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SECTION A: QUALIFICATION DETAILS													
QUALIFICATION DEVELOPER (S)			LIMKOKWING UNIVERSITY OF CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY										
TITLE		Masters of Arts in Public Relations							NCQF LEVEL		9		
STRANDS (where applicable)		1. Marketing 2. Management											
FIELD		Commerce, Business and Management Studies			SUB-FIELD		Management Studies			CREDIT VALUE		240	
New Qualification					√	Legacy Qualification							
SUB-FRAMEWORK		General Education			√	TVET			√	Higher Education			
QUALIFICATION TYPE		Certificate	I	√	II	√	III	√	IV	√	V	Diploma	Bachelor
		Bachelor Honours			√	Post Graduate Certificate			√	Post Graduate Diploma			
		Masters					√	Doctorate/ PhD					

## RATIONALE AND PURPOSE OF THE QUALIFICATION

### RATIONALE:

Public Relations is the professional maintenance of a favorable public image of a company or other organization or a famous person (Lever Wealth, 2015). As such, Public relations (PR) is the practice of deliberately managing the release and spread of information between an individual or an organization (such as a business, government agency, or a nonprofit organization) and the public in order to influence public perception (Grunig and Hunt, 1984).

The aim of Public Relations is to persuade the public, prospective customers, investors, partners, employees, and other stakeholders to have or develop a positive or favorable view of the organization, its leadership,

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products, or political decisions. Thus, Public Relations is “the management of communication between an organization and its publics” (Grunig and Hunt, 1984).


The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) Priority Skills and Employment Trends report (2019) includes Public Relations as one of the top priority areas in demand. Technological advances, new communication channels as well as more informed and knowledgeable ‘publics’ have created a need for novel ways of conducting public relations. Botswana has not been spared from these sweeping global changes and trends in PR practice. Like every country, Botswana faces the need to brand Botswana, maintain a favorable public image of organizations, guard against misinformation and effectively meet the needs of different stakeholders. The need for training in Public Relations cannot be gainsaid.

Thus, Botswana needs Public Relations professionals with expertise (skills and techniques) to improve Public Relations practices by the application of field theory and research. According to BOCRA’S communication strategy (2018-2023), one of its objectives is to improve information, education and communication, which can be achieved through the **building of human capital** as identified in Botswana’s Vision 2036 under the Mid Term Review priorities of NDP 11 (National Development Plan).

Public Relations professionals are employed in both public and private sectors (including the consultancy sector) in Botswana. Nonetheless, most have Level 7 and Level 8 qualifications which enable them to deal with mostly predictable public relations issues. As stated earlier, advances in technology have created a very unpredictable social, economic political environment; one that needs new public relations skills.

Organisations need expertise to identify, conceptualise and define new and abstract public relations issues that can be resolved through research. Public and private organisations need public relations practitioners who have skills to adapt public relations processes, practices and techniques to suit the prevailing situation. Organisations need PR practitioners who have the skills to deal with complex and unpredictable public relations situations, issues and/or problems. Other than the Master of Arts in Media and Communication offered by the University of Botswana, no institution in Botswana is offering a Level 9 qualification in Public Relations. The proposed qualification aims to fill this gap.

The International Standard Classification of Occupations ISCO-08 articulates the attributes and capabilities that public relations professionals should be able to demonstrate. The standard reveals public relations professionals

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are expected plan, develop, implement and evaluate information and communication strategies that create an understanding and a favourable view of businesses and other organizations, their goods and services and their role in the community. At managerial level (level 9), graduates are furthermore expected to plan, direct and coordinate the public relations and public information activities of enterprises and organizations or enterprises that provide related services to other enterprises and organizations.

A survey on *Needs Assessment* conducted among stakeholders through an industry consultative meeting held on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 indicates that different sectors need masters programmes qualifications to address needs of the industry at an advanced level - problems of communications and public relations, media and crisis management, public affairs and investor relations, productivity, quality, creativity, content development, and content management among others to support growth and transformation agenda of the economy (see attached to the submission, Findings on Stakeholder Support Survey and Minutes of the stakeholder support meeting).

In summary, the following findings related to the Masters of Arts in Public Relations were noted:


- a) ***The Masters of Arts in Public Relations*** was identified as one of the programmes in **demand** because of the skills and expertise that are needed it stands to develop and it that are needed. **Equally, it has not been fully developed and grown** as an industry practice within Botswana and the SADC Region.
- b) Skills, *competencies and expertise* developed by masters programmes to bridge gaps in Industry and practice *include Interpersonal communication skills, problem solving skills, creative thinking and reasoning skills, Research skills, negotiation skills, Analytical skills, Business management among others.*
- c) Specific areas or fields of practice required specialized skills, expertise and competencies *including **Public Relations and Communications, Research, Media Consultancy, Monitoring and Evaluation,** and others that will be well served by training in post - graduate programmes.*

**PURPOSE: (itemise exit level outcomes)**

The proposed qualification will provide learners with advanced theoretical and practical knowledge, skills and competences in the Public Relations discipline.

The qualification will produce graduates who:

- Plan, organize and manage publicity campaigns and communication strategies of enterprises and organizations or of enterprises that provide related services to other enterprises and organizations
- Advise executives on the public relations implications of their policies, programmes and practices and preparing and controlling the issue of news and press release

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- Undertake and commission public opinion research, analyze the findings and planning public relations and promotional campaigns
- Organize special events, seminars, entertainment, competitions, and social functions to promote goodwill and favorable publicity
- Represent organizations and arrange interviews with media and other external stakeholders
- Attend business, social and other functions to promote the organization among different publics in the local and international context.
- Plan and manage information programmes to inform legislators, the mass media and the general public about the plans, accomplishments and points of view of the enterprise or organization.

#### **MINIMUM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS (including access and inclusion)**

##### **Normal Requirements**

NCQF Level 7 (An undergraduate public relations, communications – related degree), or its equivalent.

##### **Credit Transfer**

- Credit transfer shall also be recognised as an approach to enrol those who have qualifications recognized BQA for purposes of exemptions for modules already covered and placement level.
- Qualifications from other frameworks will be assessed in line with BQA requirements.


##### **Recognition of Prior Learning**


- Recognition of prior learning based on a bachelor degree at level 7 and recognised by BQA in public relations, communication or related fields.


##### **Special Needs Requirements**


- Applicants will be assessed on individual basis in relation to their special needs status.

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<b>SECTION B</b>		<b>QUALIFICATION SPECIFICATION</b>	
<b>GRADUATE PROFILE (LEARNING OUTCOMES)</b>		<b>ASSESSMENT CRITERIA</b>	
<p>1. Develop a framework for planning public relations programmes and ethically apply the practical skills for delivering campaigns.</p> 		<p>1.1 Propose communication policies that are contextually relevant and ethically sound for the organization.</p> <p>1.2 Critique national communication policies and regulatory frameworks and use interpretation as the basis for recommendations to the organization's public relations programmes.</p> <p>1.3 Assess ethical case studies in the local, regional and global context to inform the organizations' campaigns</p> <p>1.4 Develop effective communications plan that leverages brand promise.</p> <p>1.5 Achieve organizational objectives and goals by administering the communications and public relations initiatives as determined by the larger organizational strategic planning process</p>	
<p>2. Communicate effectively with all stakeholders employing the use of diverse communication platforms and forms of communication.</p>		<p>2.1 Manage the development, production and maintain company's internal and external communication vehicles including the company's website, marketing material, publications, newsletters, invitations, flyers, advertisements and annual reports.</p> <p>2.2 Integrate the use of digital media in both mediated and unmediated applications to reach a variety of publics.</p> <p>2.3 Communicate information and reports on campaign project meetings, campaign progress, control, monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>2.4 Conduct presentations, training and consultancy to key stakeholders</p> <p>2.5 Employ interpersonal skills in the execution of tasks</p> <p>2.6 Structure business problems into a creative brief</p>	


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	2.7 Refine the company's core messages to ensure brand consistency
3. Promote the role of research and evaluation in Public Relations. 	3.1 Define, analyse and develop a constructive response to a research problem in the PR field in both national and international contexts 3.2 Apply the ethical and professional codes of the industry in public relations research 3.3 Analyze the research data collected and present the findings 3.4 Draw research conclusions and make informed decisions 3.5 Recommend the best practices, Standards, quality of services and products for the business clients 3.6 Solve today's managerial problems using research findings 3.7 Develop a research plan using an appropriate methodology 3.8 Examine and use classic and alternative media platforms as tools for purposeful research
4. Plan and implement national and international campaigns to manage reputation of brands and organizations and spearhead their goals.	4.1 Integrate cultural sensitivity in campaigns targeted at international audiences 4.2 Devise national campaigns seeking to promote national reputation to advance national objectives 4.3 Formulate appropriate PR strategies and programmes to assist in the achievement of overall organization objectives 4.4 Evaluate an integrated strategic communications plan to advance the company's brand identity and broaden awareness of its programmes and priorities 4.5 Evaluate the integrated strategic communications plan to advance the company's brand identity and broaden awareness of its program and priorities 4.6 Use promotional content to influence the public's perception of the organization brand through global media coverage and sponsorship



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	opportunities.
<p>5. Employ the practical use of public relations tools such as media relations and crisis management</p> 	<p>5.1 Organize and manage media enquiries and interview requests</p> <p>5.2 Develop keynote presentations by-line articles, open editorials, columns, other media content using advanced communication skills to achieve influence in global and local media in the</p> <p>5.3 Employ the use of digital channels most effectively creating integrated communication solutions for both government and private sectors</p> <p>5.4 Analyse the relationship between the media and its society by drawing on social and cultural theory.</p> <p>5.5 Analyse and select media platforms to determine the most effective approach to reach intended publics</p> <p>5.6 Critically assess the best practices in crisis communication</p> <p>5.7 Analyse the the use of apology in crisis communication and management</p>
<p>6. Assess the needs of audiences ('publics') and design how to communicate with them considering the wider cultural and societal landscape in which public relations operates.</p>	<p>6.1 Demonstrate improved self - awareness, openness and sensitivity to diversity in terms of people, cultures, business and communication issues</p> <p>6.2 Perform surveys to identify key publics' needs and use results to inform targeted key messages.</p> <p>6.3 Lead their team to monitor social, political, cultural, economic trends that might affect their organization and recommend ways to enhance firms' image on the basis of those trends.</p> <p>6.4 Conduct communication audits to determine publicity goals.</p>

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<p>7. Create a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics by managing communication among them.</p>	<p>7.1 Maintain a keen understanding of industry trends affecting clients and make appropriate recommendations regarding communication strategy surrounding them.</p> <p>7.2 Monitor analyse and communicate PR results on a regular basis</p> <p>7.3 Demonstrate improved self - awareness, openness and sensitivity to diversity in terms of people, cultures, business and communication issues</p> <p>7.4 Evaluate opportunities for partnerships, sponsorships and advertising on ongoing basis</p> <p>7.5 Employ strategies that help build relationships with thought leaders.</p> <p>7.6 Analyse and manage the national stakeholders interests and requirements</p>
<p>8. Create a climate where organizations and their publics adapt mutually to each other.</p>	<p>8.1 Direct social media team to engage audiences across traditional and new media</p> <p>8.2 Leverage existing media relationship and cultivate new contacts with businesses, industry and media.</p> <p>8.3 Develop media relations strategy seeking high level placement in print, broadcast and online platforms</p> <p>8.4 Develop effective marketing communications plan including strategy, goals, budget and tactics</p> <p>8.5 Create and deliver written and oral briefings to stakeholders</p>
<p>9. Formulate the policies, procedures and strategies addressing the interests of an organization to manage public attitudes and public affairs.</p>	<p>9.1 Monitor the effect of public policy changes on the organisation and advise executive management</p> <p>9.2 Analyse public opinion and attitudes to inform organizational policy</p> <p>9.3 Refer to legislation, ethical frameworks and societal expectations to inform the development of sound policies, procedures and strategies for the organization</p>

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<b>SECTION C</b>	<b>QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE</b>				
<b>COMPONENT</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Credits Per Relevant NCQF Level</b>			<b>Total Credits</b>
		<b>Level [8 ]</b>	<b>Level [9 ]</b>	<b>Level [10 ]</b>	
<b>FUNDAMENTAL COMPONENT</b> Subjects/ Courses/ Modules/Units	<b>Communication and Public Relations Theory</b>		12		12
	<b>Marketing Communications</b>		12		12
	<b>Public Relations Ethics, the Law and Policy</b>		12		12
	<b>Applied Communications Research Methodology</b>		15		15
	<b>Speech Communication and Rhetoric</b>		12		12
<b>CORE COMPONENT</b> Subjects/Courses/ Modules/Units	<b>Corporate Communication and Public Relations</b>		15		15
	<b>Brand Management</b>		15		15
	<b>Finance for Public Relations Managers</b>		13		13
	<b>Managing Media Relations</b>		13		13
	<b>Digital Communications Technology and Public Relations</b>		15		15
	<b>Dissertation</b>		80		80


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<b>STRANDS/ SPECIALIZATION</b>	<i>Subjects/ Courses/ Modules/Units</i>	<b>Credits Per Relevant NCQF Level</b>			<b>Total Credits</b>
		<b>Level [ 8 ]</b>	<b>Level [ 9 ]</b>	<b>Level [ 10 ]</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Corporate Public Affairs and Government Public Relations</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
	<b>Event Marketing and Public Relations</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
	<b>Investor Relations</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
	<b>Global Communications and Cultural Diversity</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Contemporary Issues in Public Relations</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
	<b>Marketing Management</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
	<b>Strategic Management</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>
	<b>Corporate Social Responsibility</b>		<b>13</b>		<b>13</b>

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<b>SUMMARY OF CREDIT DISTRIBUTION FOR EACH COMPONENT PER NCQF LEVEL</b>											
<b>TOTAL CREDITS PER NCQF LEVEL</b>											
<b>NCQF Level</b>	<b>Credit Value</b>										
<b>9</b>	<b>240</b>										
<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>240</b>										
<b>Rules of Combination:</b> <b>(Please Indicate combinations for the different constituent components of the qualification)</b>											
<table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 70%; text-align: left; padding: 5px;">Modules</th> <th style="width: 30%; text-align: center; padding: 5px;">Credits</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Fundamental</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">63</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Core modules</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">151</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Electives</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">26</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Total</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;"><b>240</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Modules	Credits	Fundamental	63	Core modules	151	Electives	26	Total	<b>240</b>
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## ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

### Standard Conditions of Assessment

The learners will undergo formative and summative assessments which should be designed by assessors who will be accredited by BQA.

The weightings should be as follows:

Assessment	Weightings
Formative	50%
Summative	50%

### 3.7 Assignment Setting

Assignments will be set by assessors based on the assessment criteria as per the course outlines.

All assessors must be BQA accredited.

## MODERATION ARRANGEMENTS


Moderation of assessment takes place at the key stages of the assessment process, i.e. design of tasks and marking of assignments (including consideration of results). 30% of all assignments, tests, examination and projects are subjected to moderation.

Both the Internal and External moderators should have a qualification at least one level above the Qualification, Masters of Arts in Public Relations i.e. Level 10.

### 3.8 Internal Moderation

(1) Moderation:-Design of Assessments Moderation at assessment design stage. An official and registered moderator according to BQA standards is engaged. The principle aspects considered at this stage are a review of:

- Compatibility of assessments with learning outcomes

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- Over-arching approach to assessment
- Assessment criteria
- Marking schemes
- Model answers
- Consistency with NCQF level descriptor knowledge, skills and competency
- Suitability of tasks, questions, etc.
- Moderation at the design stage also includes the assessors responsible for modules in the Qualification

(2) Moderation: - Marking of Assessments. Moderation at marked assessments stage: The key activities of moderation process at the marking stage include:

- Sampling of marked assessments
- Additional marking of borderlines and fails
- Double marking of dissertations, major projects/designs or presentations
- Adjudication by another marker where there are significant differences between the marks given by two or more assessors
- Evaluation of consistency where multiple staff members have contributed to the marking
- Consideration of special circumstances which may have affected the performance of a group of students
- Overview of the moderation approach of considering the special circumstances of individual students

### 3.9 External Moderation


The key activities of the external moderation process include:

- Sampling of marked assessments, assignments, tests, projects and dissertations
- Compatibility of assessments with learning outcomes
- Scrutiny of borderline and fail cases
- Evaluation of consistency where multiple staff members have contributed to the marking
- Consideration of special circumstances which may have affected the performance of a group of students

Overview of the School's approach to considering the special circumstances of individual students

### **RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING**

Candidates may submit evidence of prior learning and current competence and / or undergo appropriate forms of RPL assessment for the award of credits towards the qualification in accordance with applicable

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University RPL policies and relevant national –level policy and legislative framework. Implementation of RPL shall also be consistent with requirements, if any, prescribed for the field or sub-field of study by relevant national, regional or international bodies.

### **CREDIT ACCUMULATION AND TRANSFER**

CAT will be used where applicable

### **PROGRESSION PATHWAYS (LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT)**

#### **Horizontal articulation of the Master of Arts in Public Relations**

- Master of Science in Strategic Public Relations
- Masters of Arts in Public Relations and Digital Communications
- Masters of Arts Public Relations and Corporate Communication
- Masters of Arts in Mass Communications
- Masters of Arts in Media Communications

#### **Vertical articulation in Master of Arts in Public Relations may also lead to further studies**

- Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Public Relations
- Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Marketing and Communication
- Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Management Sciences: Public Relations and Communication


#### **Employment Pathways**

Graduates of the course may find employment in a range of public and private organisations for the following posts:

- Press liaison officer
- Publicity agent
- Public relations copy writer
- Public relations Manager
- Public relations Consultant
- Corporate Spokesperson
- Public Relations Director
- Public Affairs Coordinator

### **QUALIFICATION AWARD AND CERTIFICATION**



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To qualify for qualification award and certification, learners must:

- Attain a total of 240 credits overall.
- Complete satisfactorily any additional and specified requirements of the qualification.
- Have official verification that he/she has covered and passed all the modules

Qualifying candidates shall be awarded the Masters of Arts in Public Relations.

### **SUMMARY OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPARABILITY**

The proposed qualification was compared with three Level 9 qualifications, Master of Public Relations and Communication Management offered by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in South Africa, Master of Public Relations offered by Ghana Institute of Journalism, and Master of Public Relations offered by University of Sunderland, based in the UK. The proposed qualification compares well with the three qualifications used in the benchmarking exercise.

#### **Similarities**

The three qualifications have numerous similarities:

- **Name of the Qualification**


All qualifications are similar in the terminology used in the naming, such that they are all Masters qualifications in Public Relations. Although Cape Peninsula has a suffix of “Communication Management”, the suffix is essentially a component of Public Relations, which does not necessarily differentiate the qualification from the proposed one in any significant way. The absence of this suffix in the proposed qualification does not in any way suggest the qualification lacks the ability to fulfil the “communication management” aspect since the variety of proposed modules work together to fulfil this aspect.

- **NQF Level**

The qualification Master of Public Relations and Communication Management offered by Cape Peninsula University of Technology is registered as NQF level 9. The proposed qualification is a level 9 qualifications as well. This reflects the similarity of level of competencies between the proposed and the benchmark qualification.

- **Exit Learning Outcomes**

The exit learning outcomes of the proposed qualification are comparable to the benchmark qualification for several reasons. Graduates are expected to demonstrate ability to use of technology in solving communication problems across mainstream and digital channels, reflect critically on theory and apply theory to strategize,

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perform resource management function and implement governance practices, develop strategies that guide and shape communication to different publics, implement tasks with theoretical underpinnings, undertake post-graduate research to solve problems of the enterprise among many others.

- **Modules and their classification**

A significant level of similarity is observed in the modules offered and the classification thereof. The benchmark qualification has core and optional modules in their offering. The same categorization is prevalent in the benchmark qualifications. The module names may not necessarily be identical word for word, however they point to the same key concepts. Such similarities are noted in the following modules:

<b>Module/Domain from Proposed Qualification</b>	<b>Equivalent Module from Benchmark Qualification</b>
Digital Communications Technology and Public Relations	Technology communication and stakeholders
Corporate Communication and Public Relations Strategy	Managing Communication Strategy
Dissertation	Research project and Report
Communication and Public Relations Theory	Public Relations Theories
Speech Communication and Rhetoric	Public speaking and Presentation skills
Public Relations Ethics, the Law and Policy	Communication Policy
Global Communication and Cultural Diversity	International or global public relations
Public Relations Ethics, the Law and Policy	Ethics and Communication
Applied Communication Research Methodology	Advanced Communication Research Methods, design and Analysis
Marketing Communication	Marketing communications, content and engagement
Public Relations Ethics, the Law and Policy	Public Relations and Society: Ethics, critical perspectives and Research
Dissertation	Dissertation

- **Assessment strategies**

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The benchmark qualifications use both formative and summative assessments to assess learners. In the same manner the proposed qualification uses the same assessment strategies.

- **Career and educational pathways**

Upon completion of all the qualifications, upon completion the graduate can pursue level 10 (PhD) or work as a senior manager or consultant.

### **Differences**

- **Duration of study**

The proposed qualification is a two-year long qualification as opposed to two benchmark qualifications, which are 1 year long, and one, which is 1year 3months long. The variations in the period of study can be attributed to the amount of credits required to fulfil during the period of study. The proposed qualification has more credits (240) contrasted to two benchmark qualifications, which carry 180 credits.

- **Credits**


The University of Sunderland and Cape Peninsula University of Technology carry 180 credits each while Ghana Institute carries 48 credits. The latter uses a different credit system. These credits compared against the proposed qualification pose another difference between the proposed and the benchmark qualifications.

- **Modules and their classification**

The qualification offered by Cape Peninsula University of Technology has only core modules unlike the proposed qualification, which has a variety of module classification (fundamental, elective and core classification). The proposed qualification does not offer internship whereas the benchmark qualification offered by Ghana Institute of Journalism does. The latter also provides an option for practical project against undertaking a dissertation project. In the event that a student fails the dissertation proposal, they have an option to write instead a special paper. Meanwhile the proposed qualification does not provide for those options, as the student has no option besides dissertation.

The proposed qualification proposes different modules from benchmark qualifications as added value. The industry of Public relations is dynamic and calls for professionals who can mitigate the emerging gaps and trends in the industry. The following modules were added to produce a versatile professional who fits well into the dynamic local and global landscape of Public Relations:

- Event Marketing and Public Relations
- Corporate Public Affairs and Government Public Relations
- Investor Relations
- Finance for Public Relations Managers

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<b>REVIEW PERIOD</b>
Every after 5 years

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