

## CIPR Professional PR Diploma - Online

LEARNING WITH PR ACADEMY



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.

The benefits of studying with PR Academy include:

- Membership of our alumni and practitioner network [PR Place](#) – open for you to join now, so why not sign up and join the community? PR Place is a place 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.
- 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 combine 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 Professional PR Diploma – the CIPR's flagship qualification – will enable you to operate as a more strategic and confident communicator. Equip yourself with the advanced knowledge you need to design effective PR strategies. Learn more about communication and how to influence behaviour in today's digital world. Examine the role of PR and ethics. Come away knowing how to put communication theory into practice through advanced PR planning, able to deliver campaigns that will wow clients and colleagues. The [full syllabus](#) can be found at the end.

The infographic below summarises the course:

# > The CIPR Professional PR Diploma

<h3>&gt; ANALYSE</h3>	<h3>&gt; ACT</h3>	<h3>&gt; APPRAISE</h3>
<h4>&gt; UNIT 1: PR STRATEGY AND PLANNING</h4> <p>The situation analysis</p>	<h4>&gt; UNIT 2: CONTENT CREATION AND ENGAGEMENT</h4> <p>The thought leadership article</p>	<h4>&gt; UNIT 3: MANAGEMENT, MEASUREMENT, EVALUATION</h4> <p>The improvement proposal</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate a real life situation</li> <li>• Profile stakeholders and influencers</li> <li>• Set PR objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine a PR campaign or aspect of practice</li> <li>• Provide a critical review</li> <li>• Present your expert insight</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess a PR campaign or aspect of management</li> <li>• Evaluate effectiveness and ethics</li> <li>• Make professional recommendations</li> </ul>
<h4>&gt; ASSIGNMENT IDEAS...</h4>	<h4>&gt; ASSIGNMENT IDEAS...</h4>	<h4>&gt; ASSIGNMENT IDEAS...</h4>
 <p>Changing attitudes towards female employment in the construction sector</p> <p>Increasing participation in local elections</p> <p>How a new set of corporate values has impacted the reputation of an organisation</p>	 <p>Building a social media community</p> <p>Engaging stakeholders in a centenary campaign</p> <p>Developing a listening culture.</p>	 <p>Examining the workflow for the production of an annual report</p> <p>Improving the return on investment of international car launches</p> <p>Reviewing the strategic objectives of the public relations function.</p>
<h4>&gt; WHAT YOU NEED TO PRODUCE</h4>	<h4>&gt; WHAT YOU NEED TO PRODUCE</h4>	<h4>&gt; WHAT YOU NEED TO PRODUCE</h4>
<p><b>Part 1:</b> acceptable to a management team which is essentially the research you need to do before drafting a PR Plan</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> summary of secondary (not primary) data analysis. A strategic document – not tactical.</p>	<p><b>Part 1:</b> thought leadership article. For example, the sort of thing you see in Harvard Business Review.</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> reflective statement: review topic choice, relevant theories/models, research method and learning outcome.</p>	<p><b>Part 1:</b> management proposal that reviews a campaign or activity and makes recommendations for improvement.</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> an overview of your research and feedback on it. e.g. qualitative interviews with practitioners and their views on your recommendations.</p>

## 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)
Spring Online	Masters	10-12 months	£1885	£990	£75	£2950	£3327
Autumn Online	Masters	10-12 months	£1885	£990	£75	£2950	£3327

For payment options see our website.

## IS THE COURSE RIGHT FOR ME?

Yes, if...

- You have completed the CIPR Professional Certificate in Public Relations
- You are an experienced PR professional without an industry specific qualification
- You are working in any field of public relations (e.g. media relations, internal communications or public affairs)
- You want to learn about the strategic role and functions of the public relations 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:



### [Chris Tucker](#)

**What Chris says:** "I suppose you could call me a news junkie in that Sky News is constantly on in the background after, of course, BBC Radio Four's Today programme. The development of the new news ecosystem meshing on and offline media is something that fascinates me. It's certainly an enormously exciting time to be working in PR. It also makes it a great time to be teaching the subject too. There is always a new channel, concept or communication approach to discuss with students either at the PR Academy or at the London College of Communication where I am also an Associate Lecturer. I like to ensure my workshops are full of real life case study examples which collectively we can either praise or pull apart. I also bring in examples of communication challenges and learnings from my in-house career which ranged through the charitable sector, the public sector and ended up with me as Director of Public Relations for Barclays. Today my freelance consultancy work focuses on media training and crisis communications which brings me into contact with organisations operating in the UK and beyond. Lots more food for thought there."

## HOW WILL I LEARN?



Our **online courses** are taught through live webinars (which are also recorded), online discussions and guided reading. We put a high level of tutor support into online courses – you are guided throughout with a tutor always on hand to help.

All students 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.

## HOW IS THE COURSE ASSESSED?



Assessments are directly related to each study unit – i.e. one assignment per unit. These assess professional knowledge, vocational skills and personal development.

The purpose of the assignments is to enable you to demonstrate knowledge and application of core areas/concepts using critical thinking and problem solving skills (which are core management competencies and employer requirements). They are intended to be of value in professional practice – i.e. reflect real world issues and activities, as well as meeting robust assessment criteria.

The style of the assignment reflects type of work employers look for and require a high standard of written communication (encouraging strong writing skills which employer consultation has highlighted).

Students will be encouraged to develop work related projects for assignments to maintain the close relationship with real world applications, to enable them to make better connections between concepts and their current roles, and to offer evidence to employers of the practical relevance of the course.

**Unit 1 Assessment:** executive report (2000 words) and summary situation analysis (2000 words)

**Unit 2 Assessment:** thought leadership article (2000 words) and statement of reflection (2000 words)

**Unit 3 Assessment:** management proposal (2000 words) and supporting review of proposal for change (2,000 words)

See [full syllabus](#) at the end.

## WHEN CAN I STUDY? DATES AND TIMES



The online webinars are broadcast live at 13.00 and are recorded for later playback. They are between 40 minutes and an hour.

### Spring 2019

Webinar dates (course opens Fri 29 March 2019)

Tue 02 April 2019

Tue 09 April 2019

Tue 16 April 2019

Tue 14 May 2019

Tue 21 May 2019

Tue 04 June 2019

Tue 18 June 2019

Tue 03 September 2019

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Tue 10 September 2019

Tue 17 September 2019

Tue 24 September 2019

Tue 05 November 2019

Tue 12 November 2019

Tue 19 November 2019

Tue 26 November 2019

Assessment Description	Assessment Due Date	Result Due
Unit 1 : The situation analysis	26 July 2019	Thu 10 October 2019
Unit 2: The thought leadership article	18 October 2019	Thu 02 January 2020
Unit 3: The improvement proposal	03 January 2020	Thu 12 March 2020

### Autumn 2019

Webinar dates (course opens Fri 04 October 2019)

Tue 08 October 2019

Tue 22 October 2010

Tue 05 November 2019

Tue 19 November 2019

Tue 03 December 2019

Tue 17 December 2019

Tue 21 January 2020

Tue 28 January 2020

Tue 04 February 2020

Tue 11 February 2020

Tue 21 April 2020

Tue 12 May 2020

Tue 19 May 2020

Tue 02 June 2020

Assessment Description	Assessment Due Date	Result Due
Unit 1 : The situation analysis	Friday, 03 January 2020	Thu 12 March 2020
Unit 2: The thought leadership article	Friday, 27 March 2020	Thu 18 June 2020
Unit 3: The improvement proposal	Friday, 24 July 2020	Thu 08 October 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](#).

## HOW DO I ENROL?



Simply visit our website [www.pracademy.co.uk](http://www.pracademy.co.uk) and use the **ENROL** button to start the enrolment process.

## SYLLABUS



The CIPR Professional PR Diploma syllabus is based on professional practice underpinned by core PR principles, models and concepts.

The syllabus incorporates three separate units.

- The first unit is focused on the PR strategy and planning process, with an emphasis on research that establishes robust communication objectives, related to the organisation's goals.
- The second unit is focused on communication and engagement, with an emphasis on content, which reflects employers' views that management of content across the organisation is an essential competence.
- The third unit is focused on leadership of PR activities, with an emphasis on management of projects, campaigns and resources; internal stakeholders, the PR team and key suppliers; and on measurement and evaluation.

**Students would be awarded a CIPR Professional PR Diploma by successfully completing all three units.**

The learning outcomes for each unit are detailed below, after the note on assignments.

One assignment task at the end of each unit which assesses the student's ability to apply knowledge to a workplace context completes the programme.

### Assignments

The purpose of the assignments is to enable candidates to demonstrate knowledge and application of core areas/concepts listed under each unit using critical thinking and problem solving skills (which are core management competencies and employer requirements in published studies).

They are intended to be of value in professional practice – i.e. reflect real world issues and activities, as well as meeting robust assessment criteria and reflecting the types of outputs that are acceptable at this level of study within a postgraduate environment. The style of the assignment 'output' reflects a type of document required from PR managers in the workplace, which will require a high standard of written communication (encouraging the attention to strong writing skills which employer

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consultation has highlighted). Each assignment requires research skills enabling a variety of methods to be learned and demonstrated across the course, which again is a strategic professional competency.

Students will be encouraged to develop work related projects for assignments to maintain the close relationship with real world applications, to enable them to make better connections between concepts and their current roles, and to offer evidence to employers of the practical relevance of the course.

### **Assessment and grading**

The assignments are evidence of achievement of a professional standard. Together, success in all three assignments will demonstrate that the student has achieved an understanding of the processes and concepts needed to operate at a higher level in the profession and can demonstrate this in the workplace.

The award of the CIPR Professional PR Diploma is based simply on achieving the standard, a pass in all three units, but with the potential for the best work to be considered for special commendation by the Awarding Body, from recommendations by centres of their outstanding work. This offers a clearer focus on what the required standard is at the centre level, but still allows motivation for the best students to present exceptional work.

### **Unit details, learning outcomes and assessments**

#### Unit 1: PR Strategy and Planning

##### **Scope**

This Unit situates public relations within a strategic management framework, enabling critical and ethical examination of the role and responsibilities of the function, and senior practitioners, within a contemporary context. It considers practical challenges and conceptual underpinnings relating to public relations strategy and planning in a variety of situations and types of organisation. The importance of organisational and functional objectives is emphasised with a focus on research and analysis to support problem identification, stakeholder mapping and objective setting.

An analytical perspective is applied to encourage a reflexive approach in examining candidates' own experience alongside case studies of organisations and scenarios.

##### **Unit Objectives**

At the end of this Unit, candidates will be able to:

- Examine the strategic importance of organisational branding and reputation
- Assess how different PR disciplines work effectively together
- Understand the interface between public relations and other organisational functions
- Assess the relationship between corporate and PR objectives
- Use secondary research methods for situation analysis, environment monitoring and issues identification, including risk assessment.
- Analyse and apply PR planning models
- Develop creative approaches to problem identification
- Analyse data to generate insights to inform PR planning
- Undertake stakeholder identification and mapping
- Set PR objectives
- Produce an evidence-based situation analysis summary
- Produce an executive report

**Unit 1 Assessment:** Executive report (and summary situation analysis)

**Aim:** To enable students to demonstrate competence in undertaking an analysis of a case study situation to inform specific PR objectives and strategy.

**Topic of inquiry:** Students 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 student's own organisation, a client, another organisation of the student's choice or a broader societal situation that can be associated with public relations activities.

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**Submission:** The assignment will comprise:

1. 2,000-word executive report comprising:
  - A clear and concise statement defining the case study situation, justifying its relevance as a problem or opportunity facing a specific organisation and/or sector, and verifying that it can be addressed by strategic public relations.
  - Overview of the secondary research methodology and analytical approach used to collect evidence of the situation 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 PR objectives (derived from the research and analysis)
2. Supporting summary analysis of secondary research findings (maximum of 2,000 additional words).

Completion of the assignment involves the following activities:

- Reflection – students are required to use problem identification concepts and approaches to identify a relevant topic of inquiry. This will be a current concern or opportunity for a specific organisation and/or sector, and may relate to the candidate's own experience.
- Fact finding – students 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 – students are required to use a range of appropriate models, tools and methods to analysis the external and internal environment, the organisation or societal issue and stakeholder groups.
- Communication – students are required to review and structure their analysis of a situation in the form of an executive report.

### **Unit focus: Situation analysis**

Topic examples:

- Changing attitudes towards female employment in the construction sector
- Increasing public participation in local elections
- Applying a PESO communications strategy within a specific organisation

### Unit 2: PR Content, Communications and Engagement

#### **Scope**

This Unit focuses on PR strategies involving content, communications and engagement. It investigates the contemporary media landscape (including digital and ICT developments) and helps candidates to develop creative solutions, create and curate multimedia content and apply communications concepts to a variety of situations facing a range of organisations.

A professional approach emphasises the importance of ethical practice, maintaining trust, reputation management, and informed judgement. Candidates are encouraged to draw on their own experience alongside case study examples of campaigns and strategic practice.

#### **Unit Objectives**

At the end of this Unit, candidates will be able to:

- Appraise the contemporary media landscape
- Develop a compelling strategic narrative
- Employ creative problem solving approaches
- Examine the processes of multi-media content creation and curation
- Develop key messages, strategic narratives and apply storytelling techniques
- Critically assess the use of persuasion in PR campaigns and communication activities
- Understand the value of listening to stakeholders
- Apply issues management principles to practice
- Critically assess the role of dialogue within professional practice
- Undertake social media community management
- Use participant observation and content analysis research methods to reflect on professional practice

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- Produce a thought-leadership article

**Unit 2 Assessment:** Thought leadership article (and statement of reflection)

**Aim:** To enable students to demonstrate competence in strategic communication and stakeholder engagement through production of a thought leadership article

**Topic of inquiry:** Students will be required to evidence professional judgement in identifying a suitable campaign, communication activity or other aspect of strategic practice as their chosen topic of inquiry. This could be based on the student's own experience or broader public relations practice.

**Submission:** The assignment will comprise:

1. 2,000-word thought leadership article that is:
  - Suitable for publication by a reputable business title such as Harvard Business Review.
  - Structured and written in a professional style with points and arguments supported by reference to the chosen campaign, communication activity or aspect of strategy practice.
  - Effective in communicating an expert perspective on the chosen topic with reference to relevant concepts, models or theories.
  - Note: This is not an essay or journal article and does not require formal academic references
2. Supporting statement of personal reflection (maximum of 2,000 additional words)  
Completion of the assignment involves the following activities:
  - Rationale for selecting the chosen topic of inquiry and featured concepts, models or theories, learning derived from examining the example and how the thought leadership article will inform the student's future practice.
  - Self-reflection – students are required to identify a relevant topic of inquiry, which may be a current campaign, communication activity or other aspect of strategic practice for a specific organisation and/or sector, and may relate to the candidate's own experience.
  - Fact finding – data collection using a range of secondary research methods (literature, archives, published surveys, reports, etc.) to examine the chosen topic of inquiry and relevant concepts, models or theories.
  - Insight – statement of reflection demonstrating critical consideration of the data collected, concepts from theory and practice, personal learning and future application.
  - Communication – construction of an evidence-based thought leadership article that seeks to transfer knowledge through a narrative assessment of the chosen topic of inquiry, supported by the statement of reflection.

**Unit focus:** Professional practice

Topic examples:

- Building a Facebook community
- Engaging stakeholders in a centenary campaign
- Developing a listening culture

Unit 3: PR Management, Measurement and Evaluation

**Scope**

This Unit concentrates on performance improvement in respect of the management, measurement and evaluation of professional PR practice. It offers critical examination of the effectiveness of public relations strategies, campaigns and programmes.

Principles relating to accountability, socio-cultural considerations, ethical practice and continuous professional development will be applied. Candidates will be able to examine their own processes and practices alongside case study examples.

**Unit Objectives**

At the end of this Unit, candidates will be able to:

- Advise and coach senior managers
- Critically evaluate integrated campaign management
- Apply project management techniques
- Assess approaches to budget and resource management

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- Apply principles of ethical practice
- Undertake project risk assessment and management
- Review approaches and competencies for team management
- Examine processes underpinning effective agency and client relationships and management
- Understand how to appraise data to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of PR activities
- Measure and evaluate outputs and outcomes
- Use qualitative research methods to obtain feedback on public relations management
- Produce management reports outlining recommendations for performance improvement

**Unit 3 Assessment:** Management proposal outlining recommendations for performance improvement

**Aim:** To enable students to demonstrate competence in evaluating the ethics and effectiveness of professional practice.

Topic of inquiry: Students will be required to evidence professional judgement in identifying a suitable campaign, communication activity or other aspect of strategic practice as their chosen topic of inquiry. This could be based on the student's own organisation, a client, another organisation of the student's choice or a broader area of professional public relations practice.

**Submission:** The assignment will comprise:

1. 2,000-word management proposal comprising:
  - Identification and justification of the chosen topic of inquiry
  - Critical evaluation of the campaign, activity or other aspect of practice with reference to its management and measurement, with specific focus on questions regarding ethics and effectiveness.
  - Recommendations for improvement drawing on data analysis and performance indicators
2. Supporting review of proposal for change (maximum of 2,000 additional words) including:
  - Overview of secondary data research undertaken.
  - Feedback on recommendations proposed in the report obtained from qualitative research (such as 1-2 brief interviews with practitioners or line managers)

Completion of the assignment involves the following activities:

- Self-reflection – students are required to identify a relevant topic of inquiry. This will be a recent campaign, communication activity or other aspect of strategic practice for a specific organisation and/or sector, and may relate to the candidate's own experience
- Fact finding – students are required to undertake secondary research (using literature, archives, published surveys, reports, etc.) to inform recommendations.
- Insight – students are required to determine recommendations for performance improvements and review these through feedback (qualitative input) of proposals for change.
- Communication – present performance improvement recommendations for the topic of inquiry in the form of a professional management proposal (with supporting evidence).

**Unit focus:** Evaluation

Topic examples:

- Examining the workflow for the production of an annual report
- Improving the return on investment of international car launches
- Reviewing the strategic objectives of the public relations function

## ENROLMENT CRITERIA?



You can study for the CIPR Professional PR Diploma if you have any of the following:

- CIPR Advanced 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 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

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grade C or above, one of which must be in 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 & 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 English language

If English is not your first language, you must be able to demonstrate that you can write and speak English to an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) band score of 6.5 or equivalent.

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

- PR planning and crisis management / managing the PR aspect of a potential crisis situation
- Planning, developing and implementing PR 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 are unsure about eligibility, please contact us.

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