

COURSE GUIDE



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MINOR

International Advertising

Institute for Marketing & Commerce
Hogeschool Utrecht, University of Applied Sciences

- Minor code: MC-INTERADV-08
- Variant: Fulltime
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Minor International Advertising

Who is this minor for?

Welcome to the Minor International Advertising! This minor is designed to immerse students in the dynamic world of advertising, where brand strategy, psychology, creative thinking, and cultural awareness come together to create impactful advertising plans and campaigns that align with brand values and resonate with diverse target audiences. It is tailored for those students that seek to focus on strategic decision-making and brand communication, rather than the creative production of advertisements.

Background

In today's fast moving international landscape, brands must communicate across cultural boundaries, media ecosystems, and rapidly changing consumer expectations. Advertising is no longer about producing content alone. It requires understanding how brands create meaning, build long term relationships, and influence behaviour in global markets.

This redesigned minor embraces strategic brand thinking, research and insight development, cross cultural communication, creative concepting, and communication psychology. All components are aligned with the programme wide shift toward programmatic education and programmatic assessment. Students continuously gather evidence of learning, build a professional portfolio, receive rich feedback, and iteratively demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes.

The minor suits motivated, internationally oriented students who aim to work in brand management, advertising strategy, creative concept development, account planning, or marketing communication consultancy. Students learn how advertising works not only creatively but strategically and psychologically.

Introduction

You encounter advertising every day films, banners, TikToks, influencer content, outdoor installations, and branded experiences. Behind these messages lies a structured strategic process. Advertisers must determine what the brand stands for, what the audience values, how cultural and psychological mechanisms drive behaviour, and which strategic choices influence both long term brand outcomes and short term activation.

In this minor, you will learn to design strategically grounded, insight driven, culturally aware international advertising solutions. You will practice skills that help you cut through clutter, understand consumer motivations, and position brands effectively in global markets. You will also collaborate with real clients, agencies, and experts, gaining hands on experience relevant to today's industry standards.

Description of minor

Modern advertising requires far more than creativity. It demands the ability to interpret research, understand brand identity, apply psychological principles, craft concepts that resonate across cultures, and persuade stakeholders with clarity and confidence.

Students develop the capability to translate brand essence into coherent global communication strategies. A key learning element of the minor is the ability to distinguish between long term brand building and short term activation.

Throughout the programme, students engage in theory, practical workshops, creative ideation, cultural analysis, concept development, and portfolio building. Real world assignments and client collaborations help students apply their knowledge directly in practice.

Minor Objectives

At the end of the minor, students are able to:

1. Develop and justify a coherent brand and communication strategy aligned with insights, audience needs, and brand identity in an international context.
2. Apply research and analytical skills to generate actionable insights that inform advertising decisions.
3. Create original imaginative and strategically aligned creative concepts using divergent thinking, iteration, and storytelling.
4. Apply psychological and persuasive communication principles ethically to increase advertising effectiveness.
5. Adapt communication strategies for diverse cultural contexts, ensuring cultural relevance and brand consistency.
6. Communicate ideas persuasively and collaborate professionally within multidisciplinary and international teams.

Programme Overview

Duration

This minor spans a full semester and is offered both in the fall and spring semesters, providing flexibility for students to choose the timing that best fits their academic plan.

Credits

The minor is worth a total of 30 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits.

Structure of the Programme

The minor follows the principles of programmatic education and programmatic assessment, centred on continuous learning, rich feedback, reflection, and portfolio building.

Key Components

- **Lectures & Workshops:** Weekly sessions cover theoretical concepts, practical applications, creative development, and hands-on workshops to apply learning in real-world scenarios.
- **Assignments and Challenges:** Designed to build evidence of mastery across all learning outcomes.
- **Group Projects:** Students collaborate in diverse teams to design and present brand communication strategies and advertising campaigns, applying all learning outcomes.
- **Individual Assignments:** Tasks assigned throughout the minor to assess individual understanding and application of course content.
- **Practical Fieldwork:** Engaging in real-life business cases, providing an opportunity to test-drive acquired knowledge and skills in a professional context.
- **Portfolio Development:** A continuous process where students compile their work, reflections, and feedback throughout the minor to demonstrate their learning journey.

Study Burden

Total study load: 840 hours

Contact Time: approximately 150 to 160 hours

Workshops and Coaching: approximately 40 hours

Self Study and Portfolio Development: approximately 630 hours

Assessment Activities: approximately 12 hours

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

1	Strategic Brand Thinking		The student is able to develop and justify a coherent brand and communication strategy based on insights, aligned with audience and brand identity, that guides all communication activities within an international advertising context.
Assessment Criteria	1.1	Brand & Market Analysis	The student conducts a coherent and relevant analysis of brand, market, competition, and audience.
	1.2	Positioning Strategy	The student formulates a clear, distinctive, and consistent strategic direction or brand positioning.
	1.3	Strategic Justification	The student substantiates strategic decisions using relevant insights and convincing reasoning.
	1.4	Strategic Alignment	The student ensures strategic alignment with brand values and audience needs.
	1.5	Strategic Application	The student demonstrates how the strategy informs creative, media, and campaign choices.
	1.6	Critical Reflection	The student critically reflects on strategic alternatives, trade-offs, and constraints.

2	Research, Insight & Analytical Thinking		The student is able to generate research-based insights and translate them into strategic recommendations for international advertising campaigns, by purposefully collecting, analyzing, and interpreting relevant data in the context of brand, target audience, and culture.
Assessment Criteria	2.1	Research Method Selection	The student selects appropriate research methods (qualitative and/or quantitative) and applies them correctly within the context of an international advertising challenge.
	2.2	Analytical Rigor	The student processes and analyzes research data in a structured and systematic manner, leading to relevant conclusions.
	2.3	Quality of Insight Formulation	The student formulates clear, meaningful, and actionable insights based on research findings.
	2.4	Insight-to-Strategy Translation	The student translates insights into concrete strategic recommendations for brand positioning, audience targeting, or campaign execution.
	2.5	Contextual Interpretation	The student interprets data and research findings with awareness of brand identity, audience needs, and cultural context.
	2.6	Insight Evaluation & Prioritization	The student critically justifies which insights are most relevant for the communication challenge and why.
3	Creative Thinking & Concept Development		The student is able to generate original, imaginative, and strategically relevant creative concepts for international advertising, using iterative development and storytelling techniques.
Assessment Criteria	3.1	Divergent Thinking	The student explores multiple creative directions and alternatives.
	3.2	Originality	The student produces ideas that are original, imaginative, and meaningful within the campaign context
	3.3	Concept Refinement	The student develops and refines concepts through iterative testing and feedback.
	3.4	Creative Evaluation	The student critically evaluates and improves creative ideas.
	3.5	Creative Storytelling	The student uses storytelling techniques to clearly and compellingly communicate ideas.
	3.6	Strategic Relevance	The student ensures that creative work aligns with strategic objectives.
4	Communication Psychology & Influencing Techniques		The student is able to apply psychological principles and persuasive communication techniques ethically and effectively to enhance the impact of international advertising campaigns.
Assessment Criteria	4.1	Understanding Psychological Drivers	The student demonstrates understanding of key psychological mechanisms such as attention, emotion, memory, and behavior.
	4.2	Application of Psychological Principles	The student purposefully and ethically applies psychological principles in communication strategies.
	4.3	Effectiveness Evaluation	The student evaluates the persuasive impact of communication choices.
	4.4	Improvement Suggestions	The student proposes improvements based on psychological insights.
	4.5	Message Framing	The student makes well-founded choices in message framing, tone of voice, and message structure.
	4.6	Short- & Long-Term Effects	The student evaluates both short- and long-term effects of persuasive communication on audience behavior and brand perception.
5	International & Cross-Cultural Communication		The student is able to adapt advertising strategies and messages to ensure cultural relevance, sensitivity, and effectiveness in diverse international markets.
Assessment Criteria	5.1	Cultural Analysis	The student analyzes relevant cultural and contextual factors.
	5.2	Standardization vs Adaptation	The student justifies when and how to adapt versus standardize communication across cultures.
	5.3	Cultural Fit	The student develops culturally appropriate and respectful advertising solutions.
	5.4	Intercultural Sensitivity	The student demonstrates intercultural sensitivity in communication design.
	5.5	Brand Consistency	The student ensures cultural adaptations remain consistent with brand identity.
	5.6	Cultural Impact Justification	The student justifies how cultural factors influence the message and execution.

6	Persuasive Communication, Collaboration & Professional Execution		The student is able to communicate strategic and creative ideas persuasively and professionally, while effectively collaborating in international, multidisciplinary teams.
Assessment Criteria	6.1	Presentation Structure	The student presents ideas in a clear, structured, and professional manner.
	6.2	Communication Skills	The student demonstrates effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills.
	6.3	Use of Visual Aids & Storytelling	The student uses visual aids and storytelling techniques to enhance engagement and clarity.
	6.4	Response to Feedback	The student responds constructively to feedback and uses it to improve outcomes.
	6.5	Collaboration	The student collaborates professionally and effectively within diverse teams.
	6.6	Strategic Persuasion	The student persuasively communicates the strategic rationale behind creative and campaign decisions.

Programmatic Assessment

The minor follows the model of programmatic assessment used across several HU minors. Students collect data points throughout the semester assignments, peer feedback, lecturer feedback, expert coaching, and reflections. No single assignment determines success.

Students build a portfolio that demonstrates learning and mastery of all outcomes. At the end of the minor, students participate in a performance conversation with two assessors. The final result is a holistic pass or fail.

Entry requirements

To enter this programme, a foundation of introductory course(s) in Marketing Management and fluency in English writing and speaking (English language skills at CEFR level B2) is required.

Course materials

All material used will be provided on the Canvas course sites of each course.

Additional costs

Travel costs for excursions & field work: maximum € 100.

General Expectations

Students are expected to actively participate in all course activities, collaborate effectively in teams, and demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement. Regular attendance, timely submission of assignments, and constructive engagement with feedback are crucial for success in this minor.