

The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
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Dear Secretary of State for Education,

Re: Funding for University Courses in Media and Communications

On behalf of the Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA), I am writing to express our deep concern regarding the Department for Education's decision to deprioritise funding for university courses in media studies, journalism, publishing, and information services.

This decision risks inflicting long-term harm on the talent pipeline that sustains the UK's world-leading communications and journalism sectors. In the 2024–25 academic year, these subjects received just £17 million in grant funding, equating to only £130.54 per media student annually. These figures are alarmingly low when compared to the critical and far-reaching contributions these disciplines make across business, government, civil society, and democratic life.

Communications is not a peripheral skill; it is a central business function. The Government itself invests heavily in public sector communications, recognising the strategic importance of professional communicators in shaping public understanding, guiding behavioural change, and supporting national interests. The insinuation that the academic foundations of this profession are trivial is both inaccurate and damaging.

At a time when misinformation threatens public discourse, the role of trained professionals who can investigate, verify, and communicate facts has never been more essential. Media literacy, journalism, and critical thinking are indispensable to a healthy democracy and a well-informed society. These are not niche interests—they are national imperatives.

We therefore urge the Department to reconsider its current funding approach and to engage with industry stakeholders to ensure the UK retains its global leadership in communications and journalism. These disciplines deserve not only recognition but meaningful investment.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Waddington CBE

Interim CEO

Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA)