

Faculty of Humanities

School of Environment, Education and Development (SEED)

MA: Digital Technologies, Communication & Education

Joining Instructions

2013-14

Welcome

Dear Students

Welcome to the MA in Digital Technologies, Communication and Education at the University of Manchester. Whether you are studying on campus or off, we still intend, as much as possible, to make you feel part of the academic community here. This booklet describes the initial steps in that process.

This is supplied merely to get you started. Once you have gone through the enrolment procedures described here, you will be able to access the course's various web sites and other related systems, which provide more detailed information. You will also receive additional information from the Manchester Institute of Education and the University. This booklet is only intended to introduce you to issues particular to getting started on the MA DTCE. A more detailed Programme Handbook will be sent to you once your registration is completed and is available for download from <http://MAdigitaltechnologies.wordpress.com> .

If you have any more specific questions or concerns, feel free to contact us.

Drew Whitworth, Programme Director: drew.whitworth@manchester.ac.uk

Alan Jervis, Senior Course Tutor: alan.jervis@manchester.ac.uk

Mike O'Donoghue, Course Tutor: michael.o'donoghue@manchester.ac.uk

Gary Motteram, Senior Course Tutor: gary.motteram@manchester.ac.uk

Susan Brown, Course Tutor, susan.brown@manchester.ac.uk

Distance learning students have their own dedicated contact:

Marilena Aspioti, MA: DTCE Distance Student Support Officer:
marilena_aspioti@yahoo.co.uk

September 2013 Registration

You should by now have received communication from the University about the on-line registration process and what is required of you. This is therefore designed as guidance to reiterate the importance of completing all aspects of registration via the online system.

If you haven't yet received any communication from the University inviting you to register then please make sure you have completed the following

IT sign up www.iam.manchester.ac.uk

Confirm your attendance

MyManchester

Once you have completed the IT sign up you will have access to the following prior to September.

Early Payment - Available until 31st August 2012

You can upload a photo for your student card

Access the crucial guide pages www.studentnet.manchester.ac.uk/crucial-guide

Registration

This will open from 1st September 2013, however as this is a weekend we recommend that you try to register from 2nd September 2013. Ideally you should complete all sections of the registration process prior to arriving at the University to access the University's online registration facility go to MyManchester.

Registration Hotline +44(0)161 306 5544

This hotline is available weekdays between 2nd September – 30th September 2013

9.00am - 5.00pm and the weekends in September except 14th-15th September 2013.

If you do not register by 30th September 2013 the University Finance Office will impose a late registration fee. This fee will rise from £50 to £200 if you still haven't registered by 31st October 2013.

International Students

Orientation will run between Thursday 12th – Sunday 15th September.

Contact: orientation@manchester.ac.uk

Website: Orientation pages

There will also be support available for students who arrive after this date, referrals will be made from the School to a team known as Purple People.

Distance Learning Students

Student cards can be requested for posting out once you have completed registration and uploaded a photo via ssc@manchester.ac.uk. Please remember to quote your student ID within the request.

If you are unable to contact the helpdesk due to time difference then please liaise with the PGT office, who will endeavour to ensure you are dealt with promptly.

Course Unit Selection

You will be asked to select course units during the **academic online registration**. This procedure only requires you to select course units for your first year of study. However, we provide here information on subsequent years as well, to help you, and us, plan your later studies too.

The table below summarises the course units which we offer. More detailed information on course content, syllabi, and assessment, can be found at <http://www.MAdigitaltechnologies.com> or in your Programme Handbook. The Programme Handbook also contains a sample timetable for a 3-year programme of study.

MA DTCE compulsory, core and elective course units, and availability:

Number	Title	Availability	Credits
<i>Core course units - compulsory for all students</i>			
EDUC70191	The Development of Educational Technology	Semester 1. All students take this in their first semester of study.	15
EDUC61611	Communication in Education	Semester 1	15
EDUC60610	Researching Digital Technologies, Communication and Education	Semester 1 & 2 . Part-time and distance students do not do this until their final year.	30
<i>Electivecourse units (choose from the following to make up the credit load for your programme)</i>			
EDUC70510	Multimedia Design and Development	Semester 2	15
EDUC70171	Using and Managing ICT in Schools and Colleges	Semester 1	15
EDUC70030	Blended Learning in a Digital Age	Semester 1	15
COMP70190	Fundamentals of Computing Education	Semester 2	15
EDUC70221	Evaluation and Design of Educational Courseware	Semester 1	15
EDUC61712	Media and Information Literacy	Semester 2	15
EDUC70050	Teaching and Learning Online	Semester 2	15
EDUC61632	Introduction to Educational Video Production	Semester 2	15
ISS	Independent Supervised Study/Client-Based Project	Either semester, but not recommended for any student in their first semester of study	15 or 30

The last pair of options enable you to develop a small project in a field of your own choice, in discussion with your tutor. It can be substituted for 15 or 30 credits of taught course units and is arranged with your Personal Tutor and the permission of the Programme Director. "Independent Supervised Study" involves, usually, a literature review in a specialist subject. The Client-Based

Project option refers to work done in a workplace setting, involving you in design, implementation and evaluation of some kind of intervention. For more detail on this – and indeed any of the course units mentioned above - see <http://www.MAdigitaltechnologies.com>.

If you have some reason for needing to make course unit selections that deviate from the above advice, please contact the Programme Director on drew.whitworth@manchester.ac.uk.

Please also note that we reserve the right to withdraw or change course units, though we will endeavour to give plenty of notice of such changes. This list should be considered complete and accurate for 2012-13 only, not for subsequent years.

Mandatory course units should appear automatically onto your student profile so please contact the PGT office if this isn't the case.

Core/Optional course units will need to be selected by yourself, using the student center (Self Service) section of My Manchester.

When searching please ensure the course subject is Education and the course number is the course unit code i.e. EDUC 71000 (dissertation) enter 71000. You should see the 2013-14 course unit and be able to select class.

If you experience any problems please contact the PGT Office.

Note that you can change your selections at any time, even once you have started work on a course unit (though once you reach the third week of teaching you are then committed). The exception is EDUC70191, which all students must take in their first semester.

If you are a part-time on-campus student, the expectation is that you will complete 30 credits of course units each semester and therefore complete the course in **two years**.

If a distance learning student, you will complete either 15 or 30 credits per semester and therefore complete the course in **three years**.

It is not recommended that part-time students exceed 30 credits of study in any one semester except in special circumstances. If for whatever reason you wish to do so, please discuss this first with your Personal Tutor or the Programme Director.

Completing the course in a longer timescale than suggested here is possible, but please note that the university will charge you extra for this, except in special circumstances (such as interruptions due to illness) when the fee can be waived. The absolute maximum length of study, including the dissertation, is five years from the date of first enrolment.

Note that all part-time students must enrol on **at least 15 credits** in a particular semester. If you cannot do this you will need to apply for a period of "Interruption to Study" which can be for one semester or a full year. Only a maximum of 12 months' interruption is allowed during your degree.

It is essential to be realistic about the time commitment involved when planning your study schedule. Experience suggests that participants frequently underestimate the time required. This advice particularly applies to part-time students.

We do NOT recommend that you try to study on the course full-time while holding down a full-time job. Some have tried in the past. All have dropped out very quickly. If you have a full-time job, you should be studying on the course part-time. In any case inform your employer as they may be able to

arrange some kind of leave of absence or flexible working arrangements so you can engage in this professional development activity.

Induction 2013-14: on-campus students

The university arranges a variety of events for new students in the week between 16th September and 20th September 2013. You should have received information about the university-wide events separately.

A special **MA: DTCE Welcome meeting and induction** will be held at **2pm on Tuesday 17th September** (C3.19/20).

This meeting is informal and intended mostly to have you meet Drew, the Programme Director, and other members of staff, as well as your fellow students. We would like all on-campus MA: DTCE students to attend if you can.

What if you will be late?

We are aware that problems with visas, sponsorship and booking flights can often lead to delays in your arrival in Manchester. You should aim to be here by 16th September if you can (and if you come earlier you will also benefit from University-wide orientation activities for international students). However, should you not be able to make this, please contact the Programme Director on drew.whitworth@manchester.ac.uk as soon as you know. We can then discuss with you how you will find your way around when you do arrive. We can also arrange for you to be given access, remotely, to the university's computer systems, meaning you can still complete registration and even begin studying from abroad.

Note, however, that we do not recommend trying to start on the course if you are going to arrive any later than the start of week 4, that is, **Monday 14th October 2013**. For this reason, if you are having any problems arriving in Manchester, **please ensure you contact the Programme Director, on the address given above, as soon as you know of your delay and regularly thereafter.**

Induction programme 2013-14: distance learning students

If you are a **returning student** (that is, this is not your first year as a MA: DTCE student), no specific induction session has been organised for you. However, we realise you may still require help with registration, course unit choices and so on. For that reason you should already have been contacted by Marilena, the Distance Student Support Officer with some useful information. If necessary, she will help arrange a tutorial to discuss your needs.

For **new distance learning students** there is no single introductory session. Instead we adopt self-paced - but supervised - start to the course, with a series of online tasks that you have to complete by certain times and dates and which will gradually familiarise you with the various systems and applications in use, particularly Blackboard and Adobe Connect. These tasks will start from **Monday 16th September 2013**. Marilena the DLSO will contact you individually with more details. (You may be able to start on these tasks earlier, if your registration is complete.)

Please remember that it is your responsibility to ensure we have both an up-to-date home address and e-mail address for you. Any changes to either should be notified to Marilena.

Teaching dates 2013-14

Each semester has 12 weeks of teaching, then a period for preparing assignments.

First Semester:

Induction week: 16 September 2013 – 20 September 2013
Teaching: 23 September 2013 – 13 December 2013
University closed: 23 December 2013 – 3 January 2014 inclusive

Assignments to be submitted by **Monday 13th January, 2014.**

Second Semester:

Teaching: 27 January 2014 – 4 April 2014.
Easter break: 7 April 2014 – 25 April 2014.
Teaching: 28 April 2014 - 9 May 2014

Assignments to be submitted by **Wednesday 14th May 2014.**

Please note that some course units have earlier submission dates for certain sections of the course work.

Note that there is usually no teaching activity during the (northern hemisphere) summer. This is to allow both you and us a period for rest and/or other activities every year. In the third year, you will use this time to prepare your dissertation.

However, it is possible to undertake Independent Supervised Studies and/or Client-Based Projects during the summer. Some course units do run on an ad hoc basis as well. If you want to do this, ask your Personal Tutor in the first instance.

Timetabling: distance students

One of the advantages of distance learning is the greater flexibility you have to study at times which are convenient for you. Therefore, most of our distance teaching does not take place at set times.

However, some online sessions will need be arranged at specific times and dates. You will be advised of these in due course. We will do our best to negotiate their timing with you, but complete flexibility here will not be possible.

It should be noted that distance students are quite free to attend any on-campus classes for units they are enrolled in, should they find themselves in Manchester (or live near enough to travel). This can happen either on a one-off basis, or for all classes on a particular course unit.

Timetabling: on-campus students

The timetable for semester 2 2012-13 will be confirmed at the Welcome meeting in September.

The learning environments

If you are an **on-campus student**, most of your courses will have a seminar each week (times as noted above). However, you will still need to make substantial use of other resources, most of which are now online. For **distance learners** these are obviously of paramount importance. All students should therefore read this section carefully.

Online teaching materials may be based around text and images; video; audio; or other software: use will also be made of chat rooms, bulletin boards and other such communications media. But fundamentally, all this is delivered via web sites and email.

Within this general rule, however, there is some variety. Because one of the learning objectives of the MA DTCE is that you become familiar with a range of technology-based methods for delivering learning, we deliberately work with a range of **virtual learning environments** (VLEs). Principally, these include:

Blackboard. This is the University of Manchester's principal VLE. Most of our course units use it in some form, though not all.

Moodle. An open source, and free, VLE: see www.moodle.org.

Web sites. Some course units use a unique web site of their own for part or all of their teaching. There is also the DTCE Student Portal site (see below).

Email list. All students are subscribed to a listserv (e-mailing list) with the address DTCE-Students@listserv.manchester.ac.uk. This list serves as the primary medium for any course announcements and all students are expected to check it at least twice a week. You do not have to be subscribed at a Manchester university email address (though each of you will receive such an address in the form your.name@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk).

Adobe Connect. This is a videoconferencing application and with the help of web cams and microphones, allows us to communicate with you in real time, upload files, and so on.

Gaining access

You will be given access to each system depending on the course units on which you enrol. Therefore, you will not be able to log on and access any materials before you have registered as a student—including, first, academic and financial registration and subsequently, registering for your computing username and password.

In previous years this requirement has caused students, both on-campus and distance, some difficulty. Please realise that one very important step is that you *fulfil all conditions* which may have been attached to your offer; without doing so you will not be able to complete registration. Conditions such as the need to show your English language standard – proving prior qualifications – getting references and so on can hold up an otherwise smooth process and prevent you starting properly on the course. Check any communications you receive from us carefully, and do make use of our administrative staff (see contact details below) to see yourself through the registration process as quickly as possible.

The university provide a **Student portal** at <http://portal.manchester.ac.uk> which will give you access to Blackboard and also other related systems like the library. We also have our own portal site at <http://www.MAdigitaltechnologies.com>. This latter site also contains a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) list, information to help you with your choice of course units, links to online resources like the JRUL (John Rylands University Library) and other useful web sites, and so on.

Main features of the VLEs

Materials	Communication tools	Assessment
Access to courseware, e.g. handouts, reading lists, links, tasks, exercises, graphics, bibliographies, audio and video files	Synchronous (e.g. chat) & asynchronous (discussion groups, email) Announcements (calendar) Wikis and blogs	Quizzes and surveys Assignment submission in most course units

All these systems enable tutors and learners to interact, share resources and work collaboratively in a safe, easy to maintain online environment. They run through your Internet browser like any other website.

Most course units make use of all the features from the table above, and in general, you will be expected to access the VLE regularly and actively contribute to activities taking place within. However, there will be variations in the significance some tutors give to certain features compared to others. For example, some course units offer a very substantial set of materials, but a 'quieter' communications area. Others require you to post regular contributions to the discussion forum. Some tutors use video and/or audio, but others do not.

Assignments are also submitted electronically, either through the VLE or by email. You will almost always need to access online databases, journals and libraries in order to complete these. Advice about using these resources will be given as part of your studies.

Finally, as well as using these systems for work on specific course units, there are also more general activities like personal tutorials and networking with fellow students. In short, the online resources are of paramount importance to the MA: DTCE learning community.

Computer and Internet Access Requirements

On-campus students have access to the computing facilities available here in Manchester, and during your induction programme (see above) will be introduced to the systems. However, it is worth saying that most students find it best to have their own computer alongside these other facilities (and note that **we actively encourage you to bring laptops to your classes**). Nevertheless it is possible as an on-campus student to succeed on this course without owning a computer of your own.

Distance learners require regular, reliable access to a computer, and this computer should have regular, reliable access to the Internet. CD-ROMs will help with some of the course but (mainly for copyright reasons) there is a lot of content we will be unable to place on them. In addition, you will need access to the Internet to be in regular contact with your tutors and fellow students. You will also need to consult online journals and databases on a regular basis.

Your computer and Internet connection

You will need a computer powerful enough to enable you to browse internet pages and watch online video clips. The computer should have a reliable Internet connection. A broadband link is very desirable but it is just about possible to follow the course with low bandwidth, dial-up access - but be warned of the impact this is going to have on your telephone bill. While at times you may be asked to download large files, this need has been minimised. If you feel your Internet connection may prove

problematic, please contact us near the start of the course, as we may be able to supply selected material in advance on a CD-ROM.

The university is increasingly experimenting with *mobile access* to Blackboard and the student portal, therefore, so are we. Most of the content should be accessible on something like an iPhone and iPad. Some of our course units use audio files and these can be easily downloaded to an iPod. In short, we try to offer content and communications via many different media. Part of the point of this degree is to experiment with them, to see for yourselves what impact these digital information and communications technologies can have on education; we actively encourage creativity and if there is a technological medium you are familiar with but we are not, please introduce us to it, and help us experiment with it ourselves.

Software

Windows users: The following software is expected to be installed on your machine:

An Internet browser. Note that while Internet Explorer tends to be universal, we also recommend that you install Firefox from www.mozilla.com. Or, try Google Chrome - but note that we do not guarantee all content is compatible with this latter browser.

Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel and PowerPoint (or equivalent, compatible package). Note the existence of sites like <http://www.software4students.co.uk> which offer packages cheaply, or OpenOffice (<http://www.openoffice.org>) which is a free and compatible system.

Adobe Acrobat Reader (available from www.adobe.co.uk/products/acrobat/readstep2.html).

Windows Media Player version 9 or later (available from www.microsoft.com/downloads). In the past we have found that VLC player - <http://www.videolan.org/vlc/> - is particularly useful.

Older machines will need WinZip (which enables you to compress and uncompress files; available from <http://www.winzip.com/downwzeval.htm>).

Most up-to-date computers will have much, if not all, of this software already installed. If you access the Internet, including standard multimedia content, in your day-to-day life, it is likely that your computer is good enough to do this MA.

Note that the above list is of *minimum* software requirements. It is very likely that you will find many other useful software applications, for example:

Skype (particularly)

MSN

Graphics and/or photo editing packages

Concept- or mind-mapping software

Bibliographic software like Endnote or Reference Manager

Even this list is not exhaustive. Advice can be given if you require it.

Others: Users of Apple Macs, and/or operating systems such as Linux, are welcome on the course. iWork is helpful for Mac users (or again, note the existence of free alternatives like Open Office). Rest assured that all course content is compatible with the Mac: if it were not, the Programme Director (who is usually welded to his MacBook Pro) would not get very far in his daily work.

Other peripherals

Essential: A printer is pretty much essential for distance learners (and useful for on-campus learners, though they can also access printing facilities at university). A loudspeaker or headphones, and a microphone, are also essential.

We also expect students to have a webcam. This is due to our need to confirm the identity of students when they participate in online sessions.

We are aware that there are some cultural problems which arise with the use of webcams, particularly for female Muslim students. We are happy to accept that some students may wish to participate in online classes while wearing a veil or other means of obscuring the face: nevertheless, the requirement to use a webcam during all taught online classes remains.

Useful: You will also find it useful to have access to a digital camera, whether in its own right or integrated into a mobile phone. Owners of iPods and similar hardware may find these useful for accessing audio- and video-based course materials in a more flexible way than is possible with laptops and desktops.

Security

We strongly advise that your computer have anti-virus software installed as well as a firewall. Note that some applications used on the course (e.g. Blackboard, Wimba Classroom) require you to allow pop-up windows to be opened: browsers often block these. If you are not sure how to allow pop-up windows on your browser please see the guidance given on the welcome CDs which distance learners will receive; or ask for advice in the IT induction sessions (see above).

ICT skills

We set only minimal requirements in terms of your prior technical knowledge. These are the basic skills that we do expect you to have:

Basic word-processing

Accessing Internet pages

Downloading files

Playing multimedia files from websites

Sending email messages with attachments

Using spreadsheet software to organise data and make simple charts

A basic understanding of file management (i.e. the naming, organising, moving, etc. of data files).

If you are out of practice or unfamiliar with any of these, please try to spend time beforehand familiarising yourself and practising these basic skills.

There are other ICT skills, useful on the course, which are more advanced than those listed above (e.g. using the more advanced features of Word; statistical data analysis; manipulating graphics and photos; web design with Dreamweaver or Wordpress). We do not expect you to possess these in advance but some advice and guidance will be given as appropriate, either in taught course units or Key Skills sessions (more information on these will be given in Induction Week and via the DTCE Student Portal).

A note about the use of technology on this course

As you are doubtless already aware, computers and the Internet are not the most reliable of technologies. Internet connections break at inconvenient moments; software and hardware suffer from compatibility problems; unexpected events cause your computer to stop responding; or new applications fail to install, leaving you with only an error message for your efforts. Indeed, worries about what will happen in the face of such problems are a significant negative influence on students' willingness to enrol on distance learning courses. They can also cause awkwardness for on campus students.

Please understand, first of all, that we fully appreciate the nature of these problems, and how off-putting they can be, particularly if they become chronic. We will always do our best to support you through any such difficulties, and no one will be penalised in any way as a result. However, to be able to help you like this does depend on your informing us of a problem: please don't keep difficulties to yourself. More information on technical support is available on the DTCE Student Portal.

There is another side to this, however. Remember that this degree is specifically oriented towards developing in you a critical, questioning attitude to the use of technology in education. It also has a mandate to experiment with some “cutting edge” technology. The simple fact is, we *expect*, at times, problems to occur with our systems. We know that some of the more technically difficult parts of the course – like online synchronous chat sessions – will, at least at first, be fairly chaotic, as you are all unfamiliar with the technologies. Indeed, because we deliberately adopt an experimental, exploratory stance on our use of technology, we may well not be that familiar with them either. To stress this again then: no one will be penalised, or considered at fault, if our systems let you down. Problems which occur are all part of the learning process, for you and us alike, as we strive to understand the impact of digital technologies on communication and education.

We also welcome your critical input into the development of this course and its technological environment. This field moves so rapidly that it is very likely—in fact, for three-year distance students, almost certain—that the technologies we will be using at the end of your study will be different from those with which we started. If you think there are things we could do better, or more effectively: please tell us about them. Also we need to know about technical problems as soon as they occur, particularly if they are our fault (for example, a file we have supplied is incompatible with your operating system).

More will be said on this throughout your studies. At this early stage, however, please remember that the technologies you will encounter on this course are as much the *subject* of your study – and criticism – as they are *tools*.

We hope you will enjoy this course.

Drew, Alan, Gary, Susan and Mike

Registration

When registering onto your Programme at the University of Manchester there are a number of steps that must be completed. These steps are the process by which you check that we have all the necessary information about you, confirm your status as a student, pay your tuition fees and collect your student card.

Administrative and Teaching Staff

To telephone us from outside the University but within the UK, add: 0161 27***** to the numbers below. To telephone from outside the UK, add +44 161 27*****
Our postal address is: School of Education, Ellen Wilkinson Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, UK.

<i>Administrative Staff</i>	<i>Room</i>	<i>Tel.</i>	<i>E-mail</i>
Postgraduate Admissions	ALB	53463	pg-education@manchester.ac.uk

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MA Teaching: The
Development of
Educational Technology;
Communication in
Education; Media and
Information Literacy

Gary Motteram
Senior Lecturer

MA Teaching: Evaluation
& Design of Educational
Courseware; Teaching and
Learning Online;
Multimedia Design and
Development

Mike O'Donoghue
Course Tutor

MA Teaching:
Researching DTCE;
Introduction to Educational
Video Production.

Susan Brown
Course Tutor

MA Teaching: Blended Learning
in a Digital Age

Alan Jervis

Senior Course Tutor and (in semester 2 2012-13) Acting Programme Director

MA Teaching: Using and
Managing ICT in Schools
and Colleges.

Some course units are taught by members of staff outside the core DTCE team.

One of us will also act as your personal tutor: your first point of contact for non-academic matters, or issues of general concern which are not specific to a particular course unit.

You will also, on occasion, be in contact with Teaching Assistants, brought in to help with specific courses or sessions.

Distance students: We anticipate that in 2013-14 there will be around 30 distance students on the course, spanning the globe from the Caribbean to Hong Kong and Singapore, as well as many regions in the UK, Europe and the Arabian peninsula. To help us with the task of managing this complexity, we have a dedicated Distance Student Support Officer on the MA: DTCE.

The main roles of the DSSO are to act as the first point of contact for all e-mail enquiries from distance learners, to look after the web site at <http://www.MAdigitaltechnologies.com> and keep the resources there up-to-date, and to co-ordinate the timing of synchronous sessions, phone tutorials and so on.

If you are a distance student it will help to become used, early on, to contacting the DSSO first with any query. She will pass your message on to other members of staff if it cannot be dealt with straight away.

The DSSO is Marilena Aspioti, she can be contacted at marilena_aspioti@yahoo.co.uk.