

CIPR Specialist Diploma: Digital Communication, 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?



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 other 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, 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. 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?



The brand new CIPR Specialist Diploma: Digital Communication equips you with the knowledge you need to make social and digital media an effective, integral part of your communication strategy.

Understand online behaviour trends, digital and social media technologies and platforms, digital planning, community building and management, content creation and curation, platform selection, data analytics and evaluation.

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 Online
Autumn	Masters	6 months	£1340	£330	£75	£1745	£2013	✓

For payment options, please see our website.

IS THE COURSE RIGHT FOR ME?



Yes, if:

You are probably working in a communication role and are keen to develop your expertise in social media and digital communication as part of your strategic communication.

You may already hold the CIPR diploma or an undergraduate degree in PR or Communication.

WHO WILL TEACH ME?

You will benefit from unlimited tutor support throughout the course. We have a fantastic team of subject matter experts to be announced soon. 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 course is taught online through a combination of live webinars (also recorded) and "on-demand" content. 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.

WHEN CAN I STUDY? DATES AND TIMES

- The online webinars are broadcast live at 19.00 and are recorded for later playback. They are between 40 to 60 minutes.

Autumn 2019: Course opens Fri 04 October 2019

Thu 10 October 2019

Wed 16 October 2019

Wed 23 October 2019

Wed 06 November 2019

Wed 20 November 2019

Wed 04 December 2019

Wed 15 January 2020

Wed 22 January 2020

Wed 05 February 2020

Assessment deadline

Fri 27 March 2020

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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 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 aim of the CIPR Specialist Diploma (Digital Communications) is to enable candidates to develop knowledge and expertise in how social media and digital communication are integrated into strategic public relations planning and management.

The CIPR Specialist Diploma (Digital Communications) will be of interest to PR practitioners working in public relations, corporate communication, marketing communication, internal communication, public affairs and media relations, who have experience or responsibility for digital communication, in consultancy or in-house, or in a related discipline within the strategic management framework. This qualification will equip the candidate with the knowledge and tools to contribute effectively to the organisation's strategic management of digital communication and social media, while meeting what is expected of an ethical practitioner in complex situations.

Candidates will research and develop ethical digital communication and social media management strategies and plans that assist organisations to enhance and protect their reputation and to achieve their strategic objectives.

Candidates would be awarded the CIPR Specialist Diploma (Digital Communications) on successful completion of the assessment.

Syllabus

The CIPR Specialist Diploma (Digital Communications) provides a sound theoretical and practical knowledge of digital communication management within the context of strategic public relations, based on an understanding of current and emerging technologies, digital strategies and social media platforms. It includes research and identification of strategic objectives, stakeholder relationship management, community building and management, content creation and curation tools, platform selection and principles of evaluation; all within the ethical practice of public relations.

An analytical perspective is applied to enable candidates to take a reflective approach in examining their own experience alongside case studies of organisations and scenarios.

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Qualification objectives

Successful candidates will be able to:

1. Explore the disruptive and transformative impact of digital technologies on society, business, organisations and individuals:
 - Examine the effect of existing and emerging digital technologies on communications functions and operations including ethical implications and sustainable development of digital literacy and leadership capabilities.
 - Examine the impact on organisational communication of trends in digital communications usage including media convergence, citizen journalism, social media influencers and stakeholder activism.
 - Use relevant frameworks, tools and techniques to analyse trends in online behaviour, media consumption, online user profiling, and the formation of network communities.
2. Understand the concepts and tools employed in strategic public relations planning with specific emphasis on the role of social media and digital communications management :
 - Examine the range of concepts, models and tools to research external and internal environments to identify stakeholders and influencers and the issues affecting an organisation;
 - Identify digital and social media tools, technologies, and platforms to improve stakeholder engagement, issues management and crisis responsiveness.
 - Explore how to develop and manage audience-centred content and the role of owned, third party and user-generated multimedia content.
 - Match communication strategies to specific platforms, technologies and channels (for example, Enterprise Social Networks).
3. Manage, plan, monitor, measure and evaluate digital and social media activities and engagement with stakeholders and online communities, and consider legal and ethical implications:
 - Determine appropriate integrated digital communication management approaches across platforms and technologies (including resource requirements).
 - Assess relevant methods of evaluating digital communication strategies and plans (including outputs, outcomes, impact, data analytics, insights and reflective practice),
 - Critically reflect on privacy and security issues and legal responsibilities in areas such as online tracking, behavioural profiling, data protection, digital security, and social media usage.
 - Evaluate the ethical implications of the use of digital communications. in developing, implementing and evaluating PR strategies and tactics.

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.

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, or another organisation of the candidate's choice that can be associated with social media and digital communication activities.

Submission: The assignment will comprise two elements:

1. A 3,000-word (+/- 10%) executive report comprising:
 - a) A clear and concise statement defining the case study situation/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 digital communications strategy.

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- b) Overview of the tools and techniques used to collect and analyse evidence regarding the situation and provide insight into its current or potential impact on the organisation and/or sector and its stakeholders.
 - c) Discussion and substantiation of the key findings and outcome of the research and analysis which will advise the development of a communications strategy.
 - d) Creation of a set of digital communications objectives (based on the findings and outcome of the research and analysis conducted) and a brief statement of how the objectives can be measured.
2. Supporting 2,000-word (maximum) statement of reflection including critical examination and evaluation of:
- The research methods (including digital tools and techniques) used to analyse and gain insight into the case study situation;
 - Concepts, models and frameworks relevant to digital communication and social media used to inform recommendations;
 - Ethical concerns and responsibilities that emerge for PR practitioners using digital communications and social media to address the case study situation.
3. A reference list of sources using an appropriate, consistent method of referencing.

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:

Increasing engagement with online patient support groups
Establishing an effective social listening function
Developing an online reputation management strategy

Word Count

A substantive response is necessary to meet the requirements for a Pass.

Bibliographies and footnotes are not included in the word count. Footnotes must not contain appendices or be used to include additional text that should have been in the main body of the work. The word count must be recorded in the appropriate space provided on the cover sheet and at the end of the text in the main document.

Candidates are allowed a +/- 10% leeway on the word count for the executive report. Anything outside this allowance will be penalised and may result in the assessment being graded Fail.

ENROLMENT CRITERIA?



You qualify for the CIPR Specialist Diploma (Digital Communications) if you hold one or more of the following:

- CIPR Professional PR Certificate

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- one of the following **plus one year's** relevant full-time employment in communications (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 communications (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 communications (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.

If you aren't sure whether you meet the entry criteria, get in touch by calling +44 (0)203 862 6910 or emailing courses@pracademy.co.uk

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PR Academy

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Our online community – PR Place

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