

**National Council
for the
Training of Journalists**

**NCTJ Level 4
Diploma in Magazine Journalism
Qualification Specification**

603/0340/2
The Register of Regulated Qualifications

NCTJ Training Ltd
The New Granary
Station Road
Newport
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 3PL

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1. Rationale

This vocationally-related Diploma in Magazine Journalism is a bespoke qualification designed for magazine journalists working for a publisher of specialist titles and will provide learners with an understanding of core journalism skills and areas of knowledge that are particularly relevant to their field. Development of this qualification included consultation with magazine specific industry representatives.

2. Aims and objectives

The qualification aims to equip magazine journalists with the skills to face day-to-day challenges, fine-tune their strengths, iron out uncertainties and improve any weaknesses. The learning will add value to the job learners are doing each day as magazine journalists.

The specific aims of this programme of study are to ensure learners can demonstrate the following skills and knowledge in:

- Reporting
- Feature writing
- Production
- Video
- Digital and social media
- Understanding media law and ethics
- Business of magazines

3. Progression

The NCTJ Diploma in Magazine Journalism is a bespoke qualification designed for magazine journalists working for a publisher of specialist titles. To gain the Diploma in Magazine Journalism, learners must complete four mandatory assessments at grades A-E. The four mandatory assessments are: understanding media law and ethics; production journalism, magazine portfolio; and magazine project. Gaining the diploma provides continuing professional development for magazine journalists working for a publisher of specialist titles.

4. Target groups and entry details

The programme of study provides opportunities for learners who are already engaged in careers as professional magazine journalists. Because of the academic standards expected by the industry, the minimum age for entry is 18 years.

NCTJ entry requirements are intended to ensure that there are no barriers to restrict access and progression and equal opportunities exist for all learners. Learners with particular educational needs are not targeted separately although special provision may be made for them.

5. Total qualification time

Total qualification time (TQT) aims to provide learners with an indication of the minimum length of time it would take an average learner to complete this qualification.

TQT is made up of two components:

- 1) Guided learning: activities completed by the learner under the direct instruction or supervision of a tutor, trainer or other appropriate provider of education or training.
- 2) All other hours spent in preparation, study or training, including assessment time, but not under the direct supervision of a tutor, trainer or other appropriate training provider.

This syllabus incorporates a programme of study that includes an estimated 50 hours *guided learning (the estimated minimum time an average learner may expect to spend under direct instruction or supervision of a tutor or trainer)*.

An average learner can also reasonably expect to spend an estimated 100 hours in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by a tutor, trainer or other appropriate training provider.

TQT

The total qualification time an average learner can expect to take to complete the qualification is 150 hours.

Coursework will be set and marked by approved trainers and/or tutors. The coursework will incorporate practical tasks based in the classroom and/or in the workplace covering the areas outlined in the programme of study.

6. Assessment

Each subject is assessed by examination and/or portfolio or project. Each study unit in the programme of study includes assessment criteria, how marks are awarded and grade descriptors on which learners' levels of attainment will be differentiated. The assessment criteria for each unit clearly specify the standard that the learner is expected to meet in order to demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been achieved.

All assessment in this qualification follow the NCTJ's quality assurance processes and procedures as per the requirements for a regulated qualification according to the regulators' conditions of recognition.

7. Overall grading and specified levels of attainment

To pass the Diploma in Magazine Journalism, learners must gain grades A-E in each assessment. Learners who gain grades A-C in each assessment will be awarded the industry 'gold standard' Diploma in Magazine Journalism which is stated on the certificate.

Grading of A-E is awarded within the qualification for each assessment. The criteria against which individual performance within the qualification and assessments is differentiated is specified in the grade descriptors in the programme of study which will be read by the learner alongside this specification.

The grading scale used to signify performance differentiation within the qualification and units is A-E grades with C grade being the industry standard for each unit and F grade being a fail.

8. Availability of examinations and assessments

Trainers and/or tutors are required to provide learners with information and advice on the programme of study, the level of demand and associated requirements and expectations. The NCTJ reserves the right to decline entry to an examination where previous qualifications and experience are deemed to be inadequate. Further details are available on the NCTJ website.

9. Duration of examination

All examinations are structured so that the duration of each examination provides opportunities for all learners to demonstrate achievement within a set time-frame.

10. Fair access to assessment

Information on assessment and examination and entry requirements for learners with particular needs is published in the 'Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy'. A copy of this policy is available from NCTJ Training Ltd, The New Granary, Station Road, Newport, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 3PL and is also provided on the company's website: www.nctj.com

11. Validity

The general syllabus for the NCTJ level 4 Diploma in Magazine Journalism is valid until 31 August 2019.

12. Repeats of examinations

Where a learner is not able to reach the minimum standard in an examination, application for re-examination at that level is permitted.

13. Issue of results

Results will normally be issued within five weeks of the date of the examination. This time is necessary to ensure that all results are properly standardised and checked by the NCTJ. Certificates will normally be issued within six weeks of the course end date.

14. Language and bias

Every effort has been made to ensure that this syllabus and associated mark schemes, procedures and materials are free from any form of bias, refer to explicit content and have no hidden requirements for entry or assessment.

Care has been taken to ensure that the programme of study, grade descriptions and examination components make appropriate demands on learners both in terms of their physical safety, well-being and expectations of physical and cognitive performance in relation to their age and level of ability.

15. Confidentiality

In order to ensure that the NCTJ Diploma in Magazine Journalism qualification reflects an accurate measure of attainment, the NCTJ will take all reasonable steps to ensure that such confidentiality is maintained.

Where any breach of such confidentiality (including through the loss or theft of assessment materials) is either suspected by the NCTJ or alleged by any other person, the NCTJ will investigate that breach.

16. Learner registrations

Each learner that registers with the NCTJ to take the NCTJ Diploma in Magazine Journalism qualification is uniquely identified by a Unique Reference Number (URN) generated by the NCTJ's database of learner records. Centres enrolling learners to take an NCTJ qualification are responsible for confirming the identity of the learner when they are enrolled. Learners registered with FE course providers are also given a Personal Learner Record (PLR) which the NCTJ supplies the relevant data to the Learning Records Service.

17. Qualification specification

To gain the Diploma in Magazine Journalism, learners must gain grades A-E in four assessments:

1. Understanding media law and ethics exam
2. Production journalism exam
3. Magazine portfolio
4. Business of Magazines project.