



Module Definition Form (MDF)

Module code: MOD009239	Version: 3 Date Amended: 06/Dec/2024
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1. Module Title
The Business of Publishing

2a. Module Leader
Katharine Reeve

2b. School
Cambridge School of the Creative Industries

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Arts, Humanities, Education and Social Sciences

3a. Level
7

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
30

4b. Study Hours
300

5. Restrictions			
Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:	MA Publishing; MA Creative Writing and Publishing		

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

This module will help you gain a broad understanding of the complexity of the contemporary publishing landscape in a national and international context. At the heart of the publishing business is the acquisition and creative exploitation of copyrights. The importance of contracts and rights, and diversity and inclusivity in underpinning successful businesses will be examined, as will the role of the literary agent in managing fiction and nonfiction author's careers.

You will explore the variety of strategies employed by publishers to successfully find an audience for their products in a competitive and fast-moving media environment. This module will introduce you to: marketing, literary festivals, sales, bookselling, production, distribution, audio books and translation. Visiting industry specialists will contribute specialist insights and case studies.

6b. Outline Content

- Roles and processes, diversity and inclusivity, product management
- Publisher brand identity and its impact on editorial policy, imprints or sub-brands, production values, marketing
- The legal framework of publishing: intellectual property, copyright, contracts, legal issues
- Principles and practices of marketing: digital content, social media strategy, audience, live events
- Sales and distribution (high street independents to Amazon; print and digital)
- Researching and writing a feature article; creating an annotated bibliography
- Data and metadata; book sales data from Nielsen BookData through The Bookseller industry reports
- Rights, licensing and permissions (text and image), international book fairs

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

None

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	Type	On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:
1	Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate a systematic knowledge of the national and international publishing landscape
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of marketing activities in publishing
3	Knowledge and Understanding	Critically evaluate and analyse the various aspects of publisher brand identity and product management
4	Knowledge and Understanding	Demonstrate a critical awareness of the legal considerations and data issues and opportunities within the publishing industry
5	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Express informed ideas and opinions about the publishing industry in an accessible form
6	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Carry out appropriate research for professional writing and make use of editing skills

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2025/6	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	Hours	Learning Outcomes	Details of Duration, frequency and other comments
Lectures	0	N/A	N/A
Other teacher managed learning	24	1-6	12 x 2-hour seminars/workshops
Student managed learning	276	1-6	Includes self study in researching and assessing individual publishers using industry sources e.g. The Bookseller
TOTAL:	300		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence

Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1-6	100 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)

Coursework comprising: 010/1 Marketing plan, 1000 words; and 010/2 Feature article: analysis of a publishing company with annotated bibliography, 3000 words

Assessment components for Element 010

Component No.	Assessment Title	Submission Method	Weighting (%)	Components needed for Mark Calculation?
010/1	Marketing Plan 1000 words	Canvas	30 (%)	All
010/2	Feature article: analysis of a publishing company with annotated bibliography 3000 words	Canvas	70 (%)	

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:

- (a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above
- (b) pass any pass/fail elements

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]