

## NQJ E-LOGBOOK FOR JOURNALISTS – PROGRAMME OF STUDY

### THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATION IN JOURNALISM

The e-logbook syllabus is based on a programme of supervised on-the-job training undertaken for a minimum period of 18 months at the trainee's newspaper office. During this period the trainee will undertake a series of journalism assignments on a regular basis covering 20 key tasks and subsequently produce copy for publication that shall be assessed by a qualified senior member of staff to industry standards. The objectives and outcomes of this supervised training programme are as follows:

<b>Programme objectives</b>	<b>Programme outcomes</b>
<b><i>The trainee will:</i></b>	<b><i>The trainee can:</i></b>
<p><b>1. <u>Press release:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to use information contained within press releases, emails, web pages and other handouts as a basis for developing news stories that will attract and interest readers and website users</p>	<p>1.1 Identify news stories appropriate to readers and website users from information contained within handout material</p> <p>1.2 Follow up stories identified in handout material in order to obtain additional facts, quotes and new angles</p> <p>1.3 Write clear, vigorous, balanced, accurate and engaging stories derived from handout material to a specified word count within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>2. <u>Emergency services:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to develop information received during the course of routine calls (e.g. to the police and other emergency services) in order to write clear, vigorous, accurate and balanced news stories that will attract and interest readers and website users.</p>	<p>2.1 Identify the best news angle from information supplied during routine calls</p> <p>2.2 Follow up stories identified in routine calls in order to obtain additional facts and quotes</p> <p>2.3 Write clear, vigorous, balanced, accurate and engaging stories derived from routine calls to a specified word count within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>3. <u>Family Events:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to gather comprehensive information about people's life stories</p>	<p>3.1 Identify individuals and circumstances (such as wedding anniversaries, retirements and deaths) that give rise to stories about family events which attract and hold the attention of readers and website users</p> <p>3.2 Ask questions of those involved in family events in a way that encourages interviewees to talk freely and provide powerful quotes</p>

	<p>3.3 Write clear, vigorous, accurate and engaging stories about family events to a specified word count within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>4. <u>Human Interest:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to gather information about people</p>	<p>4.1 Identify individuals and events that give rise to human interest stories which attract and hold the attention of readers and website users  4.2 Interview those at the centre of human interest stories confidently but sensitively so as to elicit key facts, background information and strong quotes  4.3 Write clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced and engaging human interest stories to a specified word count, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>5. <u>Numeracy.</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to develop news stories from material that involves a large number of figures.</p>	<p>5.1 Identify statistical information that gives rise to stories which attract and hold the attention of readers and website users  5.2 Present and interpret statistical data for readers and website users accurately and without ambiguity  5.3 Write clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced and engaging stories based on statistical information to a specified word count, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>6. <u>Public Events:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to develop stories from public events</p>	<p>6.1 Produce comprehensive news coverage of a wide range of public events such as carnivals, fetes, royal visits and the like  6.2 Identify and approach organisers and other key individuals involved in public events in order to gather essential information and strong quotes.  6.3 Write clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced, and engaging stories about public events to a specified word count, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>7. <u>Inquests:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to develop news stories arising from inquests</p> <p><b>Or:</b> (for Scottish Candidates): Scottish affairs</p>	<p>7.1 Demonstrate awareness of legal and ethical issues surrounding the reporting of inquests  7.2 Identify and note accurately using shorthand relevant facts and quotes arising from proceedings in a coroner's court  7.3 Produce clear, vigorous, and accurate copy from inquest hearings to a specified word count and deadline to the standard of a senior reporter</p>

<p><b>8. <u>Press briefings/ public meetings:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to develop news stories from material gathered at press briefings and public meetings.</p>	<p>8.1 Identify relevant, newsworthy facts from written and verbal material provided at press briefings and public meetings</p> <p>8.2 Record and transcribe accurately relevant facts and quotes at press briefings/public meetings</p> <p>8.3 Write vigorous, accurate, balanced and engaging reports on press briefings and public meetings to a specified word count, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>9. <u>Business &amp; Industry:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to report stories arising from the activities of business and industry</p>	<p>9.1 Demonstrate a good working knowledge of how business and the labour market operates</p> <p>9.2 Cover a wide range of business and industry stories such as mass redundancies, new product launches, strikes, company appointments, Chamber of Trade meetings, post office closures and the like.</p> <p>9.3 Write clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced, and engaging stories about business and industry to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>10. <u>Inquiries, tribunals and statutory bodies:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to develop news stories arising from inquiries, tribunals and the activities of statutory bodies</p>	<p>10.1 Demonstrate good general knowledge of the customs and practice of statutory bodies whose activities and decisions effect the lives of most readers and website users</p> <p>10.2 Cover the activities (and public reaction to those activities) of a wide range of statutory bodies such as police and fire authorities, Ofsted, Primary Care Trusts, the Highways Agency, Ombudsmen, the Audit Commission, planning inspectors and the like</p> <p>10.3 Write clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced, and engaging stories about inquiries, tribunals and statutory bodies to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>11. <u>Politics:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to cover stories with a strong political dimension</p>	<p>11.1 Demonstrate political awareness and knowledge of how the main political parties differ</p> <p>11.2 Cover a range of stories with a strong political dimension such as the activities of local MPs, ministerial visits, local elections and the like</p> <p>11.3 Write clear, vigorous, balanced and accurate stories about political issues to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>12. <u>Community issues:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of the newspaper's role as an advocate and agent for change within its community</p>	<p>12.1 Identify appropriate issues and individuals worthy of a newspaper campaign</p> <p>12.2 Demonstrate awareness of a campaign's history and objectives</p> <p>12.3 Write clear, vigorous, balanced and accurate stories to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>

<p><b>13. <u>Pictures:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to write copy to accompany pictures or graphics</p>	<p>13.1 Demonstrate an ability to think in visual terms and initiate pictures that will enhance written coverage of news events</p> <p>13.2 Write stories specifically with pictures in mind in such a way that the story will be diminished severely without the illustration</p> <p>13.3 Write clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced, and engaging picture stories to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>14. <u>Courts:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to cover different types of courts (other than coroners' courts) and a range of court cases</p>	<p>14.1 Demonstrate legal and ethical awareness of issues involved in reporting and following-up court cases</p> <p>14.2 Identify and note accurately relevant facts and quotes arising from proceedings in court</p> <p>14.3 Write clear, vigorous, balanced and accurate stories about court cases to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>15. <u>Councils/ committees:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to report the meetings of councils</p>	<p>15.1 Interpret accurately pronouncements made during the course of council meetings</p> <p>15.2 Identify the implications of council decisions and activities and carry out appropriate follow-ups</p> <p>15.3 Write clear, vigorous, balanced and accurate council stories to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>16. <u>Major stories:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to report major incidents within the newspaper's circulation area</p>	<p>16.1 React effectively to major incidents so as to identify and gather key facts and reaction quickly and accurately</p> <p>16.2 Work within a team and understand the strategy and tactics of editorial managers responsible for co-ordinating coverage of a major incident</p> <p>16.3 Write clear, vigorous, and accurate copy about major incidents for both the newspaper and its website and do so to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>17. <u>Features/ news backgrounders:</u></b> Learn and apply knowledge of how to write features and background articles about people and issues</p>	<p>17.1 Identify events and individuals suitable for features and background articles that will attract and hold the attention of readers and website users</p> <p>17.2 Understand the different requirements needed in writing longer feature stories and news background articles</p> <p>17.3 Write clear, vigorous, balanced and accurate feature and background articles to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>18. <u>Social media</u></b></p>	<p>18.1 Build online contacts made through social media, such as Facebook and Twitter</p> <p>18.2 Use social media to source stories for publication</p> <p>18.3 Use social media to help develop stories for publication</p> <p>18.4 Use social media in a legal and ethical manner, having due regard to any regulatory issues</p>

<p><b>19. <u>Trainee's choice 1</u></b></p>	<p>19.1 Demonstrate ability to produce original, off-diary stories on topics not covered by the other key tasks (such as sports stories and arts reviews).</p> <p>19.2 Write such stories in a clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced and engaging way to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter</p>
<p><b>20. <u>Trainee's choice 2</u></b></p>	<p>20.1 Demonstrate ability to produce original, off-diary stories on topics not covered by the other key tasks (such as sports stories and arts reviews)</p> <p>20.2 Write such stories in a clear, vigorous, accurate, balanced and engaging way to a specified length, within deadline and to the standard of a senior reporter.</p>

## **Assessment**

NQJ e-logbooks are marked and moderated by senior journalists under the guidance of the NCTJ. They take into account at which stage of a candidate's training examples of work were produced and will expect a higher standard from candidates at the end of their training than at the start. Marked logbooks are subjected to rigorous moderation to ensure consistency of marking.

### ***Logbook content***

Two appropriate cuttings must be submitted for each of the 20 key tasks. A key task without one or both cuttings will not be able to be submitted for marking.

Varied submissions should be made wherever possible and no submission may be presented in more than one key task section. Submissions must be long enough to be assessed. Stories of fewer than 80 words are unlikely to be accepted.

Submissions do not have to be by-lined. If they carry a joint by-line, it must be clear from the accompanying original copy which parts of the published story were produced by the candidate. If it is unclear, the key task will not be marked and the logbook will fail.

Each submission must include the original copy as produced by the candidate. Markers will assess what candidates actually produced and submitted for publication, not what appeared in the paper or newspaper website.

Key task cuttings without original copy uploaded will not be able to be submitted for marking.

Candidates and editors/trainers are required to verify that original copy is the candidate's own work by checking the relevant box on screen. Logbooks cannot be submitted without this check.

Candidates who write directly to screen and whose copy is not handled by anyone else before publication should submit a screen print for original and final copy. This should be explained on the coversheet page. Stories written directly to screen but then open to amendment by subs or other journalists must be accompanied by a cutting of the published version.

For each key task, candidates must complete a key task cover sheet. Cover sheets must include headlines, publication dates and a brief explanation by the trainee of how stories were obtained and developed - whether, for instance, a story was self-generated; exclusive;

the result of painstaking effort in the face of many obstacles; and followed up by all the nationals.

### **Logbook assessment sheets**

Assessment sheets should be completed and uploaded at 6, 12 and 18 months (just prior to sitting the NQJ exams). Logbooks cannot be submitted for marking without three completed forms.

### **Awarding marks**

Up to 200 marks are awarded for the e-logbook (up to 10 marks per key task). Candidates must submit two stories for each key task.

Total will be divided by two to gain the final mark.

60 = Pass      65-69 = Merit      70+ = Distinction

Marking guidelines per story for different platforms:

- **5 Excellent**

**Print/online:** awarded for stories that are accurate, relevant, well-structured and readable. The introduction should be well-structured, quotes well-chosen and well placed, and the use of language error-free. Opportunities provided by the online format have been maximised.

**Video/audio:** awarded for stories that are accurate, relevant, well-structured and well-presented. The introduction should grab the attention of the viewer or listener, quotes are well chosen and well placed, and the use of language error-free. It shows an excellent level of 'viewability' and an excellent level of creativity. The story should maximise opportunities provided by the video/audio formats and includes outstanding use of audio/video techniques.

- **3-4 Satisfactory**

**Print/online:** awarded for stories that are accurate, adequately structured, balanced and readable with an acceptable intro and effective use of quotes. There may be minor language errors. Opportunities provided by the online format have been used well.

**Video/audio:** awarded for stories that are accurate, relevant, have adequate structure and presentation. The introduction should be acceptable. It shows a satisfactory level of 'viewability' and is creative. The story uses opportunities provided by the video/audio formats and includes effective use of audio/video techniques.

- **1-2 Poor**

**Print/online:** awarded for stories that may contain several inaccuracies. Story structure may be disjointed, with few or no quotes, many language errors and poor writing style. There may be little evidence of initiative in sourcing story. Opportunities provided by the online format have not been used effectively.

**Video/audio:** awarded for stories that may contain several inaccuracies. Story structure may be disjointed, with few or no quotes, many language errors and poor writing style. There may be little evidence of initiative in sourcing story. Opportunities provided by the video/audio formats have not been used effectively.

- **0 Unacceptable**

**Print/online:** awarded for stories containing one or more major inaccuracies which would require correction and/or apology, or are written so badly that they cannot be understood

without reference back to the candidate. Shows no originality or initiative and show little or no understanding of what is required. Opportunities provided by the online format have been ignored.

**Video/audio:** awarded for stories containing one or more major inaccuracies which would require correction and/or apology, or are written so badly that they cannot be understood without reference back to the candidate. Shows no originality, initiative or understanding of what is required. The report shows little or no evidence of 'viewability' and is not creative. Opportunities provided by the format have been ignored.

## **Grade descriptors**

### **Distinction 70+**

All the submissions contain the essential facts and the stories are written in an accessible, well-structured way, with no inaccuracies. The candidate has chosen compelling angles and produced tightly written intros that carry real impact. Story construction is logical and aids understanding. The best quotes have been selected, used accurately and attributed correctly. The final copy demonstrates a high-level of journalistic skills and can be published with little or no correction.

### **Merit 65-69**

All the submissions contain the key facts, plus the majority of the other worthwhile facts, with no inaccuracies. The candidate has chosen strong angles and the intros are well written. Story construction is logical and aids understanding. Good quotes have been selected, used accurately and attributed correctly. The final copy demonstrates a good level of journalistic skills and can be published with few changes.

### **Pass 60-64**

All of the submissions contain most of the key facts, plus most of the other worthwhile facts. Any inaccuracies will be minor and not change the thrust of the story. The candidate has chosen satisfactory angles and the intros are satisfactory. Stories have a sensible flow and can be easily understood. Acceptable quotes have been selected, used accurately and attributed correctly. The final copy demonstrates a satisfactory level of journalistic skills and can be published with only minor changes.

## **NQJ Pass/fail criteria**

Those who gain 60 marks or above will automatically pass this section. Those who fall below 50 marks will fail this section.

Those who gain a borderline mark of between 50 and 59 will go into an aggregating process (final moderation) involving the other assessments that make up the NQJ qualification – news interview, media law and practice and news report.

If a candidate has gained 60 marks or over in each of the other three NQJ assessments, a candidate achieving a mark of 50-59 will be awarded a pass for the reporter's e-logbook as long as he/she has achieved an overall score of 240/400.

To pass the NQJ overall, a candidate must achieve a combined mark of 240/400.