication sector and the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector are in the top five graduate destinations for the 2020/21 cohort.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport's UK Digital Strategy Paper sets out strengthening the digital education pipeline as a key policy objective, but with an emphasis on boosting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) undergraduate places.⁹⁵ Yet the data into the pathways of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates as unpacked in this report, examined against the core higher education syllabus explored in Chapters 1 and 5, shows the value and importance of SHAPE graduates from fields such as Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies to digital sectors.

To that end, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies graduates come away attuned to digitalisation and technology, its (mis)uses and applications, and the implication of rapid technological development. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies fosters an immersive learning environment through student-led collaborative projects, practice-based learning and experimenting with audio-visual production, cinematography, or creative software.

The social, cultural and economic impact of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies research is far reaching and relevant to global challenges

The REF 2021 cycle results demonstrate a rigorous and high-performing field. Almost 80% of UOA 33 (Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies) and UOA 34 (Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management) submissions received a 'world-leading' (4*) or 'internationally excellent' (3*) rating for their overall quality. The submissions reflect a research ecosystem that covers several different disciplines, methodologies and practices to improve understanding of our cultural, creative, communication, political and social institutions.

The impact of research submitted to the REF 2021 cycle points to the international influence of UK Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies scholarship, where 47.6% of UOA 34 submissions and 43.8% of UOA 33 submissions were assessed as world-leading in their impact. The case studies captured in this report demonstrate this research excellence. Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has made – and continues to make – profound contributions to society and culture. For example, scholarship may scrutinise political bias in global news, or the ethics of AI and digital behaviours. A common thread woven throughout the diverse spectrum of research are questions which examine society, justice, representation and power in cultural institutions and how values are culturally produced. This also includes research concerned with structural injustices in the creative industries themselves.

The report has identified risks and shifting trends in research funding sources in the field of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies

An increased proportion of world-leading or internationally excellent REF submissions to Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies subjects may correspond to a rise in quality-related (QR) funding between 2021/22 and 2023. UOA 33 received a 15% increase in funding from £21 million in 2021/22 to £24 million in 2022-23. Both rounds of funding were higher than the QR-funding average for Panel D for each of those years. UOA 34 saw a 21% rise to £16 million in 2022-23, higher than the 20% increase for Panel D overall. However, how income from QR-funding is allocated by discipline or activity is at the discretion of individual universities. There is no requirement for institutions to invest this funding to the UOA subjects themselves.

⁹⁵ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (2022), *UK Digital Strategy* [Accessed April 2024].

Over a five-year period, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies has seen a change in the main income source for peer-reviewed competition funding. In 2017/18, 30% of all income for that year came from EU government bodies alone but that has since decreased by 22% on average per year. This may be linked to delays to the UK's association to Horizon Europe, the EU's funding programme for research and innovation, during that period. Meanwhile, this coincides with increased funding from the UK central government, which could indicate Horizon replacement funds. Total research council funding has increased since 2017/18 and grants and contract income from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) accounted for 75% of research council funding in the year 2021/22. This reliance on AHRC grant income has a level of risk, particularly if the AHRC receives a smaller share of research council funding in the future. In September 2023, the AHRC announced plans to reduce the number of funded doctoral places from 425 to 300 per year by 2029 to 2030. This poses significant risks for maintaining a healthy and sustainable pipeline of researchers from across Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and would be a barrier for postgraduate research students from underrepresented and low-income backgrounds.

It should be noted that for many creative practice research projects, funding may not be fully or at all captured through HESA or Research England data. Non-quantifiable pots may go directly to project leads; for example, those filming a documentary or producing art design as practice-led research, from sources such as cultural or creative organisations, production companies or private foundations.⁹⁶ The UOA 33 summary in the Main Panel D report notes that 58 out of 84 of its submissions had recorded £26.5 million from non-HESA sources for research funding, with other non-HESA income further referenced in submissions.⁹⁷ These sources of income are not always quantified in official figures and therefore the full extent of income received by Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies disciplines towards scholarship is not always known. However, non-HESA funding plays a significant role in supporting and realising creative research across these disciplines and creating strong partnerships between academia and the culture sector.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ REF2021, *Overview Report for Main Panel D*, p.181

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Rossi, F., Baines, N., Kemp, L. and Wilson, E. (2023) *REF 2021: Research Impact and the Arts and Culture Sectors*. National Centre for Academic and Cultural Exchange, p.4 [Accessed April 2024].

Data sources and methodology

This report is primarily an investigation of quantitative evidence related to the field of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, drawing on qualitative evidence and context throughout to nuance the findings. In Phase 0, we undertook scoping calls with members of the academic community in the field. In Phase 1, we formed an Advisory Group, which sought to represent the disciplines of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies, the geography of the UK and a range of institution types. We also agreed our initial report outline, the scope of the project and data methodologies. Phase 2 consisted of the quantitative and qualitative research, including the literature review and an analysis of the REF 2021 Impact Case Studies. In Phase 3, we conducted the writing of the report. Phase 4 included final drafting and sign-off.

This section outlines the data sources and overall methodology in further detail. As well as the contextual information below, and footnotes throughout, a full glossary of terms is found following this section of the report. We have developed the following methodology with guidance from the Advisory Group, whose membership is detailed in the opening pages of this report.

Quantitative data

To analyse staff and student trends, we interpret Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies to align with the cost centres and codes in Table 8. Throughout this report, we use dataset terminology when analysing data from HESA, LEO and REF 2021. However, we recognise that this does not always directly match with the courses and departments in which Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies is taught and researched. Further, Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies often operates beyond and across disciplinary boundaries, especially at the intersections of Modern Languages and Area Studies; Film, Television and Screen Studies; Cultural Studies; Communication Studies; and Media Production. To that end, under guidance from the Advisory Group, the codes were selected according to those which would capture the breadth of the field.

From the academic year 2019/20, HESA introduced a new subject coding system — the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) — to replace the Joint Accounting Coding System (JACS). The Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) groupings were also introduced with the aim of providing standard categories across HECoS and JACS. However, HESA has since determined that the new CAH groupings are incompatible with previous datasets. It is therefore important to note that, while HESA 2019/20 to 2021/22 data are referenced in this report, our use of JACS and CAH coding means there is a break in continuity with earlier time series. Table 8 shows the breakdown of codes utilised in this report for the analysis of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies and a broader aggregate of SHAPE disciplines. Within this report, where variations occur in how Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies data is collected or interpreted this is explained.

Table 8. HESA dataset coding

Coding Sector		Area of analysis
Cost centre	<p>Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies</p> <p>145 Media Studies</p> <p>SHAPE aggregate</p> <p>104 Psychology & behavioural sciences</p> <p>108 Sports science & leisure studies</p> <p>124 Geography & environmental studies</p> <p>125 Area studies</p> <p>126 Archaeology</p> <p>127 Anthropology & development studies</p> <p>128 Politics & international studies</p> <p>129 Economics & econometrics</p> <p>130 Law</p> <p>131 Social work & social policy</p> <p>132 Sociology</p> <p>133 Business & management studies</p> <p>134 Catering & hospitality management</p> <p>135 Education</p> <p>136 Continuing education</p> <p>137 Modern languages</p> <p>138 English language & literature</p> <p>139 History</p> <p>140 Classics</p> <p>141 Philosophy</p> <p>142 Theology & religious studies</p> <p>143 Art & design</p> <p>144 Music, dance, drama & performing arts</p> <p>145 Media studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HESA academic staff data • HESA Research funding data
JACS	<p>Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies</p> <p>(P3) Media Studies</p> <p>(P5) Journalism</p> <p>(W6) Cinematics and Photography</p> <p>SHAPE aggregate</p> <p>(C8) Psychology</p> <p>(B) Social studies</p> <p>(C) Law</p> <p>(D) Business and administrative studies</p> <p>(E) Mass communications & documentation</p> <p>(F) Languages</p> <p>(G) Historical & philosophical studies</p> <p>(H) Creative arts & design</p> <p>(I) Education</p> <p>(J) Combined</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HESA Student data, 2012/13 to 2018/19 • HESA Graduate Outcomes data 2017 to 2018

Coding Sector		Area of analysis
CAH	<p data-bbox="655 315 1010 376">Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies</p> <p data-bbox="655 383 986 412">(CAH15-01-06) cultural studies</p> <p data-bbox="655 418 938 448">(CAH24-01-04) journalism</p> <p data-bbox="655 454 975 483">(CAH24-01-05) media studies</p> <p data-bbox="655 490 1137 519">(CAH25-01-04) cinematics and photography</p> <p data-bbox="655 526 863 555">SHAPE aggregate</p> <p data-bbox="655 562 884 591">(CAH04) psychology</p> <p data-bbox="655 598 914 627">(CAH15) social sciences</p> <p data-bbox="655 633 788 663">(CAH16) law</p> <p data-bbox="655 669 1043 698">(CAH17) business and management</p> <p data-bbox="655 705 1035 734">(CAH19) language and area studies</p> <p data-bbox="655 741 1054 792">(CAH20) historical, philosophical and religious studies</p> <p data-bbox="655 799 1010 828">(CAH22) education and teaching</p> <p data-bbox="655 835 1082 864">(CAH23) combined and general studies</p> <p data-bbox="655 871 991 922">(CAH24) media, journalism and communications</p> <p data-bbox="655 929 1018 1003">(CAH25) design, and creative and performing arts</p> <p data-bbox="655 1010 986 1061">(CAH26) geography, earth and environmental studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1161 315 1485 376">• HESA Student data, 2019/20 to 2021/22 <li data-bbox="1161 383 1485 448">• HESA Graduate Outcomes data, 2018/19 to 2020/21

HESA datasets

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is part of Jisc and collects, assures and disseminates data about higher education in the UK. We have applied the HESA rounding and suppression methodology to datasets used in this report to anonymise statistics for staff and students.⁹⁹ This means that numbers are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5 and numbers less than 2.5 are rounded to 0. Percentages based on a population of less than 22.5 are not published. Due to the application of the rounding methodology, the sub-totals and percentages in a category may not correspond precisely to the sum of the total.

We have used the following datasets from HESA:

- HESA Student, Staff and Finance Data

The HESA finance data in this report provides a breakdown of research grants and contracts by source of income and HESA cost centre. The HESA staff record provides a breakdown of academic staff in higher education institutions by the cost centres to which their academic contracts are assigned. Cost centres are used by HESA to allow for meaningful and granular comparisons between different records. It should be noted that HESA cost centre coding does not align precisely with university departmental structures; it is at the discretion of the submitting HEI as to what cost centre staff are submitted to. As such, the chapters which use cost centre coding will refer to the 'cost centre', rather than to departments. The student data in the report is based on the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS 3) and Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH), which allows for longitudinal analysis between 2012/13-2018/19 and from 2019/20, respectively. At the time of writing, 2021/22 is the latest academic year that is available as data on student trends under CAH. This is outlined in more detail in Table 8. Neither JACS 3 nor CAH coding directly map onto Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies.

⁹⁹

HESA, [Rounding and suppression to anonymise statistics](#) [accessed November 2023].

The CAH disciplinary distinctions in Table 8 have significant overlap. We also note where student or staff data refers to Full Person Equivalent (FPE) or Full Time Equivalent (FTE) respectively.¹⁰⁰

- HESA Graduate Outcomes Data

The Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey data is analysed in chapter 5. The GO survey commenced in 2017/18, replacing the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey. The survey includes graduates who achieved their higher education qualifications from higher education providers in the UK, and from Further Education Colleges (FECs) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This report draws on the GO survey to analyse data on outcomes from 2020/21. As the DLHE survey has a different methodology and constitutes a different measurement that is not directly comparable with GO datasets, we have not utilised this earlier dataset for the purpose of comparison in this report.

Longitudinal Education Outcomes

This report draws on Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data for our analysis of graduate outcomes for Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in chapter 5. LEO data uses administrative data, including tax, benefits and student loans data, to provide information on employment and earnings of higher education graduates at different points after graduation, including 1 year, 3 years, 5 years and 10 years. While this data source can be a valuable tool for measuring graduate outcomes, there are some caveats to the methodology which impact accuracy. The data does not, for example, account for whether a graduate is in full- or part-time work, or has taken time out for childcare. LEO data may also exclude graduates who are self-employed in the relevant tax year, or are working overseas.

Mixed: quantitative and qualitative data

Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies encompasses a wide ranging field of study and research that is intrinsically interdisciplinary and resistant to neat categorisation. This has implications for the visibility of its constituent disciplines through data capture alone. Quantitative data sets fall short of offering the granularity or nuance required to depict a representative profile of the field across higher education. Moreover, complications in definitions, disciplinary parameters and methodologies further curtail how accurately data is recorded or categorised.

This report uses mixed or purely qualitative sources to support the quantitative findings. The two main sources are the REF 2021 and QAA Subject Benchmark Statements (as detailed below). In addition to these sources, chapter 1 on the field's key research and teaching characteristics includes of a literature review which draws on both academic and policy research from across the sector.

Research Excellence Framework

We also utilise the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021) exercise as part of our analysis of academic research in Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies in chapter 5. The REF is the UK's approach to assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions. The REF outcomes are used to inform the allocation of some £2 billion per year of public funding (or Quality Related research funding) across UK higher education institutions. Submissions to REF are given a weighted assessment for their overall research quality profile based on three sub-profiles: impact, output and environment. It was first carried out in its current format in 2014.

¹⁰⁰ HESA (2021/22), 'Count of students vs full-person equivalent (FPE) vs full-time equivalent (FTE)', Definitions: Students [Accessed November 2023]; HESA (2021/22), 'Staff full-time equivalent', Definitions: Staff [Accessed November 2023].

The report analysed the quantitative data from the results of the REF exercise as well as a qualitative analysis of panel and sub-panel reports. We align our analysis of REF 2021 with Panel D, Units of Assessment 33 (Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies) and 34 (Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management). Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies related research appears extensively in other Units of Assessment and sub-panels. Instances of Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies related research are present, for example, in submissions to 25 (Area Studies), 26 (Modern Languages and Linguistics), 27 (English Language and Literature) and 32 (Art and Design: History, Theory and Practice).

This report also engages with the impact case studies submitted to REF 2021, which assess the wider contributions of research. Impact case studies offer insight of how research conducted at an institution within a specific timeframe has resulted in a change or benefit against a broad range of impact types: cultural, economic, environmental, health, legal, political, societal, and technological.

It should be noted that procedural and classification changes for REF 2021 mean that an accurate comparison between 2014 and 2021 is not always possible.¹⁰¹ Our findings will refer to the 2014 results to compare quality profiles and submission changes, for example, but with the caveat that any comparison should be treated as an estimate rather than a like-for-like comparison.

QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies 2024

We refer to the QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies throughout the report to describe the scope and delivery of the field's academic programmes. Subject Benchmark Statements provide general guidance on the structure and content of bachelor's and master's degree programmes in the UK. QAA Subject Benchmark Statements are written by an advisory group of subject specialists comprised by members of the academic community, employers, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and students.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ For example, Unit of Assessment 33 (Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies) in REF 2021 was similar but not exactly the same as Unit of Assessment 35 (Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts) in REF 2014. While not specifically mentioned in the name of the subpanel, Film and Screen Studies was referenced in the subpanel report as an important and growing field.

¹⁰² See: [QAA: Subject Benchmark Statements](#)

Glossary

Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH)

The Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) was developed to provide standard groupings that can be applied to both HECoS and JACS subjects, allowing for consistent analysis across both coding frames. As this coding system was introduced in 2019/20, this report uses CAH coding for its 2019 to 2021 student data.

Cost Centres

HESA cost centres are used predominantly in their staff and finance records as a way of coding higher education activities.

First degree

An undergraduate degree, also known as a bachelor's degree, which will normally be a three year programme if studied full-time. First degree students make up the largest proportion of higher education provision.

Foundation degree

An undergraduate course which combines academic and vocational elements of learning, equivalent to two-thirds of a first (Bachelor's) degree and usually studied over two years if full-time. Foundation degrees are available in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They are often focused on specific professions and frequently lead to further study as they can be used towards a degree by taking an additional 'top-up' year.

Graduate Outcomes (GO) Survey

The GO survey is run by HESA. All graduates who complete a higher education course in the UK will be asked to take part in the survey 15 months after finishing their studies. It aims to contact over 700,000 graduates over four survey periods through the year, depending on when the graduate completed their studies.

Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS)

HECoS is a new student coding system, which replaces HESA's previous subject coding system, the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) which was used in years prior to 2019/20. This report draws on Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH), which was introduced in 2019/20 with the aim of providing standard groupings across HECoS and JACS subjects for time series analysis.

Higher Education Institution (HEI)

A term used in the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 to describe any provider of higher education that is one or more of the following: a UK university; a higher education corporation; an institution designated as eligible to receive public grant money from one of the UK higher education funding bodies.

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

HESA is the official agency for the collection, processing and publishing of data about higher education in the UK.

HESA Cost Centre

HESA uses cost centres as a way of coding higher education activities, such as income and expenditure or staffing. There are both academic and administrative cost centres and institutions code their financial returns and their staff record by cost centre. The current cost centre codes have been in use since 2012/13.

Joint Academic Coding of Subjects (JACS)

JACS is a way of classifying academic subjects and modules in higher education. The current version, JACS 3.0, has been used since 2012/13 and has different levels of detail. For most of our analysis, we refer to the 'principle subject' level of coding as this is the most detailed level of coding available in HESA student data.

Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO)

LEO is a dataset of education records joined to tax and benefits data. This shows whether graduates were employed and how much they were paid.

Other Undergraduate

Undergraduate level courses that are not first (bachelor's) degrees and include foundation degrees (although these are sometimes counted separately in statistics), diplomas in higher education (such as those for nursing, social care, and veterinary science), Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and Higher National Certificates (HNCs), and the Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE).

Postgraduate Taught (PGT)

Courses at postgraduate level, usually taken after completing an undergraduate first degree or equivalent, and include Master's degrees, Postgraduate Certificates, and Postgraduate Diplomas, of which there is a taught element.

Postgraduate Research (PGR)

Courses that require a student to produce and present original research, usually under the supervision of an academic staff member. These include Master's by research or dissertation, Master of Philosophy (MPhil), research doctorates (PhD, DPhil), and professional or specialist doctorates.

Research Excellence Framework (REF)

The REF is the system for assessing the quality of research in UK higher education institutions, managed by Research England. It replaced the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and was first used in 2014, assessing the period 2008 to 2013. Results in the REF are used to determine the distribution of quality-related (QR) research funding, an allocation of public funding for research given to higher education institutions. In this report, we use results from REF 2021.

REF 2021 Impact Case Studies

A measure of research impact was introduced in the 2014 and 2021 Research Excellence Frameworks to assess the positive effect that research has beyond academia. Impact is defined by REF 2021 as an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia. Impact is assessed through the submission of impact case studies, five-page documents describing the impact of research and containing further information about the underpinning research.

Standard Occupation Classification (SOC)

The standard occupational classification (SOC) is a common classification of occupational information for the UK. It is used in the HESA Destination of Leavers in Higher Education survey to code responses of graduates in employment.

Student Domicile

The term “domicile” relates to the country of a student’s permanent home address prior to entry on their course. UK Home students are those who were resident in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man for at least three years prior to the start of their course. EU domiciled students are those who were living in a European Union country other than the UK prior to their course. Non-EU overseas students are from any country outside the European Union.

Appendix

Margins of Error for Graduate Outcomes Survey – Activity

Activity	Undergraduate (first degree and other undergraduate)		Postgraduate taught		Postgraduate research	
	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies (aggregate)	SHAPE (aggregate)	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies (aggregate)	SHAPE (aggregate)	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies (aggregate)	SHAPE (aggregate)
Voluntary or unpaid work	±0.3%	±0.1%	±0.4%	±0.1%	±1.3%	±0.2%
Unknown pattern of further study	±0.0%	±0.0%	±0.1%	±0.0%	±0.0%	±0.1%
Unknown pattern of employment	±0.1%	±0.0%	±0.3%	±0.0%	±0.0%	±0.2%
Unemployment	±0.5%	±0.1%	±0.9%	±0.1%	±3.0%	±0.4%
Part-time further study	±0.1%	±0.0%	±0.2%	±0.0%	±1.9%	±0.2%
Part-time employment	±0.8%	±0.2%	±1.4%	±0.2%	±6.4%	±1.0%
Other including travel, caring for someone or retired	±0.4%	±0.1%	±0.7%	±0.1%	±4.2%	±0.7%
Full-time further study	±0.4%	±0.1%	±0.7%	±0.1%	±1.9%	±0.4%
Full-time employment	±1.0%	±0.3%	±1.9%	±0.3%	±8.0%	±1.3%
Employment and further study	±0.6%	±0.2%	±0.9%	±0.2%	±4.6%	±0.8%

Margins of Error for Graduate Outcomes Survey – Reflections

Graduate Reflections	Undergraduate (first degree and other undergraduate)		Postgraduate leavers (taught and research)	
	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies (aggregate)	SHAPE (aggregate)	Media, Screen, Journalism and Communication Studies (aggregate)	SHAPE (aggregate)
I am utilising what I learnt during my studies in my current activity				
Strongly agree	±0.8%	±0.2%	±1.6%	±0.3%
Agree	±0.8%	±0.2%	±1.6%	±0.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	±0.7%	±0.2%	±1.2%	±0.2%
Disagree	±0.8%	±0.2%	±1.1%	±0.2%
Strongly disagree	±0.7%	±0.1%	±1%	±0.1%
Not known	±0.7%	±0.2%	±1.3%	±0.2%
My current activity fits with my future plans				
Strongly agree	±0.9%	±0.2%	±1.7%	±0.3%
Agree	±1%	±0.2%	±1.8%	±0.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	±0.6%	±0.2%	±1.2%	±0.2%
Disagree	±0.7%	±0.1%	±1%	±0.2%
Strongly disagree	±0.6%	±0.1%	±0.9%	±0.1%
Not known	±0.6%	±0.2%	±1.3%	±0.2%
My current activity is meaningful				
Strongly agree	±0.9%	±0.2%	±1.7%	±0.3%
Agree	±1%	±0.3%	±1.9%	±0.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	±0.7%	±0.1%	±1.1%	±0.2%
Disagree	±0.5%	±0.1%	±0.8%	±0.1%
Strongly disagree	±0.4%	±0.1%	±0.7%	±0.1%
Not known	±0.7%	±0.2%	±1.3%	±0.2%