

APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD FOR JOURNALISM

1. Job

Junior journalist

2. Duration

We would expect a candidate coming onto this apprenticeship, without previous relevant experience, to typically take at least 18 months to complete the programme. This may be reduced if an apprentice is part-qualified or has relevant experience on entry.

3. Role profile

Journalists bring people the news and information from their street, their community, their town or city and from around the world using a combination of words, pictures and moving images. They are able to work on their own competently and work without immediate supervision in generating and producing stories for publication and/or broadcast. At the successful completion of this apprenticeship, you will become a junior journalist.

4. Knowledge and skills

Journalists will use their knowledge and skills to produce news and information for TV, radio, print and digital publications. These are the core skills for a junior journalist:

- know what a story is and how to carry out the necessary research and interviews;
- build and maintain a range of reliable contacts;
- create quality stories that are accurate, clear, vigorous, fair and balanced, in a form that will engage an audience;
- work in an ethical manner and in accordance with relevant codes of conduct and demonstrate integrity;
- be able to work on getting stories 'right the first time';
- demonstrate an ability to write and use good English to industry standard for all platforms;
- produce content for digital platforms, including video and photographic material;
- adept at using social media and digital platforms and techniques to source content, contacts and build an audience;
- be a good communicator;
- understand the importance and value of brands;
- connects with the audience they serve;
- work to tight deadlines;
- be technically proficient and able to understand/use web analytics;
- understand how society works;
- take and keep accurate notes and records;
- be able to gather, verify and make proper use of User Generated Content (UGC);
- be able to gather, use and present data;
- understand how the law affects the work of a journalist;
- adhere to relevant health and safety legislation in the workplace; and
- understand the 'news business' with a knowledge of emerging trends in the media industry.

Apprentices will follow one of the following pathways to gain the additional specialist skills:

For print and associated digital platforms, journalists must:

- for most employers, write and accurately transcribe shorthand at 100 words per minute;
- edit copy and write headlines for publication on different platforms;
- take photographs suitable for publication;
- be able to report from a wide range of settings;

- research and write clear, accurate, compliant and engaging stories and features for newspapers, magazines and websites;
- for some employers, be able to use data to contribute towards potential editorial content and strategies; and
- have a good working knowledge of regulation as laid out in the editors' code

For TV/radio and associated digital platforms, journalists must:

- research and write clear, accurate, balanced, compliant and engaging stories for TV and radio;
- for some employers, be able to write and accurately transcribe shorthand at 100 words per minute;
- understand the techniques of interviewing for broadcast and can conduct a simple broadcast interview themselves;
- demonstrate familiarity with the basic techniques and technology of broadcast newsgathering, including the sourcing of material;
- have an awareness of the basic set-up of radio and television news studios, operate simple radio and television equipment, and be familiar with the language and terminology of a broadcast newsroom;
- show a good working knowledge of the key principles of broadcast regulation as laid out in the Ofcom Broadcasting Code; and BBC editorial guidelines.

For public relations (PR), corporate communications and associated digital platforms, journalists must:

- understand how journalism in PR and corporate communications differs from journalism in other sectors;
- for some employers, be able to write and accurately transcribe shorthand at 100 words per minute;
- be able to prepare content for specific purposes (e.g. press releases, social media, brochures, exhibition boards);
- have a good understanding of the business (businesses) they work for;
- know the difference between outputs (e.g. press releases, social media etc.); and
- be able to act as a mediator and facilitator between the media and employer.

5. Qualities

Journalists should have: a hard-working attitude; an inquiring mind; a lively interest in current affairs; an ability to write and use words accurately and with effect; persistence and determination; and a willingness to embrace change and accept unsocial working hours. They must be able to demonstrate commitment and desire to be a journalist. They must have professional attitudes to their job, how they present themselves for work and have an understanding of the diversity of their audience. They should also be: prepared to work shifts; conscientious; enthusiastic; resilient; a team player; have an ability and desire to carry out duties in accordance with the law, regulations and any appropriate codes of conduct; and have high personal standards in terms of discretion/confidentiality.

6. Entry requirements

Individual employers will identify any relevant entry requirements in terms of previous qualifications, training, work experience or other criteria. Apprentices without Level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to completion of their apprenticeship.

7. Assessments

This assessment will include the NCTJ Level 3 Diploma in Journalism, an existing end-of-programme assessment which is well-recognised and valued in the industry. The end-point assessment will cover the whole standard and will be graded pass, merit or distinction.

8. Level and review date

This is a level 3 apprenticeship which will be reviewed after three years.