IULM University
Faculty of Communication

Course of study in Strategic Communication

Class of degree: LM - 59 Communication, Business and Advertising Science

Language: English

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR THE COURSE OF STUDY
FOR THE COHORT ENROLLED IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2024/2025

Presentation

The Master's Degree Course in Strategic Communication, taught entirely in English, is designed to develop the technical specialist communication skills, as well as the business, managerial and sociological skills required to work in the field of strategic communication. The course aims to train graduates capable of pursuing professional careers in the corporate world, in international organisations and institutions, and in strategic and management consultancy. The degree course is structured into a **first year which is the same for all students** and a **second year characterised by two separate curricula** from which students must choose: the first in **Corporate and Marketing Communication**; the second in **Sustainability Communication**.

With the aim of accentuating its international vocation, the Degree Course offers three Dual Degree opportunities at Huddersfield University (UK), Cardiff Metropolitan University (UK) and UWA University (Perth, Australia). In addition to these, there are numerous exchange opportunities with universities abroad specifically tailored for students of strategic communication.

Specific learning objectives and description of learning paths

The Master's Degree Course in Strategic Communication, in the Communication, Business and Advertising Sciences degree class, combines technical courses in specialist communication with content that is more oriented towards developing those transversal skills that will help graduates to interpret contexts and orient themselves in an interconnected and constantly changing global environment, such as the one in which organisations operate today.

The Degree Course in Strategic Communication therefore aims to train graduates capable of filling important professional and managerial roles in the communication departments of companies and organisations, in the world of non-profit world, and in managerial and strategic consulting, not only in the field of communication.

The Faculty is made up of teachers specialised in the main aspects of strategic communication, with significant professional and/or teaching experience abroad, and of professors of international standing from universities around the world that have developed courses of excellence in the field of strategic communication.

The teaching methods combine theory and practice, have a strong applicative and project-based slant, based on classroom discussion of international case studies and readings, on business games and role-plays that enable students to understand the real workings of organisational and managerial dynamics.

Expected learning outcomes as expressed using European descriptors for qualifications

Knowledge and understanding

The degree course aims to increase knowledge and understanding of the behaviour of individuals and groups in the context of organisational dynamics. Students will be provided with stimuli, models and tools to know and understand the internal context, the organisational environment and the ways in which individuals interact in different situations such as managing innovation, change, identity or corporate reputation. Knowledge will be provided to understand the scenarios and competitive contexts in which complex organisations operate today. This means developing the ability to analyse and diagnose the challenges coming from external and internal contexts, skills in planning and designing communication strategies and policies; in line with strategic positioning choices; skills in managing relations with different stakeholders. In this regard, knowledge will be developed in the area of managing relations with different parties, such as customers, institutions, stakeholders, traditional and digital publics, and communication and marketing skills. Depending on the curriculum chosen by students in their second year, knowledge will be more related to the

corporate/marketing world or to the world of sustainability. Students choosing the corporate/marketing communication profile will acquire knowledge related to specialisations such as financial communication, internal communication, public affairs, and marketing communication. Students who choose the programme in sustainability will deepen their knowledge of the more technical/specialist issues related to environmental and social sustainability in order to be able to manage the supporting communication processes in a managerial manner. The course also aims to provide knowledge of social, political and cultural scenarios and phenomena in order to develop managerial planning and management skills also in multicultural contexts. The assessment of learning takes place at the end of the single course through formal examinations that will assess the range of knowledge acquired by the individual student and the ability to understand communication dynamics within structured organisational contexts.

Applying knowledge and understanding

Through interactive teaching methods widely used in international training contexts, students will be stimulated to work in situations of high complexity and organisational uncertainty, knowing how to manage qualitative and quantitative research tools and internal and external context analysis, interpreting the data obtained in order to make decisions within work groups. In this regard, the methods chosen will be as follows: exercises carried out in the classroom in order to stimulate an immediate understanding of the theoretical principles explained during the lectures; group and individual workshops involving the realisation of more complex projects aimed at integrating communication, management, marketing, sociological and evaluation skills and competences; workshops in which participants can experiment and carry out analysis and design tests on the topics covered in the lessons; discussions of cases drawn up by the most prestigious institutes at an international level; real-time simulations (e.g. in crisis and sustainability situations). The assessment of learning takes place, also during the course, through the exercises on the business cases proposed in the classroom, the group and individual work carried out by the students within the single course, and the projects realised also in collaboration with the companies. The formal assessments at the end of the single course must assess the student's ability to apply the skills acquired.

Making judgements

The subjects taught in the Master's Degree Course in Strategic Communication are characterised by active teaching and active student participation. This occurs both in the workshop activities, which are planned for each course and in which students are called upon to actively participate, and in the more traditional lectures during which students are equally called upon to express themselves and make their contribution. Teachers on all occasions in the classroom are called upon to ensure that students perceive the complexity of the situations described and to accustom them to evaluating these situations and making choices under conditions of uncertainty. Students, both individually and in groups, are called upon to carry out exercises, role simulations, discussions and analyses of business cases and are stimulated to evaluate the various situations presented, solve problems, and propose original solutions. The objective of the various teaching methods mentioned is in any case aimed at developing students' judgement skills, which must in turn stimulate adequate autonomy in both training and professional activities.

Communication skills

The exercises that students are required to carry out as part of their lessons and workshops involve the presentation of reports to develop their ability to communicate the results of their work and assessments clearly and concisely. Students are required to carry out individual and group work culminating in written papers to be presented in the classroom, often with the support of slides. Particular attention is paid by the teachers to evaluating not only the content of the presentations but also the way in which they are presented so that they can be easily used by the various interlocutors, including non-specialists. In addition, students are provided with training support to exploit the opportunities inherent in group work, overcoming critical issues and developing negotiation skills that are very useful in the world of work.

Learning skills

The development of learning skills is stimulated through the students' active participation in the seminars, professional workshops and case study presentations conducted by professionals and lecturers, which often require further elaboration and sometimes design work on the part of the students. In fact, the aim is to stimulate both more traditional learning skills through the understanding and in-depth study of the contents and interpretations proposed by the lecturers, and learning skills based more on learning by doing through their participation in active learning contexts, such as the workshops and case study presentations mentioned above. Over the years, the complexity of the projects and exercises proposed to students has evolved, and therefore the ability to assess students' progress and the development of their learning skills has also been refined.

Employment and professional opportunities

The Master's degree course in Strategic Communication will give you access to the managerial levels of the profession both in the communication departments of complex organisations and in the specialist areas of internal communication, media relations, marketing communication, financial communication and institutional communication.

The course prepares graduates for the professions of:

- *Strategic Communication Manager*

  - *Job functions:* A strategic communication manager is responsible for planning and coordinating the corporate communication strategies of an organisation. They ensure consistency between the communication activities carried out and the messages communicated, both outside and within the organisation, in order to develop a strong and distinctive corporate identity. They coordinate the implementation of the various communication activities at a tactical level. They are responsible for the achievement of communication objectives at corporate level and the related Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
  - *Associated competences*: The ability to organise activities for listening to stakeholders in order to plan the most appropriate communication strategies. The ability to translate insights from stakeholder research into strategic lines of corporate communication. The ability to manage a team of communication specialists to implement diverse tactics. The ability to oversee the soundness of the corporate identity and manage the coherence of corporate narratives through cross-media storytelling activities. The ability to monitor the achievement of communication KPIs through the management of metrics dashboards integrated with business dashboards.
  - *Professional opportunities*: Private and public companies, Non-profit organisations, Associations and public organisations.

- *Crisis & Issue Manager*

  - *Job functions*: A crisis manager is responsible for managing crises that may involve the organisation in both the online and offline worlds. They co-ordinate the crisis management team, acting as the company spokesperson in moments of pre-crisis or full crisis, and managing media relations. They identify activities and events in the market and social environments that may turn into critical media issues for the organisation.

  - *Associated competences*: They must possess sound public speaking, stress management and team leadership skills. They must know which communication techniques need to be activated in the event of a crisis, managing all the appropriate tools from a cross-media perspective to meet the information needs of the different stakeholder groups. They define strategies to manage media issues, identify the responses to be given in pre-crisis or actual crisis situations and choose the most suitable communication channels and tools to be used in the different contexts.
  - *Professional opportunities*: Private and public companies, communication agencies and public relations agencies.

- *Digital Communication Specialist*

  - *Job functions*: A digital communication specialist is responsible for planning, coordinating and integrating online and offline communication activities in a specialised area. They must coordinate the communication efforts carried out in an integrated manner in order to promote the coherence of the messages disseminated inside and outside the organisation, both in the physical world and on virtual platforms. They define and constantly monitor indicators to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the activities carried out.

  - *Associated competences*: They must know and be able to manage specialised communication tools, in areas such as corporate social responsibility communication, institutional relations and public affairs, traditional and online media relations. They identify key audiences and prepare communication materials. They organise events (physical, virtual and phygital) and sponsorships, plan releases in traditional and online media, and manage social media engagement activities. They must be able to monitor the achievement of objectives and evaluate the effectiveness of the initiatives implemented.

  - *Professional opportunities*: Private and public companies, Communication agencies and public relations agencies, Non-profit organisations.

- *Global Reputation Manager*

  - *Job functions*: A Global Reputation Manager is responsible for the development and continuous improvement of the reputation of a brand or organisation at corporate level. They set up the strategic plan of communication activities that may have reputational implications and advise the other main corporate units. They monitor dashboards of indicators of the achievement of defined objectives.

- *Associated competences*: They must be able to design and manage continuous reputation monitoring activities among stakeholders, through the media and online. They must be able to translate the insights from monitoring into strategic guidelines for the communications department and the management of the other most important corporate units. They must be able to work closely with other corporate areas to coordinate with their managers both communication initiatives and corporate decisions that contain an important communication dimension in terms of reputation.
- *Professional opportunities*: Private and public companies, Communication agencies and public relations agencies, Non-profit organisations.

- ### Public Affairs & Advocacy Manager

  - *Job functions*: This professional figure is responsible for relations with public institutions, and decision-making bodies at local, national and supranational level. A Public Affairs & Advocacy Manager supports the above-mentioned institutions in their decision-making processes, providing data and analyses, managing moments of confrontation and dialogue, also mediated by digital technologies.

  - *Associated competences*: Basic legislative knowledge, knowledge of the workings of legislative institutions and governing bodies, skills related to preparing dossiers and reports, negotiation and mediation skills
  - *Professional opportunities*: Industry, private and public bodies, freelance work in the field of public affairs, lobbying and advocacy

- ### Sustainability Communication Manager

  - *Job functions*: A sustainability communication manager supports the organisation by communicating projects in the environmental, social and governance fields effectively. They contribute to the drafting of the sustainability report and organise stakeholder engagement processes for continuous and proactive attention to critical issues. In addition, they work on the creation and promotion of projects aimed at promoting awareness in the field of sustainability.

  - *Associated competences*: They are familiar with issues, contents and regulations, also at an international level, related to integrated reporting in the field of sustainability and ESG. They possess narrative and stylistic skills, including digital skills, and competences in calculating and managing KPIs important for assessing the effectiveness of initiatives
  - *Professional opportunities*: Industry, Private and public bodies, Freelance work.

Curricular requirements for admission

For all information on admission requirements and criteria, admission test sessions and application deadlines, please consult the Admission Procedures published at this link

For students who are not native speakers of Italian, written and oral proficiency in Italian is required as one of the competences of a graduate (Ministerial Decree of 16 March 2007). At the end of the course there will therefore be a final assessment test of the level of proficiency in Italian, which will be recorded in the transcript as a fulfilled requirement. The requirement can be met by attending an extracurricular Italian language course at the University or upon presentation of a valid certificate obtained outside the University. The requirement of proof of proficiency in Italian must be obtained by the completion of the course and is binding for graduation purposes.

Organisation of the Degree Course

The Study Plan for the Degree Course in Strategic Communication is divided into two years, during which students are required to acquire 120 CFUs (university credits), and includes core curricular activities and workshops, elective courses and the final exam.

The degree programme is divided into two syllabuses which provide for the awarding of university credits.

Study Plan

1st YEAR

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS	SCIENTIFIC-DISCIPLINARY SECTOR	TYPE OF COURSE	CFU/ECTS CREDITS
Strategy and Management	**SECS-P/07**	*Core*	**9**
Strategic Communication	**SECS-P/08**		**12**
Fundamentals of Strategic Communication		*Core*	*6*
Issue and Crisis Management		*Core*	*6*
Digital Communication management and AI	**SPS/08**		**9**
Social media relations management		*Core*	*6*
AI for Communication and marketing		*Core*	*3*
Data Analysis & Data Visualization	**SECS-S/05**		**12**
Data Analysis for Communication		*Core*	*6*
Visual Communication and data visualization		*Core*	*6*
Principles of CSR and Communication	**SPS/08**	*Core*	**6**
Organizational Behaviour & Neuromanagement	**SECS-P/10**	*Core*	**6**

Elective courses		*Other training activities*	**6**

2nd YEAR
Corporate and Marketing Communication

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS	SCIENTIFIC-DISCIPLINARY SECTOR	TYPE OF COURSE	CFU/ECTS CREDITS
Corporate Marketing and Management			**12**
Brand and Marketing Communication	**SECS-P/08**	*Core*	*6*
Brand & Corporate narratives	**L-LIN/10**	*Elective*	*6*
Social evaluations	**M-FIL/03**	*Elective*	**6**
Financial communication and Investor relations	**SECS-P/07**	*Core*	**6**
Internal communication and change management	**SPS/08**	*Core*	**6**
Corporate Public Affairs	**IUS/10**	*Core*	**6**

Elective Courses		*Other training activities*	**6**

Field project/stage		*Other training activities*	**6**

FINAL PROJECT - *Thesis*		*Other training*	**12**

		activities	

2nd YEAR
Sustainability Communication

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS	SCIENTIFIC-DISCIPLINARY SECTOR	TYPE OF COURSE	CFU/ECTS CREDITS
Sustainability Marketing and Management			12
Management for Sustainability	**SECS-P/08**	*Core*	*6*
Sustainability for marketing and sales	**M-FIL/03**	*Elective*	*6*
Digital Sustainability	**INF/01**	*Core*	**6**
Sustainable HR management	**SECS-P/10**	*Core*	**6**
Integrated reporting	**SECS-P/07**	*Core*	**6**
Global environment issues and the human values	**M-FIL/01**	*Elective*	**6**

Elective courses		*Other training activities*	**6**

Field project/stage		*Other training activities*	**6**

FINAL PROJECT - *Thesis*		*Other training activities*	**12**

For the acquisition of the 12 CFUs of the elective courses, students can have priority in choosing from among the recommended options.

Students have the possibility to opt for no more than one course activated in Master's degree programmes, other than their own, of the same or of other Faculties.

The approval of individual study plans is subject to examination by specific Committees delegated for this purpose by the Boards of the teaching bodies concerned, and which also act as advisory bodies on the matter. In the event that their proposal is not approved, students have the right to be heard by the Committee.

Teaching method

Lessons are delivered in the form of lectures, which may be supplemented by exercises, seminars and/or supplementary courses. Some of the courses will be divided into a more theoretical general module and a more operational part taught by external professionals.

Attendance

Although strongly recommended, attendance is not compulsory. The course has been designed assuming full attendance on the part of the students.

Methods of examination

Each course may consist of one or more courses/workshops (teaching modules). Learning outcomes may also be assessed during the course of the year and for parts of modules, in accordance with the procedures set out in each

Università IULM, via Carlo Bo, 1, 20143 Milano
Facoltà di Comunicazione
Preside: Prof. Luca Barbarito
e-mail: facolta.comunicazione@iulm.it

6

syllabus or communicated by the course/workshop coordinators at the beginning of the lessons, as established by the competent teaching bodies. The total number of credits for each course shall be deemed as definitively acquired in the student's records only once the final overall assessment has been registered.

Methods of assessment for first-year courses are regulated by article 18 of the University Academic Regulations, which state:

1. The Faculties shall regulate the examination methods in such a way as to ascertain the adequate preparation of the students enrolled in the courses of study, and with a view to providing a continuation of their school studies and to the acquisition of the credits corresponding to the courses followed. These assessments, always carried out on an individual basis, must take place under conditions which guarantee the thoroughness, objectivity and fairness of the assessment in relation to the teaching or training activity followed, and to what is explicitly required for the purposes of the test.

2. Results of the assessments may be expressed as a mark or grade (examinations) or as a simple judgement of approval or non-approval (ability tests).

3. Assessment tests and examinations may be oral and/or written, and may even be carried out using digital means, provided that this does not fully replace the tests. In the case of assessment based on written and oral tests, the result of the former cannot be preclusive of the latter. In the case of assessment based on written tests only, students have the right to request a further oral assessment. In any case, the tests, if oral, must be open to the public and students must be able to see the written test paper.

4. There are three examination sessions for each course year. It is therefore not permitted to take examinations outside these sessions or to register results of exams taken in previous periods.

5. It is not permitted to repeat an examination that has been passed and registered.

6. The final result of the examination will be expressed as a mark out of thirty, with the pass mark being at least 18/30. In addition to the maximum mark of 30/30 the Examining Board may unanimously award the mark *cum laude*.

7. If a student withdraws or has not achieved a pass mark, a note will be made in their examination record book and transcript and, without affecting the final average, this will be highlighted in the documents sent to the Degree Examination Board.

Procedures for registering examinations

The procedures for registering examinations can be found at this link

Organisation of teaching activities and examination sessions

The academic calendar, lecture timetable and examination dates are published on the university website on the degree course page.

Lessons are held over two semesters with the semesters in turn being divided into two cycles.

Academic year 2024/2025:

FIRST SEMESTER	**23 September to 21 December 2024**
1st cycle	23 September to 31 October 2024
2nd cycle	12 November to 21 December 2024
SECOND SEMESTER	**17 February to 31 May 2025**
1st cycle	17 February to 29 March 2025
2nd cycle	7 April to 31 May 2025

Easter holidays: 18 to 21 April 2025 with an academic holiday from 22 to 24 April 2025

Course organisation

24-hour courses (3 CFUs)	2/3 lessons per week of 2 academic hours, held on 2/3 days within one teaching cycle.
48-hour courses (6 CFUs)	2/3 lessons per week of 2 academic hours, held on 2/3 days within two teaching cycles in the same semester.
72-hour courses (9 CFUs)	3/4 lessons per week of 2 academic hours, held on 3/4 days within two teaching cycles in the same semester.
96-hour courses (12 CFUs)	4/5 lessons per week of 2 academic hours, held on 4/5 days within two teaching cycles in the same semester or 2/3 lessons per week of 2 academic hours, held on 2/3 days in both semesters.

For specific teaching needs, and when justifiably requested by the course teacher, the Dean may authorise alternative teaching methods to those provided for in the above formats.

There are 3 exam sessions, for a total of 8 exam dates for each course plus one exam session for students on international exchange programmes from 16 to 20 December 2024:

1st session	8 January to 15 February 2025 (3 exam dates)
2nd session	3 June to 10 July 2025 (3 exam dates)
3rd session	26 August to 20 September 2025 (2 exam dates)

There will be 3 degree examination sessions, the periods of which will be set out in the academic calendar published for each academic year.

Degree Thesis

The Master's degree in Strategic Communication requires the writing and presentation of an individual thesis containing both theoretical and operational research and analysis.

The thesis must be written and presented in English.

Candidates will have to demonstrate both knowledge of the fundamental elements of the disciplines on which the course of study is based and the ability to apply this knowledge in the various areas that characterise the research and professional fields of strategic communication.

The topic of the thesis, chosen in agreement with the supervisor, one of the teachers on the degree course, must be relevant to the master's degree course.

The supervisor is also responsible for approving the written work in which the student summarizes the results of the research carried out, and, together with a co-supervisor appointed by the Head of Faculty, acts as Supervisor for the thesis during the Final Examination. *(from Regulations for the Final Exam – Master's Degrees)*

The thesis must provide a theoretical framework and an exhaustive treatment of the topic with references to up-to-date scientific literature and adopting an international approach.

The Master's thesis, corresponding to 12 CFUs, must present a level of complexity, depth of analysis and originality that is significantly higher than that required for the final examination of the Bachelor's degree course.

The dissertation must demonstrate the student's ability to critically use the tools and knowledge acquired during the course of study through the analysis of a topic that is pertinent to the course itself and to the relevant disciplinary corpus, also by developing an empirical part.

For the empirical part, candidates may carry out field research characterised by methodological precision or focus on a project in fields relevant to the Master's degree course. In both cases, a personal contribution with clear elements of originality in the research carried out is required.

Once the dissertation has been approved by the supervisor, it is assessed by a committee in accordance with the University Academic Regulations. Credit will be given to the international scope of the work, as well as to the autonomy of the research process.

The Examination Boards for the Final Examination and for awarding the degree are appointed by the Faculty Dean. The Examination Boards are chaired by the Faculty Dean or, in their absence, by the highest ranking or most senior Professor *(from [Regulations for the Final Exam – Master's Degrees](#)).*

The Examination Board shall give a brief qualitative evaluation of the Final Examination (unsatisfactory, satisfactory, quite good, good, very good, excellent), taking into account both the evaluation of the thesis as expressed by the supervisor and the co-supervisor, and the presentation of the thesis by the student. This evaluation gives the right to the acquisition of the required CFU credits. In the event of a negative evaluation, the student is required to repeat the Final Examination. The mark for the degree will be expressed as a mark out of 110 on the basis of academic records and the evaluation of the final exam.

Approved by the Faculty Board at its meeting held on 11 April 2024

Università IULM, via Carlo Bo, 1, 20143 Milano
Facoltà di Comunicazione
Preside: Prof. Luca Barbarito
e-mail: facolta.comunicazione@iulm.it

9