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Consumption, Culture and Marketing at Royal Holloway

The MA in Consumption, Culture and Marketing brings together the research and teaching strengths of the marketing and sociology groups at Royal Holloway University of London. The programme offers courses in consumption-related subjects chosen for their relevance to contemporary research as well as practical and theoretical debates. They cover topics such as ‘Consumers and Brands’, ‘Marketing Communications’, ‘Sociology of Consumption’, ‘Children and Consumption’ and much more besides. We believe that this is an innovative programme inviting students to critically explore their lived experiences within the consumer society.

The MA Consumption, Culture and Marketing will be suitable for all candidates regardless of whether you do, or do not have prior knowledge of Marketing and/or Sociology. All courses in the programme work from first principles to take students to an advanced level of understanding in each particular specialist area.

Royal Holloway is widely recognised on the world stage as one of the UK’s leading teaching and research university institutions. One of the larger colleges of the University of London, Royal Holloway’s character and location attract scholars and students from across the world. On the MA Consumption, Culture and Marketing we pride ourselves on providing a friendly, welcoming, interdisciplinary environment.

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Course Structure of the MA in Consumption, Culture & Marketing

Master’s Degree
MA Consumption, Culture & Marketing (180 credits)

Core Courses
60 credits
- CR5001 Sociology of Consumption
- MN5071 Consumers and Brands

Core Research Courses
- MN5074 Consumption Research Methods
- MN5059 Dissertation

Elective Courses
60 credits, each worth 20 Credits (Must choose 3 from list)
- MN5064 Marketing Communications
- CR5005 Crime and Consumerism
- CR5003 Children & Consumption
- MN5067 Consumption, Markets & Cultures
- MN5072 Technology & Macromarketing
- MN5056 Arts Marketing

Core Research Courses
- MN5074 Consumption Research Methods
- MN5059 Dissertation

Elective Courses
60 credits, each worth 20 Credits (Must choose 3 from list)
- MN5064 Marketing Communications
- CR5005 Crime and Consumerism
- CR5003 Children & Consumption
- MN5067 Consumption, Markets & Cultures
- MN5072 Technology & Macromarketing
- MN5056 Arts Marketing

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60 credits
- CR5001 Sociology of Consumption
- MN5071 Consumers and Brands

Core Research Courses
- MN5074 Consumption Research Methods
- MN5059 Dissertation

Elective Courses
60 credits, each worth 20 Credits (Must choose 3 from list)
- MN5064 Marketing Communications
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- CR5003 Children & Consumption
- MN5067 Consumption, Markets & Cultures
- MN5072 Technology & Macromarketing
- MN5056 Arts Marketing

Core Research Courses
- MN5074 Consumption Research Methods
- MN5059 Dissertation

Elective Courses
60 credits, each worth 20 Credits (Must choose 3 from list)
- MN5064 Marketing Communications
- CR5005 Crime and Consumerism
- CR5003 Children & Consumption
- MN5067 Consumption, Markets & Cultures
- MN5072 Technology & Macromarketing
- MN5056 Arts Marketing
Assessment Regulations: Individual Courses

Marks for assignments, presentations, projects and the dissertation are weighted in each course as follows:

Core Courses

**MN5071 Consumers & Brands** (30 credits)
30% - Students have to select an iconic brand, preferably from their own country, and analyse, with reference to theories of materiality, their own consumption of the brand. Word count 2,100.

20% - Students will be selected into readings groups who will conduct a series of meetings to discuss selected readings. The group will eventually present the various discussion points that arose during these discussions with marks awarded for the richness of the discussion.

50% - From the conceptual and theoretical issues presented in lectures and through your privately directed readings of relevant material. Students can explore the brands and branding and their relevance for any industry, product, brand, strategic plan, cultural phenomenon, economic problem, demographic trend, multicultural contrast, global issue, consumption phenomenon, career objective etc. that they wish to explore. Word count 4000.

**CR5001 Sociology of Consumption** (30 credits)
60% - Essay. Students will be asked to select one question from a list provided by the lecturer as the topic of their 3000 word essay. Word count 3000.
40% - Ethnographic project titled ‘Places of Consumption’. Word count 2500. Further information will be provided in class.

Research Courses

**MN5074 Consumption Research Methods** (20 credits)
50% - Group work
Students will be expected to generate two pieces of qualitative data, one on the basis of group work which will include a 2650 account.

50% - Individual work - word count of 2650. Students will be expected to use different methodologies in both tasks.

**MN5059 Dissertation** (40 credits)
12000–15000 words (100%)
Elective Courses

Note students must select three electives, at least one of which must come from marketing modules (MN) and one from sociology (CR).

**MN5064 Marketing Communications** (20 credits)
- 30% Case study (individual)
- 60% Report (individual)
- 10% Group presentation

**MN5067 Consumption Markets & Cultures** (20 credits)
- 30% Case study (individual): 2000 words
- 60% Report (individual): 3000 words
- 10% Final oral presentation and presentation report (group): 1000 words

**MN5072 Technology and Macromarketing** (20 credits)
- 30% 3,000-3,500 word Group project
- 70% Individual in-class test

**CR5003 Children and Consumption** (20 credits)
- 80% Individual essay (4000 words)
- 20% Group presentation

**CR5005 Crime and Consumerism** (20 credits)
- 80% Individual essay (4000 words)
- 20% Group presentation (assessed as a group)

**MN5056 Arts Marketing** (20 credits)
Two individual assignments (Total 5,000 – 5,500 words). The two assignments will be proportion 40%/60% (both in words and weighting)

Full details of all the assignments will be provided in class.
Core Course Content

MN5071 Consumers & Brands
This course explores current ideas within marketing and consumption scholarship and practice regarding one of the most centrally important aspects of contemporary commercial and cultural practice; how consumers consume brands. As the centrality of brands to commercial practice and everyday living becomes increasingly evident, it is vital that a module dedicated to this subject is included as part of an MA in Marketing & MA Consumption, Culture and Marketing.

With a focus on critical engagement, the course adopts an eclectic view of branding and consumption theory, incorporating current thinking on the strategic management of brands, consumer behaviour and its role within general marketing practice but also recent theoretical formulations concerning brand culture and consumer culture and, accordingly, how personal experiences, relationships, identities are partly organised and mediated by the consumption of brands and their immanence in a constantly evolving symbolic order. As such, there is a particular emphasis upon how people, as consumers, encounter and consume these brands so the focus of the module is on the lived experiences of consuming brand. Such theoretical perspectives add extra dimensions to conventional branding and consumption courses and hence will add value to the marketing portfolio and student experience.

CR5001 Sociology of Consumption
This course provides an introduction to the theoretical analysis of consumption in modern society. It aims to critically examine the development of consumption and consumerism in society, to introduce students to foundational sociological ideas and arguments concerning the role of culture in promoting a sense of belonging and identity-formation and finally to explore how consumerism and cultural production are socially-contingent, shaped by historical conditions and political-economic arrangements.

Research Course Content

MN5074 Consumption Research Methods
This course examines key methodological debates in management research, and the methods and techniques of qualitative data gathering and analysis. The course unit comprises three elements. The first section examines competing perspectives on research methodology, the relationship between theory and method in research design and the nature of validation and reliability in the research process. The second section introduces the student to the ethical issues involved in research, and the main elements of the research planning process. The final section investigates the techniques and methods that are commonly deployed by qualitative researchers in the management and broader social science fields. The course is particularly appropriate for students who intend to pursue research-related careers in both academic and non-academic settings.

MN5059 Dissertation
By the end of the dissertation, students should be able to plan and manage a project; define the aims of this project; identify the data sources and methods appropriate to conduct the project and construct an effective argument with the dissertation.

For full details on the dissertation please see the Dissertation Handbook, a copy can be located via the Postgraduate Vault: [http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Management/PGmotd.html](http://www.rhul.ac.uk/Management/PGmotd.html).
Elective Course Content

Students must select three electives, at least one of which must come from the marketing portfolio of elective courses (MN codes) and one from the sociology portfolio of elective courses (CR codes). Please note that these courses may be subject to change. For all of the elective courses to run, a minimum number of students must be enrolled on each (usually 10 students).

MN5064 Marketing Communications

The central aims of this course are:

1. To examine the principal means of marketing communications – advertising, promotion, public relations, direct marketing and sales teams, discussing its techniques, strategies and the means by which these approaches interact with each other and the benefits they give both to consumers, organisations and other stakeholders. Within this, it also intends to focus on the use of marketing communication channels such as print media, radio and television, and digital media such as the internet and mobile telephones and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

2. To provide an understanding of the contemporary media environment and how this impacts on marketers efforts to communicate with stakeholders. Attention will be paid here to the radical shifts which have taken place in the media environment over the last two decades due to digitalisation and media and audience fragmentation, and the response of marketing communication to this.

3. To examine how marketing communications interacts with, affects and is affected by other elements in the marketing process such as research, strategy, segmentation and positioning, branding, product development, distribution and new product development. An important theme that will be examined is how should communication change when dealing with different segments and entering different markets (particularly overseas) with different communication cultures.

4. To teach communication theory and discuss how this can be used by marketers when developing integrated marketing communications strategies and programmes.

MN5067 Consumption, Markets & Culture

This course will equip future marketing practitioners with the skills and knowledge to understand the interactions that occur between the market, consumers and the marketplace. The focus of this course centres on how particular manifestations of myths, ideologies & grounded in specific socioeconomic circumstances and marketplace systems. Working with popular texts such as The McDonaldization of Society by George Ritzer as well as with complex theoretical concepts including Consumer Culture Theory, Symbolic Consumption and the Production of Culture, this course will provide students with an intellectually and historically grounded ability to understand the broader socio-cultural issues relevant to marketing practice in the 21st century.

MN5072 Technology & Macromarketing

This module provides an introduction to the theoretical analysis of macromarketing at the intersection of marketing, markets, and society. The wider macromarketing discourse is contextualised by introducing selected challenges and typical responses arising from the theoretical analysis of macromarketing. Taking a critical perspective on the subject, particular emphasis is placed on exploring the ways in which digital innovation and technology in general may be used to promote a market-driven ideology within society.
CR5003 Children and Consumption

Theories of consumption and consumer culture constitute the underlying framework for this course on children as consumers, but also children as consumption. Located within the construct of agency, this course will explore the processes by which children become consumers in contemporary society, but also the processes of neo-liberalism which lead to children becoming commodities of consumption. Key theorists including Marx, Veblen, and Bourdieu will be studied to understand the dynamics of contemporary consumer society. Such theories will be located within wider debates about conceptualizations of children and childhood, consumer socialisation, agency, exploitation, the political economy of consumerism and neo-liberalism.

CR5005 Crime and Consumerism

On successful completion, this course will enable students to:

1) Engage critically with a range of theoretical arguments and concepts
2) Understand the role of a consumerist and brand culture in crime, deviance, and subculture-formation
3) Reflect upon the uses of deviance as a marketing device
4) Understand the role of crime control in designing the consumerist experience.

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in consumerist society within Criminology, particularly amongst the British school of Cultural Criminology. This new focus is prescient: the 2011 London riots were characterised, amongst other things, by a distinctively consumerist acquisitiveness. This option unit explores the connections between consumerism and crime alongside the rich theoretical work of Cultural Criminology (including Jack Katz, Mike Presdee, Keith Heyward, and Jeff Ferrell). We look at, amongst other things, the relationship between gang cultures and consumerism, the marketing of deviance, and consumerism as a motivation for crime.

MN5056 Arts Marketing

In examining arts marketing attention is drawn to arts consumption and consumers, with reference to (performing and visual) arts organizations in the private (commercial), public, and voluntary (not-for-profit or third) sectors of the economy. The particularities of ‘marketing for the arts’ (such as audience development, corporate sponsorship, and philanthropy) are addressed alongside conventional marketing concerns like segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP), branding, distribution networks, and promotions. Specialist topics include relationships between corporations and the arts and financial investment vehicles in the arts (for theatre, film, and fine art). We also examine ‘the arts for marketing’ through various institutional critiques by contemporary artists.