

CIPR Specialist Diploma: Public Affairs, blended learning

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With hundreds of communication practitioners choosing to learn with us each year, PR Academy is one of the largest providers of public relations education in the UK and the largest centre for qualifications accredited by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR). We design and deliver, both face to face and online, a wide range of courses in communication. We work with other top awarding bodies, including the International Association for the Measurement and Evaluation of Communication (AMEC), and the newly Chartered Association for Project Management (APM).

WHY CHOOSE US AS YOUR STUDY PARTNER?



Our philosophy is simple: we don't rest until we've done everything we can to make sure you succeed. Our students' consistently high results speak for themselves and are available to view on our website. But we also believe that studying should be fun. You will make great new friends, study at the smartest venues and in the best online spaces, and learn from the sharpest minds. [Read](#) what our students say.

The benefits of studying with PR Academy include:

- Membership of our alumni and practitioner network [PR Place](#) – open for you to join now. PR Place is an online community where practice meets scholarship, where insight is derived from evidence, and where questions of career development and professionalism can be explored. As well as news and views, it carries a growing body of guides and reports to support learners and practitioners. Why not sign up now?
- Online learning centre with useful links and resources including an online library plus messaging and discussions
- High level of support from tutors and the office team.
- Experienced, knowledgeable tutors – we think the best in the business. Our tutor team comprises academic and senior level practitioner credibility – doctors and directors!
- Networking opportunities. Study alongside practitioners from a wide range of sectors.

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WHY STUDY FOR A PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION?

A professional qualification will make you a more confident communicator and help you in your career. You will learn the theory and how to apply it. Come away with strategies to ensure your communication has impact.

For employers it means:

- Skilled and knowledgeable team member
- Confident decision maker
- Motivated team member
- Fresh insights and latest thinking
- Improved performance.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Studying for the CIPR Specialist Diploma: Public Affairs will give you an insight into the process of policy formation, how public affairs relates to corporate communications and the reputational context in which public affairs operates. The Public Affairs Diploma is firmly rooted in practice – with senior PA practitioners involved in its development – and is grounded in the latest academic thinking. The [full syllabus](#) can be found at the end.

COURSE INFORMATION AT A GLANCE

Intake	Level	Length	Tuition fees (ex VAT)	CIPR Awarding body fee (no VAT)	CIPR Course registration fee (no VAT)	Total course fees (ex VAT)	Total course fees (Inc. VAT)	Delivery method
Autumn	Masters	6 months	£1340	£330	£75	£1745	£2013	Blended ✓

Please see our website for payment options.

IS THE COURSE RIGHT FOR ME?

Yes, if...

- You are an experienced public affairs, communication or PR professional looking to gain a specialist qualification to underpin your skills with theory and analysis
- You want to gain new skills or improve existing skills by learning about the strategic role of public affairs
- You wish to establish yourself as a public affairs practitioner.

The full [CIPR enrolment criteria](#) can be found at the end.

WHO WILL TEACH ME?

Our teaching team members all have great experience. They'll not only get you thinking about the theory but how it works in practice too. This course is led by:



Heather Yaxley

What Heather says: "I'm a passionate advocate for investment in sustainable professional development and the benefits that effective learning brings to individuals, teams and organisations. At a time of unprecedented change in working practices, we all need to keep up to date with latest thinking, new ideas, and emerging practices. My experience is that personal development is an active process that works best when encouraged and nurtured as a shared practice. As a PR practitioner, consultant and educator, I've seen how learning improves confidence by enhancing current capabilities to help achieve future potential. I recently completed my PhD researching career strategies in public relations, during which I developed an innovative timeline research method and originated a new tapestry approach to career development. This recognises how careers are crafted by individuals within an environment that is increasingly fluid. As such, professional qualifications are a vital component of the lifelong learning and key in developing successful contemporary careers."

HOW WILL I LEARN?

This **blended learning** course is comprised of two full-day workshops supported by nine webinars with subject matter experts, recorded for later playback.

The **workshops** are held in central London. We mostly use the lovely [Etc Venues at Norton Folgate, Bishopsgate](#) which is near Liverpool Street Station. The venue is designed especially for training with great food, WIFI and light, modern classrooms.

You will receive access to PR Academy's online learning centre with discussion forums and links to useful resources and an online library with a range of e-books.

WHEN CAN I STUDY? DATES AND TIMES

- Face to face classes comprise two full day Saturday workshops from 10.30 – 16:00
- The online webinars are broadcast live at 19.00, and are recorded for later playback. These last approximately an hour each.

Autumn 2019	
Webinar/Class dates (course opens Fri 04 October 2019)	
Thu 10 October 2019	Webinar
Thu 07 November 2019	Workshop
Sat 09 November 2019	Webinar
Thu 21 November 2019	Webinar
Thu 12 December 2019	Webinar
Sat 11 January 2020	Workshop

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Thu 16 January 2020	Webinar
Thu 30 January 2020	Webinar
Thu 06 February 2020	Webinar
Thu 20 February 2020	Webinar
Thu 05 March 2020	Webinar
Assignment Due Date	
27 March 2020	

ABOUT THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS (CIPR)



The CIPR is the only public relations body with a Royal Charter. The CIPR Awarding Body develops, regulates and controls a range of PR and communication qualifications: Professional PR Diploma, Professional PR Certificate, Foundation, Specialist Certificate in Internal Communication and Specialist Diplomas in Internal Communication, Public Affairs and Crisis Communication. PR Academy has been delivering CIPR courses since 2007. We have worked closely with the CIPR over the years to develop its Internal Communication and Public Affairs courses, and we pioneered the development of the online versions of its qualifications.

You can join the CIPR and benefit from its Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme and earn CPD points for this course. It sets you on the road to becoming a [Chartered practitioner](#).

On successful completion of the CIPR Specialist Diploma: Public Affairs you can fast-track to become a [CIPR Accredited Practitioner](#).

HOW DO I ENROL?



Simply visit our website www.pracademy.co.uk and use the **ENROL** button to start the enrolment process. Do this as early as possible so that we can get everything organised before the start date.

SYLLABUS



The CIPR specialist diploma (public affairs) focuses on the process of policy formation and the wider corporate communications and reputational context in which public affairs operates. It is focussed on professional practice and explores the concepts, theories and knowledge required to develop capabilities in research, planning, execution and evaluation of public affairs activities. An analytical perspective is applied to encourage candidates to take a reflective approach in examining their own experience alongside case studies of organisations and scenarios.

Qualification objectives

Successful candidates will be able to:

- 1 Apply key concepts in public affairs including:
 - Typologies of political and democratic systems and government structures.

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- Approaches to policy formation and decision making within these systems.
 - Researching key political institutions and actors.
 - Analysis and mapping of linkages between political stakeholders and their influences.
 - Policy making processes.
 - Interactions between political stakeholders.
 - Recent developments in public affairs including the rise of populism and the increasing influence of social media.
 - The employment of, and differences between, methods of political science research (including content analysis, policy analysis, (quasi) experimental methods, polling and surveys, interviews and focus groups).
- 2 Discuss the contribution of the professional practitioner in strategic planning including:
- Policy development and strategic planning processes within organisations, including the role of the public affairs/political communication function.
 - Linking organisational strategy to public affairs work through reputation and issues management.
 - How to conduct a situational and risk analysis to inform policy development and strategic planning (incorporating issues management, political influence, stakeholder engagement, crisis scenarios, and social responsibility).
- 3 Critically evaluate public affairs issues and campaign management including:
- How to deploy direct and indirect approaches in relationship building and political communications, including online options.
 - Campaigning; issues; tactics; mediated communicative activities (traditional and digital) and agenda setting; campaigning as public affairs work (aims, tactics, channels, research and evaluation).
 - The importance of psychology, including credibility and personality, in political communications, and contrasting rhetorical approaches.
 - How to identify and evaluate appropriate channels for communicating policies and positions, including traditional media and social media.
 - How to operate ethically in the political environment to enhance organisational reputation, minimise risk and secure or maintain policy change or resourcing.

HOW IS THE COURSE ASSESSED?



Assessment: executive report and summary situation analysis

Aim: to enable candidates to demonstrate competence in undertaking an analysis of a case study situation/issue to inform specific public affairs objectives and strategy.

Topic of inquiry: candidates will be required to evidence professional judgement in identifying a suitable case study as their chosen topic of inquiry. This could be based on the candidate's own organisation, a client, another organisation of the candidate's choice or a broader societal situation that can be associated with public affairs activities.

Submission: the assignment will comprise:

1. A 3,000-word (+/- 10%) executive report comprising:
 - A clear and concise statement defining the case study/issue, justifying its relevance as a problem or opportunity facing a specific organisation and/or sector, and verifying that it can be addressed by a public affairs strategy.
 - Description of the analytical approach used to collect evidence of the issue and provide insight into its current or potential impact on the organisation and/or sector and its stakeholders.
 - Discussion and substantiation of the key findings and outcome of the research and analysis.
 - Identification and explanation of public affairs objectives and strategy (derived from the research and analysis).
2. Supporting 2,000-word (maximum) summary analysis of secondary research findings including:
 - Overview of secondary research undertaken.

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- Relevant research methodology.
- Frameworks and models used to inform recommendations.
- Discussion of the ethical challenges encountered in the process.

Completion of the assignment involves the following activities:

- Reflection – candidates are required to use problem identification concepts and approaches to identify a relevant topic of inquiry. This will be a current issue of concern (or opportunity) for a specific organisation and/or sector, and may relate to the candidate's own experience.
- Fact finding – candidates are required to undertake data collection using a range of secondary research methods (literature, archives, published surveys, reports, etc.) to examine the chosen topic of inquiry.
- Insight – candidates are required to use a range of appropriate models, tools and methods to analyse the external and internal environment, the organisation or societal issue and relevant stakeholder groups.
- Communication – candidates are required to review and structure their analysis of a situation in the form of an executive report.

Example topics

New regulations on environment for a particular industry

Punitive taxes on excess profits in the financial sector

Securing rights for a neglected minority

Setting up a lobbying process with Brussels post-Brexit

ENROLMENT CRITERIA?



This course is aimed at experienced practitioners who want to develop their strategic public affairs and management skills with the aim of taking on more senior roles.

You qualify for the CIPR Specialist Diploma: Public Affairs if you hold one or more of the following:

- CIPR Professional PR Certificate
- one of the following **plus one year's** relevant full-time employment in public relations (or related sectors, e.g. marketing, journalism) and five GCSEs at grade C or above, one of which must be in the English language:
 - CIPR Internal Communications Certificate
 - postgraduate professional qualification in a related discipline (e.g. CIM diploma)
 - UK Bachelor's degree or equivalent in a PR-related discipline: business, marketing, management, communication, media or journalism.
- one of the following **plus two years'** relevant full-time employment in public relations (or related sectors) and five GCSEs at grade C or above, one of which must be in the English language:
 - CAM Advanced Diploma in Marketing Communication
 - NCTJ Diploma
 - UK Bachelor's degree or equivalent in any other subject
 - LCCIEB qualification which must comprise five level-three subjects in PR, marketing, advertising, and principles and practice of management
- **four years'** relevant full-time employment in public relations (or related sectors) and five GCSEs at grade C or above, one of which must be in the English language.

In addition, those whose first language is not English must be able to demonstrate proficiency in the language – spoken and written – to an International Language Testing System (IELTS) band score of 6.5 or equivalent.

Relevant experience should include at least 50% of the following:

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- PR/Public Affairs planning and crisis management / managing the PR/Public Affairs aspect of a potential crisis situation.
- Planning, developing and implementing PR/Public Affairs strategies.
- Organising events including press conferences, exhibitions, open days and press tours.
- Researching, writing and distributing press releases to targeted media.
- Coaching client representatives in effective communication with the public and with employees.
- Preparing and delivering speeches to further public relations objectives.
- Establishing and maintaining co-operative relationships with representatives of community, consumer, employee, and public interest groups.
- Preparing or editing organisational publications for internal and external audiences, including employee newsletters and stockholder reports.

If you aren't sure whether you meet the entry criteria, get in touch.

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PR Academy

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Our online community – PR Place

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