

Course outline: Marketing, Distribution, Sales and Exhibition

The MA in Marketing, Distribution, Sales and Exhibition is a specialisation within the broader **MA in Film and Television**.

The course will provide students with the skills, knowledge and experience to become highly employable MDSE executives in the film, television, and games industries. The emphasis will be very much on the practical application of these competencies, delivered through seminars and workshops with key industry experts, and enhanced by field trips to key markets and conferences and the opportunity to embed this learning in valuable work placements that will form a solid part of students' CVs and prepare them for the jobs market before completing the course.

The course will focus on 8 modules over the 2 years, as well as a wealth of other workshops and exercises. Each module will produce an assessed piece of work and some will provide an opportunity to work with students from other NFTS courses.

The ethos of practical application and embedded learning within this pathway is underpinned by a strong theoretical and historical framework. Students are required to understand the history of the film, television and games industry and demonstrate an analytical appreciation of the impact of key developments on the shape of today's landscape. They are encouraged to apply this analytical approach throughout the pathway, assessing the historical context of key working practises, release and marketing models, and decision making processes within MDSE, and continually challenging and looking to improve the current way of doing things. A series of "Meet the Author" workshops are planned across the MDSE, Producing and Entrepreneur pathways. These will provide students with unique opportunities to discuss key texts with the author, and the basis for future theoretical discussions and debate sessions around their work throughout the course.

As well as engagement with the taught curriculum, the pathway places a considerable emphasis on independent study and learning. Students are expected to be self-motivated and guided to read in-depth around the subjects within each module, research related topics and trends, as well as attend relevant events, screenings, and festivals independent of the specified curriculum to broaden their knowledge and experience of marketing, distribution, sales and exhibition within the three industries. The focus on self-guided study will increase in Year 2 where the student's ability to produce assessed and non-assessed work independently is considered a key skill area for entering the workplace at an executive level.

UNIT 1 (80 credits)

Year 1

MODULE 1:

Introduction Marketing & Distribution Planning - Film, Television and Gaming

Duration: January-December

Teaching Components:

Students will be introduced to the marketing and distribution landscape of films, television and games, through a series of seminars on:

- The Value Chains – Film, Games, TV, Online Content
- Audience and Consumer Behaviours, Analysis
- Business Processes of Distribution, Exhibition, Broadcast, Re/e-tail
- Key Players in the Entertainment Industry
- Marketing Filmed Content and Games at each stage of the distribution, sales and exhibition cycle
- Campaign Creative – Poster and Trailer Creation
- Press and Publicity in the Entertainment Industry
- Harnessing the Power of Social Media
- Release planning and models (inc. direct to consumer innovations)
- Financial, Budgeting (inc, P&L, P&As)
- Understanding Content Creation Process and Creatives from a MDSE Perspective
- Working with Agencies and Third Parties

This module is compulsory for MDSE students, and will involve Games, Producing, Directing (all relevant specialisms), Cinematography, Production Design and Graphics students to develop and deliver the activity.

Module 1 Assessments – Deliverables by October and by December Yr 1:

Part 1: A Marketing and Distribution Plan For A Game

Part 2: A Marketing and Distribution Plan For A Fiction Short Film

Part 1: Students will be required to work with a 2nd year student from the NFTS Games MA course to support their project with a marketing and publicity plan culminating in the game's showcase at EGX.

Part 2: Students will be required to work with a 1st year student from the NFTS Producing MA course to produce a comprehensive distribution and marketing strategy for their First Year Fiction film.

For each, the outcome will be a presentation supported by a more detailed document of strategies and campaigns for festivals, conferences (eg. EGX), launch, release, exhibition and or digital, marketing, publicity, social media, on-set marketing, asset creation, events together with a timeline, audience profile, positioning, and budget. The report will also include the student's self-assessment, project evaluation and lessons learnt from the project. The presentation and document may be supported by creative materials such as key art, poster, and trailer, on which students can brief students from the NFTS graphics course. The students will work with the producing students from pre-production through to post production.

NB: Where the numbers of students on each course (MDSE, Games or Producing) differ, MDSE students may have to work on more than one project, or be offered an alternative for the purposes of this module deliverable.

MODULE 2:

Audiences – Defining, Finding and Reaching Them

Duration: January-May

Teaching Components:

As well as augmenting the knowledge from the module above with more in-depth seminars on those subjects, this module will cover:

- Audience and Consumer Behaviours, Analysis
- Film Focus (dedicated focus on Film)
- The Evolving World of Exhibition
- Not Such a Small Screen – Dedicated focus on Television
- Playing the Games – Dedicated focus on Gaming Industry
- Living Online – dedicated focus on Online Content
- Resources, research and information (eg. Rentrak, Nielson, BARB, official charts)
- Media Planning and Buying for Film, TV and Games

This module is compulsory for MDSE students, with contributions from Producing and CBEE pathway students.

Module 2 Assessment – Deliverable by End May

Students will select, or be allocated, a demographic segment (eg. Females aged 18-24), as provided by the BFI as a challenging audience to reach. Students will analyse their given sector including behaviours, consumption habits, values and influences, to form recommendations on how to reach them and convert them into film and television audiences, or games and home entertainment consumers. The outcome will be a written report containing key evidence and research such as national statistics, exit poll analysis, reports on audience and sales figures and trends, their own

market research, analysis of how other brands and produces have reached this demographic or otherwise, together with a series of informed observations and recommendations.

MODULE 3:

Work Placement & Company Analysis

Duration: May – July (Including 6 week placement in May)

Teaching Components:

As well as further augmenting the knowledge from the modules above with more in-depth seminars, case studies and workshops on those subjects, this module will cover:

- Branding and Presenting Yourself
- Introduction to Financial, Budgeting (inc, P&L, P&As)
- Industry Trends
- Product Genres and Their Challenges

Teaching on the placement will primarily be delivered through on-the-job training and workplace experience. The employer will be encouraged to provide some mentoring support throughout the placement. They will be advised of the subjects covered in the previous modules and the placement will look to embed some of this learning. The HoD will have regular check-ins with the student to provide advice and support as necessary.

As well as job-specific knowledge areas, there are key skills that the student is expected to develop during their placement:

- Breadth of view
- Communication skills
- Experience of office environment
- Interpersonal skills
- Project Management
- Marketing, publicity and/or sales
- Teamworking
- Time management
- Personal Effectiveness
- Working with third parties

This module is compulsory for MDSE students, with contributions from Producing and CBEE students on the critical audience for the assessed group presentation component.

NB: The Head of Department will take the lead in allocating and securing this placement in consultation with the student, however the student will be encouraged to use their existing network to make any approaches to support this.

Module 3 Assessment – Deliverable at the end July:

Employer Feedback and Group presentation

The students will present an analysis of the business in which they spent their work placement, covering the nature of the business, its objectives and structure, a SWOT analysis, present and future key projects, reputation, they will research competitors and the company's place within the industry. Each presentation will also include the key things the student has learned from their work placement.

The grade for their company presentation will be combined with the employer feedback to give the student's overall performance in this module.

MODULE 4:

Territory Analysis

MDSE Duration: March-November

Teaching Elements:

As well as further augmenting the knowledge from the modules above with more in depth seminars on those subjects, this module will deliver seminars and case studies on:

- International Perspective - Distribution and Exhibition in Key Territories
- International Sales & Acquisitions
- Navigating and Exploiting Markets, Conferences and Festivals
- Impact of Awards & Festivals on Product Success

This module is compulsory for MDSE students. Producing and CBEE students will also work on this module.

Module 4 Assessment – Deliverable: Film Report and Presentation in May, Television and Games Report and Presentation in November

The students must produce a detailed, written research report on a key territory, covering the Film, TV and Games industries in that territory. Students will work with students from the Producing course on the Film element of their report and present this together with them in May. They will then go on to research the Television and Games sectors for the remainder of the report. The report must include, but not be limited to, for each sector: history, structure, trends and quirks, strengths and weaknesses,

challenges and opportunities, developments and key players, audience/consumer analysis, future predictions, and conclusions for launching products in this territory from each of the 3 sectors.

UNIT 2 (40 Credits)

Year 2

MODULE 5:

Dissertation

Duration: Submitted End of May

The dissertation will commence in Year 1 but delivered at the end of May in Year 2. Topic areas can be wide ranging, covering B2B, B2C or both, focusing on creative, business, past or future aspect of MDSE, but must be an in depth exploration that ultimately support the student in their working practice. Example topics might be:

- Analysis and recommendations of new, creative methods of reaching and converting audiences and consumers
- What can film, television, and/or games learn from how other industries reach their audiences, or navigate the same digital disruption and challenges, eg. Publishing, fashion, music
- A comparison of how different film or gaming releases have used media successfully, or otherwise, to reach their target markets
- Analysis and recommendation of innovative release models for feature films

This module is compulsory for MDSE students. Students may seek guidance on the research for their dissertation, depending on the subject, from the HoDs of the Producing or Games pathways.

UNIT 3 (120 Credits)

MODULE 6

The Acquisitions, Sales & Commissioning Process

Duration: January-May

Teaching Components:

As well as augmenting the knowledge from the modules above with more in-depth seminars on those subjects, this module includes the field trip placement at EFM in Berlin and will cover:

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- Film and games acquisitions process
- TV acquisitions and commissioning process
- Legal & Business Affairs
- Windows and Holdbacks
- Programming buying and points of negotiation
- Scheduling and audience figures
- Forecasting and budgeting

This module is compulsory for MDSE students, with contributions from students on the Producing, Film Studies, Games Design and Development, TV Entertainment and CBEE pathways.

Module 6 Assessment – Deliverable by End May

Students are assessed throughout the module by the Lead Tutor and by their performance in a series of deliverables including script reports and project assessments, case studies, a Cannes bible, feedback from their Berlin field trip and work placement, and their overall development across the module.

MODULE 7:

Work Placement & Company Analysis 2

Duration: Oct - Dec (Including 6 week placement)

Teaching Components:

As well as further augmenting the knowledge from the modules above with more in depth seminars, case studies and workshops on those subjects, this module will cover:

- Communication, presentation and negotiation skills
- Marketing, publicity, sales case studies
- Project Management
- Strategic planning
- Teamworking and team management
- Time management

Teaching on the placement will primarily be delivered through on-the-job training and workplace experience. The employer will be encouraged to provide some mentoring support throughout the placement. They will be advised of the subjects covered in the previous modules and the placement will look to embed some of this learning. The HoD will have regular check-ins with the student to provide advice and support as necessary.

As well as job-specific knowledge areas, there are key skills that the student is expected to develop during their placement:

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- Breadth of view
- Communication, presentation and negotiation skills
- Experience of office environment
- Finance and budgeting
- Interpersonal skills
- Marketing, publicity and/or sales
- Project Management
- Strategic planning
- Teamworking and team management
- Time management
- Personal Effectiveness
- Working with third parties

This module is compulsory for MDSE students, with contributions from Producing and CBEE students on the critical audience for the assessed group presentation component.

NB: The onus will be on the student to secure this 2nd Year placement, harnessing the networks, connections and skills they have developed over the duration of the course. The HoD and Lead Tutor will support this with their advice, contacts and tutorials. Placements cannot be guaranteed and, in the event of one not being secured by the end of the course, despite reasonable efforts, an alternative opportunity to demonstrate the learning outcomes will be provided by the Head of Department. This will take the form of a Company Analysis presentation.

Module 7 Assessment – Deliverable at the end July:

- Employer Feedback

The placement employer will complete a feedback form on the student's performance and areas of development during their time with them. This, combined with a pastoral tutorial with the Head of Department, will form the assessment for this module.

MODULE 8:

Graduation Portfolio Project: Produce a Marketing and Distribution Plan for A Feature Film or Game

Duration: June-December

Teaching Components:

This final module will bring together and build on all the learnings from previous modules. Additional subjects covered in seminars, workshops and case studies will be:

- Best Practice – Learnings from Other Industries eg. Music, fashion, publishing
- Funding and Grants for MDSE and the Application Process
- Legal & Business Affairs
- Looking Through Windows and Holdbacks
- Production and Technical aspects in Distribution and Exhibition

This is compulsory for MDSE students, and will include contributions from CBEE and Producing pathway participants.

Module 8 Assessment – Deliverable: December

As their final graduation project, students must produce and present a comprehensive plan for the release and marketing of a 'live' feature film. The title will be a live title to be released by a distributor or channel in the UK. The outcome will be a presentation, to an industry panel, supported by a more detailed document of strategies and campaigns for festivals, launch, release, exhibition and or digital, marketing, publicity, social media, media planning, sustain campaign, asset creation, and events, together with a timeline, audience/consumer profile, performance comps and forecasts, positioning, and budget. The presentation and document may be supported by creative materials such as key art, poster, ad designs, and trailer.

Other non-assessed exercises:

Knowledge gained from the seminars and workshops will also be embedded through short term, non-assessed exercises, throughout the course. Some examples are:

- Assess the impact of awards on a film, game or TV show's performance
- Analyse the marketing and publicity campaign and release/broadcast plan for a film, game or TV show
- Attend industry market events and follow projects as a buyer would and present "acquisitions" and rationale back to the group
- A live negotiation exercise, recreating the pitch and negotiations of market
- Follow and analyse releases and campaigns from festivals and markets such as Cannes, Edinburgh TV Festival, Gamescom
- How do you measure success of a TV show (eg. Reach, ratings, social media engagement)
- Evaluate the audience journey from first hearing a film, to sitting in a cinema to see it.
- Producing industry-level script reports and project assessments of real content
- Working with one of the industry's leading A/V and post-production houses to produce a trailer
- Work with the Graphics & Titles students to brief and create theatrical and home entertainment materials for a 'live' film