

# **The Fears and Hopes of Scotland’s Post Pandemic Journalism Generation**

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## **Abstract**

The landscape of media education in the UK is changing rapidly due to an array of contributing factors including a shift in the jobs market, altering pedagogies during and post pandemic and social drivers including fewer students choosing media pathways of study due to the cost-of-living crisis.

In order to take a closer examination of the current situation impacting student and educator groups, this paper focuses primarily on Scotland where the media landscape is smaller and more focused between both Glasgow and Edinburgh metropolitan hubs. It is in both cities where the majority of media and journalism students also reside and where the key employers are based.

This study draws on insights from 40 students at 5 Scottish universities all of whom graduated in the summer of 2023. The students in question are primarily from Scotland and are comprised of BA and MA media and journalism cohorts. The research presents a window into the mindset and expectations of this post-pandemic graduating class while drawing on current and relevant literature. The study explores and highlights some of the key emotional drivers pertaining to these graduates, including their fears and hopes while the study portrays how this in turn can impact their graduate content outputs.

In addition, the paper includes reaction from industry and academic experts in Scotland to the findings and outlines what can be done to address the trends presented in the paper including fears about disinformation and safety of UK journalists online. The experts include two senior broadcast journalists who have worked for Scotland’s biggest media employers, an established media educator who has worked across further education and higher education in

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Scotland while also being a national news editor and one of Scotland's most experienced journalism educators who is also the chair of the World Journalism Education Council.

The work is predominantly qualitative in nature drawing on a mixed research approach of expert interviewing and surveying while focusing on media pedagogy and providing recommendations for journalism educators to support the emotional development of the class of 2024 and beyond.

### **Keywords**

Journalism Education, Media Education, Pedagogy, Graduate Destinations, Covid-19

### **Bio**

Dr James Mahon is a 33-year-old Romanian born Irish broadcast storyteller and University lecturer who has worked for local, regional, national and international outlets. He has accumulated more than 1000+ hours of live presenting and reporting experience. While on assignment he has covered the largest election in history in New Delhi India in 2019 as well as the ISIS occupation of Mosul in Iraq in 2017. Mahon is currently based in Scotland with ITV Border where he is a freelance self-shooting on-screen journalist. He is interested in human-interest stories and social and political issues. He is a digital media consultant, trainer, university lecturer, author and was an invited speaker at the World Journalism Conference in Paris 2019 and the UK Media Education Summit 2021 as well as MECCSA in Scotland in 2023.

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