

<b>Module</b>	History of the Media
<b>Course code</b>	BAJH-HM
<b>Credits</b>	5
<b>Allocation of marks</b>	50% Continuous Assessment
	50% Final Examination

### **Intended Module Learning Outcomes**

On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

1. Understand how particular media structures have emerged in contemporary society;
2. Comprehend the relationships and historical processes between relevant political conditions, technological innovation, business entrepreneurship and social demand that gave rise to the communications structures in society today;
3. Analyse, including comparing and contrasting, how media formats have been embraced by social forces to entertain, to advance egalitarianism, and also to consolidate power, profit and social control.

### **Module Objectives**

This module introduces learners to the key events and epochs in the history of human communications. Learners analyse the impact of key changes in communications media, starting from the earliest known forms of media, through to the invention of the printing press, the emergence of a literate reading public, the development of newspapers, the invention of radio, film and television, and into the digital age.

Underlying all of these successful media are three common conditions: in each case an identifiable social demand emerged for the product, a stable usable technology was developed and, it was a profitable business venture for those involved. Also, we find what is to be learned from media history, where, with the advent of each new media format the existing power structures in society were disrupted and a struggle for control of the new medium took place.

This course offers an analysis of the evolution of human communication. The world we live in today is one where humans communicate and share information in an ever growing range of media, from text to satellites, from billboards to blogs.

### **Module Curriculum**

#### **Topic 1: History of the Printing Press**

Here we analyse the impact of the Gutenberg Press on the medieval world. The social, political and economic consequences of the invention of the press on medieval Europe shows us the type of effects that subsequent developments in media technologies have had on society.

#### **Topic 2: History of the Newspaper Industry**

The arrival and endurance of popular newspapers over the past 400 years is a crucial landmark in the history of modern media. Newspapers have been the day to day chroniclers of world history. This topic concentrates on the background to, and development of, the capitalist newspaper industry in 19th century England.

### **Topic 3: History of Radio**

Radio was the first electronic mass media to emerge in the 20th century. Its role has changed since from being a dominant media to being outflanked by television. This topic looks at the development of radio from the late 19th century, and contrasts how it was adopted in the USA, the UK and Ireland up to the late 1930s by which time it was hugely popular.

### **Topic 4 : History of the Internet**

The convergence of technology platforms for producing media products across print, photography, TV and radio broadcasting, music and the internet is one of the defining features of our age. Here we look at the processes involved in forming this digital age: the key people and inventions that led to its ubiquitous adoption; how can the history of media help us to understand its contemporary uses and the attempts at control - from Wikileaks, file sharing and the 2011 Egyptian revolution, to SOPA and ACTA, three-downloads-and-your-disconnected, to Google and Facebook's history of law breaking, fines and privacy invasion. Additionally, we ask: is unconditional web access a human right?

### **Topic 5: History of Film (Ireland & Hollywood)**

The film industry was one of the most popular forms of mass entertainment in the 20th century. The development of power structures in this medium is a crucial factor in the development of 20th century media structures. We examine the format's development in Ireland and Hollywood.

### **Topic 6: History of Television & Society**

Television created an electronic media which combined elements of television and film in a format that now has the capacity to transcend media formats as we know them. This module studies the impact of television on both audiences and the general media industry.

### **Topic 7: History of Writing & the Alphabet**

This topic examines the development of primary forms of human communication, including language, art, writing and reading. Where was writing invented 5,000 years ago, how did it develop and spread geographically and what was it used for?