

National Council for the
Training of Journalists
Annual Report



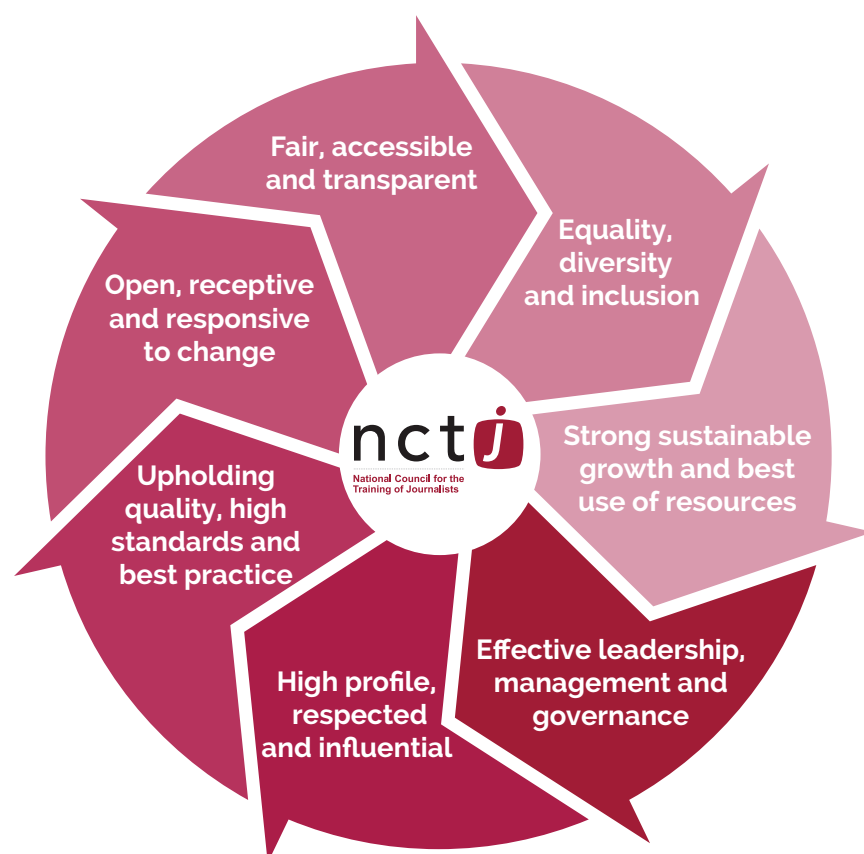
2019-20

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NCTJ values

To grow and develop the NCTJ our values are:



NCTJ mission

To be recognised as the industry charity for attracting, qualifying and developing outstanding journalists who work to the highest professional standards. We provide a world-class education and training system that develops current and future journalists from all walks of life for the demands of a fast-changing media industry.

NCTJ objectives

- Increase resources to build the capacity and capability of the NCTJ to strengthen its role and influence across all media sectors and related sectors where journalism skills are required.
- Ensure there are effective products and services for journalists and journalism trainers at all stages of their careers and foster a culture of continuing professional development.
- Maintain a progressive, flexible and inclusive framework of respected industry 'gold standard' journalism qualifications and apprenticeships that embrace digital and other changes in practice.
- Accredit journalism courses of excellence at colleges, universities and independent providers and reward and support them to achieve the media industry's challenging performance standards.
- Provide an effective careers information service that promotes journalism careers, accredited courses and the industry's training scheme for professional journalists.
- Take more action on equality, diversity and inclusion to build a journalism workforce that widens participation so that it better reflects its audiences.
- Mobilise employers to ensure the media industry's professional training scheme produces journalists with high ethical standards to win public confidence and trust in quality journalism.
- Communicate and collaborate effectively with all target audiences to increase take-up of NCTJ products and services and to increase awareness of the NCTJ's brand values, its role, value for money, agenda-setting activities and status as a charity.
- Make a positive and demonstrable contribution to the future sustainability of quality public interest journalism in the UK.
- Provide the industry with substantive research and up-to-date skills information to help us develop our understanding and response to the rapidly changing market place for journalism.

Vital statistics 2019-20*



A total of **10,368** NCTJ examinations/assessments were taken throughout 2019-20

These comprised:

6,431	482	875	2,540	317
diploma exams	national exam sittings	portfolio/coursework assessments	shorthand exam sittings	Certificate in Foundation Journalism assessments

1,138 students enrolled to sit Diploma in Journalism exams on one of on



59 accredited courses at **35** approved centres

116 distance learners enrolled on the Certificate in Foundation Journalism

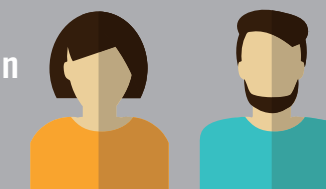
288 distance learners enrolled on the Diploma in Journalism

99 apprentices were registered



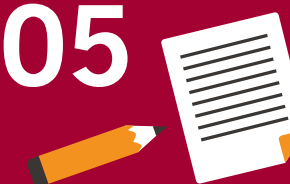
153

students were enrolled on non-accredited courses sitting NCTJ exams



THE TOTAL NUMBER OF NQJ EXAMS SAT WAS

205



84

trainees sat the NQJ and

59

trainees passed the qualification

THERE WERE

93

REGISTRATIONS FOR THE NQJ



78 Community News Project reporters are in post



35 SCHEDULED AND IN-HOUSE SHORT TRAINING COURSES WERE RUN

57 bursaries awarded by the Journalism Diversity Fund

£392,000 in JDF donations from

14 sponsors and **4** donors

*Figures correct as of November 2020, with 23 accredited courses extended until December 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic



Chairman's review

It's embarrassing to admit it, but journalists tend to want the worst to happen even when it puts them in danger, because it will make a more exciting story.

Perhaps this is the year we are cured of that. We know now that global pandemics are more fun in films than real life, that there aren't any laughs in Coronavirus and that everyone is fed up talking about it. We've all had enough.

It would be easy to plunge into gloom: this is a huge story that damages the beleaguered industry reporting it, frustrates teachers used to engaging young reporters face to face and takes half the fun out of college life for departing and arriving years of students: how do you sell papers when there is no one on the streets? What serendipity of ideas ever happens on Zoom? Have our students escaped their parents only to be locked in a small room in a hall of residence?

People care about health workers, worry for actors, grieve for pubs and clubs. There aren't any tears to spare for journalists, young or old.

So how impressive it has been to see everyone connected with our end of the business swallow hard, pick up the pieces and get on with life. The industry has fought, finding time not only for proper reporting, but also to campaign in support of journalism. Teachers – at universities, colleges and training centres – have stepped up, accommodating where necessary the demands of online. Our students, and those young reporters who have recently qualified, have made the best of things, sharing accounts of work and study with the enthusiasm that continues to make journalism such an engaging trade. Don't believe everything you read in the press a lot of life still goes on.

As for the NCTJ, all of us on the board have taken huge pride in seeing the team adapt so swiftly to the difficulties of remote working. As the serious nature of this pandemic became clear – not only in health but also in economic terms – our chief executive stepped up to impose a pay cut on her own salary. She and the team did a remarkable job in moving seamlessly online. Weeks

later, they were barely back to the office when they had to move out again.

Yet through all those months, with the support of our industry, the backing of our teachers and the drive of our students, the NCTJ team has kept examinations going, developed new modules, launched our skills academy, conducted accreditations, run the Journalism Diversity Fund and extended relationships with sponsors and supporters. Team members believe in what they do: they are spurred on by a belief in journalism and a sense of responsibility to those who sign up for accredited courses and encouraged by the energy that flows not only from the industry but also from so many training centres. Look elsewhere for people feeling sorry for themselves, you won't find them in those home offices and back bedrooms currently networked into Newport.

We work in a world where the value of journalistic standards becomes clearer every day. As social media rumours swirl – coverage of Coronavirus is a great example – we need responsible reporting, accurately researched. The NCTJ has been banging on about high standards since 1951 and there are signs the idea may even become fashionable. Heavens, we have seen students using Twitter to promote the value of shorthand this year.

And if journalists aren't expecting much sympathy, they can take comfort from the list of those to whom Coronavirus lockdown rules do not apply. Yes, journalists are essential workers. I'm sure they'll take that, along with the responsibilities expected of those accorded that status.

Kim Fletcher, chairman



Chief executive's report

This was always going to be a memorable year for the NCTJ.

With some really exciting projects lined up and, in our 'business as usual' response to the pandemic, it has been a pleasure to see these come to fruition.

Launching our Journalism Skills Academy, celebrating fifteen years of the Journalism Diversity Fund, publishing the 25th edition of McNae's, winning recognition for a new senior journalist apprenticeship, staging an inspiring skills conference and awards with the University of Sunderland, upgrading the Diploma in Journalism and seeing the real impact the community news reporters are having are just some of the highlights.

Quite what an extraordinary year it became certainly wasn't something we could have predicted.

But we were well-placed and as well-prepared as we could be for the challenges ahead.

Well-placed because we have the support and dedication of so many editors, journalists, educators and trainers, examiners and volunteers who have been truly magnificent.

Well-prepared because we have the strong foundations and culture needed to be creative, proactive, positive and innovative. This has been our approach and it has worked.

We have prioritised the needs of our learners, centres and partners alongside a focus on good communications, adaptability and flexibility.

Cutting-edge secure proctoring technology and online platforms enabled students, apprentices and trainees to sit their exams at home in order to complete their qualifications.

We were determined to protect the integrity and validity of our qualifications, and also to understand the uncertainty and anxiety facing our learners. Watching the general qualifications fiasco unfold over the summer has been extremely painful for those of us in the awarding sector.

This doesn't mean it hasn't been damned difficult for us too at times. But as a charity we have come through this stronger and wiser and even more committed to supporting this wonderful trade and the remarkable people who make it all work.

So, after an unimaginable year, what comes next?

We still can't predict with any certainty what will happen but we remain positive about the future and persistent advocates of trusted journalism.

Our focus remains on offering highly-respected meaningful industry qualifications and training for journalists from all walks of life and at all stages of their careers.

Accrediting the best journalism courses, growing the Journalism Skills Academy, mobilising employer support for journalism training, providing an outstanding careers service, helping to sustain quality public interest journalism and publishing professional research are all priorities in the year ahead.

This astonishing year has ended on a high with news from Facebook that the Community News Project is to be extended with a further \$3m donation to the NCTJ. Over the years there have been many well-meaning initiatives to support local news and diverse talent. I don't know of any that have had such a big impact in such a short space of time. It's a brilliant project the NCTJ is proud to be supporting and we are honoured to be working in partnership with the publishers, trainers and trainees who strive to make a difference to the local communities they serve.

Thank you for your support. We are there with you.

Joanne Butcher, chief executive



Patron's address

Before you write off 2020, please think again.

It's been tough. No question. It's been far too tragic. Too many of us have lost friends, close colleagues and much-loved relatives. Nothing can take away from that and I wouldn't try to. We've all felt desperately lonely at times, terribly stressed and far too often depressed. We've witnessed and reported on some of the saddest, most difficult, in some ways most heart-rending times of our lives. This has been a truly challenging time wherever you are in the world, and wherever you are in your career. But don't give into dwelling on these negatives. They can overwhelm. They WILL overwhelm if you let them. Far better to focus on the positives this virus has brought with it. And honestly, I believe there are many.

For a start, this year has shown how vital journalism is. It is journalists who have exposed the lack of Government preparation for a global pandemic. They've crunched numbers and data and scrutinised science and offered alternatives to the official version of the virus trajectory. They've identified and given names and voices to the pandemic victims and their relatives. They've pinpointed those most at risk and sounded multiple alarms at the disproportionate numbers of people of colour struck down; at the horrifyingly high level of deaths amongst our old folk in care homes; at the lack of PPE for health care workers; at the woeful effectiveness of the track and trace system. They've asked tough questions – and when they've not been allowed to ask those tough questions directly to those in authority, they've found ways around this to make their point. And boy, those points have been made.

Reporters have thrown themselves into the frontline of the virus, from Wuhan to Italy to France, to the UK, to Brazil, donning hazmat suits and visors and stepping into the pandemic petri dish to get to the truth and deliver it honestly. They've found ways round border controls; lockdowns; the evacuation of their own offices; their personal health fears and worries about their family's health in order to keep the news on the air and in print, regionally, nationally and globally. Editors have had to

constantly think about how to keep their staff healthy and fit – both physically and mentally.

The virus has made it easier to shut down and lock-out journalists but they've refused to be silenced. OR distracted. Some of Britain's best journalism has come from its regional reporters and bureaux. *The Yorkshire Post* is just one which has had a stonking year with strong, uncompromising coverage of the virus and its handling. Many in the regions have utilised local contacts to forge the way forward, lead the charge and call those in charge to account.

Coronavirus has strained us but journalists have been the backbone of truth and refused to be broken by it.

Journalism is still under threat, there's no doubt. That we can all agree on. It's not COVID-19 we should be fearing but the fake news pandemic which has permeated every part of society across the world. It's truly shocking how continual lies have been believed and continue to be believed by millions, by whole countries. Serious distrust in the global media damages us all and threatens everyone's liberties. Coronavirus may well have brought us together in more ways than it's divided us. It's encouraged collaboration (of sorts) in our own industry in fighting untruths and misinformation from all quarters. It SHOULD do. It MUST do.

We need to work together as journalists and as an industry to fight the fake news pandemic which will be here long after the coronavirus is conquered. Like the incredible scientific collaboration and teamwork that has developed a vaccine in record time for the world, we need to pool resources, brain cells and collective ingenuity, take lessons from the lab technicians and come up with an antidote to save our profession. Together we are stronger.

Alex Crawford,
special correspondent,
Sky News and patron of the NCTJ

Building our capacity and capability

All registered charities exist to create a better society and are charged with measuring and increasing their impact and the results of their fundraising.

The NCTJ is no different. We have a clear mission, shared values and measurable objectives to ensure we are not just making a difference but we are making more of an impact.

We believe in supporting our cherished democracy by ensuring as many journalists as possible are trained and qualified to hold power to account and to inform the public about what's really going on.

We are working to increase the number of strategic partners who support the NCTJ to boost our resources and influence. We are encouraging more media and related companies and charities to get involved in our work.

Our engagement with new partners has been a focus of our work this year. Reach, the market-leading publisher of digital and print content, now plays a central role in the work of the NCTJ. Other partnerships are being forged with all the leading media organisations that share our commitment to ensuring professional standards of journalism.

Other new partners this year have included **Ability Today**, **Dow Jones**, **News UK** and **Nike**.

We were thrilled to receive support from **Google** for the launch of the **Journalism Skills Academy**, the **Financial Times** for our **careers guide**, and the **Independent** for our **Awards for Excellence**.

Generating more sponsorship and securing more grants are helping us develop our products and services and are revolutionising our infrastructure. Look out next year for our new website, more e-learning courses, a new online centre management system and more support for apprentices.

Talking of next year, 2021 is the NCTJ's 70th anniversary year. We are marking this milestone with some very special events and new projects. We can't wait to celebrate with you!

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

SHARED VALUES

CLEAR MISSION

Continuing professional development for journalists and trainers

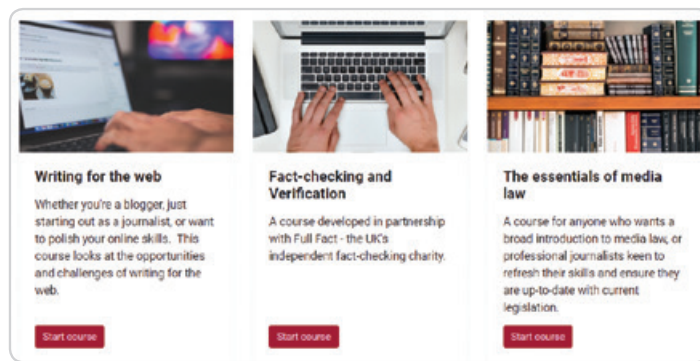


As part of an initiative to scale up training for in-work journalists and encourage a renewed culture of skills development across the sector, the Journalism Skills Academy (JSA) was launched in the autumn of 2020.

Supported by the Google News Initiative and centred on a new e-learning platform, the academy is a one-stop shop for journalists at all stages of their careers to develop their knowledge and skills.

Free bitesize resources

The platform hosts a selection of free bitesize resources, which are perfect for quick dips into key skills for those new to journalism or anyone who wants to brush up on their knowledge.



Users can watch short video masterclasses on a range of subjects, from court reporting to sports journalism, test their knowledge with interactive quizzes, and read expert tips on impressing at job interviews and pitching to editors.

Sharpen your journalism skills

For those looking to develop or refresh their skills at their own pace, the platform also hosts a selection of structured e-learning courses. All offer an interactive experience, encouraging learners to test their knowledge as they progress through the carefully designed stages of the course.

Subjects covered include verification and fact checking, media law and writing for the web.

A wide range of 'live' interactive online courses, led by experts in the field, are also offered under the JSA banner.

Qualifications by e-learning

The Journalism Skills Academy is the new hub for the NCTJ's distance learning programmes, including for the first time the National Qualification in Journalism (NQJ), which for many professionals marks the transition from junior to senior journalist.

Journalists who do not have employer-led NQJ training available to them can now study the qualification online.

The Certificate in Foundation Journalism, the NCTJ's introductory-level qualification, is also available to study via the JSA, and the Diploma in Journalism will be available online in early 2021.



Joanne Butcher,
chief executive of the NCTJ, said:

*"The launch of the NCTJ's **Journalism Skills Academy** marks a significant milestone in the charity's development and the training we provide to support the UK journalism industry.*

"Working with our partners, we aim to increase the range of learning resources available to journalists throughout their careers and to widen access to our training and qualifications.

"Although planned long before the pandemic, remote working and learning have made the vision we have for the JSA to revitalise a culture of ongoing professional development across the journalism industry even more vital.

"I'd like to thank Matt Cooke and everyone at the Google News Initiative for the wonderful support they have given us to reach this point and to the NCTJ team for their outstanding work on this exciting new project."



Rt Hon John Whittingdale,
Minister of State for Media and Data, said:

"High quality journalism is one of this nation's great strengths and through the pandemic journalists have continued to get trusted news and information out to keep people in the know.

"But to maintain the excellent journalism we benefit from we need people to have the right skills.

*"The NCTJ's **Journalism Skills Academy** will provide vital training to help journalists navigate news in a digital age, regardless of where they're at in their career.*

"This is a terrific initiative and I encourage all those in the field to explore the opportunities on offer."



Sports journalism students at News Associates cover Brisbane v Richmond in the AFL preliminary final

Highly-respected industry qualifications for journalists

Diploma in Journalism

This year saw the introduction of two new elective options: data journalism; and journalism for a digital audience. The use of social media, analytics and data to find and tell stories are all vital tools for journalists and the elective options take the skills to the next level from the introduction that is taught in essential journalism.

Two popular elective options, videojournalism for online and production journalism, were revised and updated during 2019-20 in line with industry-wide research and feedback from tutors, trainers and learners. Both modules were retitled to reflect their content and purpose: videojournalism for digital platforms and editing skills for journalists.

To reflect the increased level of digital skills and knowledge needed by journalists, the Diploma in Journalism was raised to a level 5 qualification. The diploma has progressively evolved to include digital skills as standard throughout the qualification, but the level of the qualification had remained at level 3. A review of the mandatory essential journalism module will be conducted in 2020-21.

National Qualification in Journalism (NQJ)

The new, updated level 6 NQJ is available to journalists working across the media and is tailored to meet different sectors' needs. Candidates select a pathway to follow that is relevant to their job role and the assessments focus on testing the appropriate knowledge and skills at a senior level within those roles. Journalists working in local and regional newsrooms have taken the new-style online exams this year and there are also separate pathways for production journalists and community journalists.

A new pathway for local democracy reporters has been developed for introduction in 2021 and future development includes pathways for magazine journalists; sports journalists; and journalists working in PR and communications.

The NQJ is a mandatory qualification in the level 7 senior journalist apprenticeship standard and is also designed for use as a professional development qualification and is available to study via distance learning.

Apprenticeship standard for a senior journalist

In June 2020, a level 7 apprenticeship standard for a senior journalist was approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) and published for use in England.



By including the National Qualification in Journalism, the new apprenticeship standard allows all who complete it the opportunity to gain the industry standard qualification at a senior level. Development of the new apprenticeship across the nations is under consideration for 2021.

Apprenticeship standard for a junior journalist

This apprenticeship standard, which has been successfully delivered across England for five years and is also available as an apprenticeship framework in Wales and as a pathway in a Modern Apprenticeship in Scotland, will be reviewed and updated in 2021.

All options include the NCTJ's Diploma in Journalism qualification as mandatory, providing a consistent standard of journalism training for apprentices across the UK. Developments in Northern Ireland will be explored next year.

Assessments

Like many awarding organisations, the NCTJ's activities were seriously disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic and we were unable to run any diploma exams in April. We looked at ways to mitigate this impact and the adverse effect the delay to exams could have on our candidates, in particular those studying on one year and fast-track courses.

As the NCTJ offers qualifications that assess occupational competence, we took the route of adapting the mode of delivery for our exams, so they could be sat remotely.

Following a successful period of testing, we introduced the option of remote exams in May. The opportunity to sit NCTJ exams securely at home supported candidates' remote training and gave them the opportunity to achieve their NCTJ qualification during the pandemic without further delay.

We are continuing to offer these adaptations in 2020-21, whilst coronavirus restrictions remain in place.

Our online exams, held in Cirrus, are delivered remotely using Proctorio, a secure proctoring software. Exams sat outside of Cirrus are delivered remotely via Zoom, using online invigilation. Shorthand exams, which are comprised of an exam dictation delivered outside of Cirrus and a transcription delivered in Cirrus, are delivered remotely using a combination of Zoom and Proctorio.

The platforms and procedures we have put in place for remote delivery protect the integrity of our assessments and the reliability and validity of our assessment results, whilst giving candidates the much-needed opportunity to achieve their qualification without further delay.

Between May and October the NCTJ delivered approximately

4,842 exams

most of which were sat remotely. This figure includes exams for all diploma subjects, including shorthand, and exams for the National Qualification in Journalism.

Additional exam dates were run in August and September, to ensure candidates who could not sit remotely had the opportunity to sit exams in-centre as lockdown restrictions eased.

Because remote exams are not suitable for everyone, we are continuing to offer this mode of assessment delivery as an option only, and we have asked our centres to prioritise candidates who cannot sit exams remotely for in-centre sittings, which can take place with social distancing whilst universities and colleges remain open under current government guidance.



Socially distanced Cardiff University students begin their MA studies

High-performing accredited journalism courses



Awards for Excellence 2019 winners

During this turbulent year, it is abundantly clear that the teams who run NCTJ-accredited courses have worked extremely hard to adapt their courses to online delivery throughout the pandemic, creating opportunities for students to learn in centre where possible and to run remote exams.

The NCTJ has been working with course teams to ensure that the exacting accreditation standards continue to be met and centres are still able to deliver the diploma qualification. Centres have shown real innovation to adapt to these challenges and meet these standards, by running virtual news days, bringing practical journalism training online and finding new opportunities to expose their students to the industry. Remote exams have also given students the opportunity to achieve the diploma while on course.

To support centres, the NCTJ has co-ordinated a webinar series to connect tutors with one another and to share ideas, as well as to speak with members of

the NCTJ team. Webinars have included coronavirus contingency arrangements, delivery of remote exams, sharing best practice among shorthand tutors and how to deliver practical journalism training remotely. The webinar series will continue throughout 2020-21 and the NCTJ's dedicated tutor Facebook page continues to be a source of collaboration. Course leaders will also be able to discuss the challenges and opportunities surrounding delivery of NCTJ qualifications at accreditation forums taking place in November 2020, postponed from earlier in the year.

The NCTJ also met with elected student representatives on a webinar dedicated to discussing remote exams and their concerns.

Promoting accredited courses has also been a key task to help boost recruitment and so that more prospective students are aware of the different types of courses and the value of accreditation for employability.

Accreditation visits and meetings

The NCTJ is continuing to concentrate its efforts on those centres and courses that need it the most, offering targeted support in a rigorous, transparent and risk-based system.

In the 2019-20 academic year, the NCTJ carried out ten visits as either accreditation panel meetings or monitoring meetings, offering that additional support by bringing together panellists and industry advisers to ensure centres are training students to industry expectations.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, visits are now being delivered virtually. These meetings ensure the NCTJ is continuing its support to centres by meeting with course staff, students and involving senior working journalists from all parts of the industry who offer their opinions and guidance to course leaders about how courses can improve.

The NCTJ continues to appreciate the support of editors and senior journalists who volunteer their time to take part in accreditation panel visits.

Our thanks go to:

David Higgerson, chief audience officer, Reach PLC

Adele Jones, alumni manager and talent coordinator, *Financial Times*

Will Harrison, editor, Newsquest London

Grace Witherden, deputy editor, *Maidenhead Advertiser*

Mike Shallcross, associate publisher, Mark Allen Group

Laurie Tucker, day editor, Sky Sports News

Maria Breslin, editor, *Liverpool Echo*

Simon Hughes, football writer, *The Athletic*

Rob Cotterill, deputy editor and head of content, *The Sentinel*

Liz Hannam, head of news, ITV News Central

Martin Wright, editor-in-chief, MNA Media

Louise Cooper, specialist editor, JPIMedia

Industry advisers

Industry advisers have been invaluable in offering ongoing support and sharing their specialist expert knowledge by visiting centres. Advisers have found it beneficial to watch the students in action on a news production day in order to observe the standard of training and work being produced. For the NCTJ, industry advisers help to maintain that link with the centre and provide up-to-date information about the centre in between accreditation visits.

Accreditation of new courses/modules

To gain approval to deliver a new course or a new module and to remove modules, recognised centres are required to submit a proposal to the NCTJ including how the new combination of modules on offer will boost the employability of students.

Centres approved to deliver new diploma modules in 2019-20:

Nottingham Trent University – photography for journalists, data journalism and practical magazine journalism

University of Sheffield – videojournalism for digital platforms

University of Salford – introduction to PR and PR and communications

Leeds Trinity University – photography for journalists and journalism for a digital audience

University of Lincoln – TV journalism and radio journalism

University of Kent – TV journalism and radio journalism

Centres approved to deliver new courses in 2019-20:

Glasgow Clyde College – fast-track diploma course

Sutton College – 18-week fast-track diploma course

Liverpool John Moores University – MA Journalism and MA Sports Journalism



An effective careers information service

As the education and training market becomes increasingly competitive, we have stepped up our careers activities to inform and inspire the next generation of journalists.

So many journalism students make big investments in courses, only to discover they haven't been equipped with the right skills for employment, they don't have an NCTJ qualification and should have done an NCTJ-accredited course.

Our aim is to explain the different ways into journalism, the breadth of opportunities available and ensure people make the right career and training choices for them.

Careers guide

For the second year running, we have published a journalism careers guide sponsored by the *Financial Times* titled *Do you want to be a journalist?*

Sent to schools and colleges across the UK, the handy booklet aims to encourage young people from a range of backgrounds to consider a career in journalism.

Aspiring journalists can consider their training options by hearing from alumni about the different paths they took into successful careers. The guide also features easy-to-navigate listings of all NCTJ-accredited courses.



"I think this is a brilliant resource, our students will find it really useful." Careers leader, Wyvern College

Summer school



Alex Crawford delivers an introduction to journalism

Some of the top names in journalism, including ITV's Piers Morgan and Sky's Alex Crawford, came together to produce an online summer school, launched by the NCTJ to provide an introduction to journalism for beginners.

Each video, hosted on the NCTJ's YouTube channel, provided viewers with an insight into a different area of the industry, or a different journalistic discipline.

The initiative aimed to offer a grounding in basic skills, paving the way for participants to consider studying for a journalism qualification via distance learning or an NCTJ-accredited course.

The video masterclasses are now homed on the Journalism Skills Academy, alongside other free resources such as CV and cover letter tips and interactive quizzes.

Mobilising employer support for journalism training

The NCTJ was set up to serve the needs of the industry – and just as those needs have changed, so the NCTJ has evolved to keep pace.

But while our qualifications are now preparing students for life as journalists across a multiplicity of platforms, the NCTJ's focus on standards and quality endures. That is why employers remain supportive of the qualifications we develop, and of our rigorous system of accreditation.

Indeed, employers are represented throughout the NCTJ's organisational structure, advising the executive staff on the key skills requirements of journalists in 2020 – whether in print, broadcast or digital environments.

Recognition of the NCTJ's critical role in overseeing training standards for the industry is most obvious in the recruitment of trainees who have completed their Diploma in Journalism. Two-thirds of UK journalists have an NCTJ qualification – a clear sign that it remains the benchmark for judging the calibre of new entrants to the newsroom.

The resurgence of apprentice standards has further mobilised employer support for high-quality training. When the junior journalist apprenticeship was introduced in 2013, completion of the Diploma in Journalism was integral to the qualification – and the NCTJ liaised closely with employers to make the scheme a reality.

This year has finally seen the introduction of a senior apprenticeship standard, which creates a new pathway to senior status by incorporating the National Qualification in Journalism. Once again, the NCTJ has worked in concert with the industry to secure support for the new standard, which further cements the importance of ongoing professional development and of recognised qualifications.

Further evidence of employers' commitment to training can be found in the ongoing Community News Project, and in the success of the Journalism Diversity Fund, which has this year offered more bursaries to journalists of the future than ever before – thanks in large part to increased levels of support from the organisations which sponsor the fund.

As ever, the NCTJ hopes that the support of the industry for its training schemes will continue to increase in the year ahead. As its qualifications evolve, and as its distance learning programmes become more accessible thanks to the development of the Journalism Skills Academy, the NCTJ would be glad to hear from news publishers and producers about how we can best support journalists throughout their careers.

The resurgence of apprentice standards has further mobilised employer support for high quality training.



"We value highly the quality of training our journalists receive through the NCTJ which means they come to us work ready. The NCTJ continues to set the gold standard for the training of journalists in the workplace."

Jeremy Clifford, editor-in-chief, JPIMedia



Journalism Diversity Fund recipients at the equality, diversity and inclusion conference 2019

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Committed to leading radical change in the industry, we have this year broadened and scaled up our work on equality, diversity and inclusion.

As the **Journalism Diversity Fund** (JDF) celebrates its 15th anniversary, the charitable fund has now helped almost 400 people from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds to train as journalists.

The JDF is supported by those in the industry who want to make newsrooms better reflect the communities they serve.

In early 2020 we announced our ambitious goal of raising the annual value of the fund to half a million pounds, which we are well on our way towards achieving.

Despite the challenges the industry has faced this year, two new sponsors – News UK and Dow Jones – have come on board, and a number of existing sponsors have increased their donations.

Thorold Barker, *The Wall Street Journal's* editor for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, said: "We're excited that this sponsorship will help the next generation of talented reporters from all backgrounds pursue their careers in journalism. We are committed to helping ensure that our newsroom and those around the country better reflect the diversity of their readers."

"The support I received from [the] JDF removed the stress that comes from financial anxiety and enabled me to completely immerse myself in my studies; I was able to offer up my take on the world unfurling before us. The importance of having a range of perspectives in a seemingly new era, was more vital than ever."

I finished my journalism studies in January 2020, and my qualification gave me the confidence to step into spaces that had previously seemed unattainable."

Jaqueline Shepherd, journalist, BBC Radio London.

We have also convened a **forum for employers from across the media sector** to discuss and advise on the further action needed that will make a difference to the equality, diversity and inclusion of newsrooms.

Chaired by NCTJ trustee Abu Bundu-Kamara, global diversity and inclusion lead for Boeing, the group met in January and July, bringing together representatives from more than 30 news media organisations. The forum also provides an opportunity for businesses to share and promote good practice.

The areas identified for further investment cover careers promotion and information, research, entry-level training, mentoring, and continuing skills and career development support.

Joanne Butcher, chief executive, said: "We recognise that tackling inequalities and making journalism better reflect our audiences needs the combined efforts of the industry, businesses, employers and journalists.

"We also appreciate that although this is a tough time for our industry, we need to be bold and to tackle the issues on a much bigger scale to achieve our ambition.

"The NCTJ will do as much as it possibly can to help media businesses attract and retain diverse talent and a broader range of voices in journalism."



Kirsteen Allison



Jacqueline Shepherd



Nikki Akinola

In May 2020, we partnered with social enterprise Ability Today to launch an introductory journalism course for aspiring journalists with disabilities.

Thirteen students enrolled on the remote course, which delivered the Certificate in Foundation Journalism qualification via the Journalism Skills Academy e-learning platform.

Direct mentoring and teaching support were also key aspects of the course, which was tailored for the needs of learners with a range of disabilities.

Student Kirsteen Allison said: "Journalism was always a career interest of mine and I wanted to further develop my research and reporting skills. I am also passionate about disability matters and getting our voices heard. This is a means to achieve that."

In the autumn of 2020, Nikki Akinola took up the newly-created role of diversity and inclusion co-ordinator at the NCTJ.

Before joining the NCTJ's examinations team in 2019, Nikki worked at Reed Learning as a learning and development co-ordinator for eight years.

She has extensive knowledge of training delivery and adult learning and has worked in the industry for 15 years.

Nikki said: "I am delighted to have taken up this new and exciting role, and I hope to be able to influence and set an example. The NCTJ has big ambitions for improving the equality, diversity and inclusion of the journalism industry, and I am looking forward to being a part of achieving these."

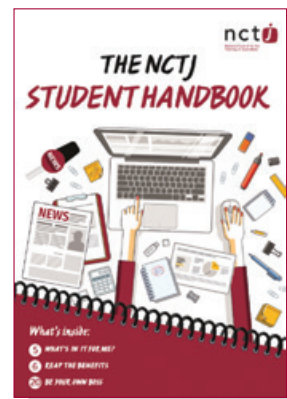
Joanne Butcher, chief executive, said: "Nikki was a brilliant addition to our exams team last year and I'm delighted she has moved into this new role where, given her skills and passion, I'm confident she will make a real difference to this vital area of our work."

Effective communication and collaboration

During an uncertain year, clear communication has never been more important. Throughout the coronavirus pandemic we have kept all stakeholders well-informed about the NCTJ's contingency plans, and any updates.

We also kept in regular contact with centres, encouraging collaboration and the sharing of ideas through a regular webinar series around delivering training remotely.

Student handbook



In a bid to help make the relationship students have with the NCTJ more tangible and longer lasting, we produced the first ever NCTJ handbook for students on accredited courses.

The 24-page booklet provides comprehensive careers advice and tips on applying for, and succeeding in, their first

journalism jobs. It also provides an introduction to the NCTJ, and information about the Diploma in Journalism and exams.

Journalism Skills Conference and Awards for Excellence

The latest developments in journalism education and training were discussed at the Journalism Skills Conference, hosted by the University of Sunderland on 28 and 29 November 2019.

Panels discussed a range of topics, including: the future of sports journalism in a digital age; keeping resilient and understanding personal safety; podcast journalism; and the changing jobs landscape for NCTJ graduates.

Student, trainee and apprentice journalists were honoured at the Awards for Excellence, sponsored by *The Independent*.

Sky Sports News presenter Dharmesh Sheth presented the ceremony, which took place at Sunderland's Stadium of Light.

The best performing NCTJ-accredited courses were also celebrated, with the sports media diploma course at News Associates London being named the best performing course overall.

Also honoured at the ceremony was John Wilson, former JPIMedia editorial trainer, who won the Chairman's Award for his outstanding contribution to journalism training and education.



The future sustainability of quality public interest journalism training

The coronavirus pandemic has created enormous challenges for the news media industry, while simultaneously demonstrating the vital importance of the sector's role. Journalists have communicated key messages, scrutinised the actions of those overseeing the official response to the crisis, and highlighted stories that matter to their audiences.

Quality public interest news, however, requires quality journalism training. After all, a court reporter cannot operate effectively without shorthand and without a good understanding of how courts operate. Likewise, a journalist without a sound knowledge of the way government operates will struggle to hold power to account, at either local or national level.

Even at the most basic level, a well-trained journalist will understand how public interest stories can be found in every nook and cranny – and that uncovering them is the best way both to serve, and engage with, their audiences.

Public interest journalism lies at the heart of the NCTJ's qualifications. We are delighted that in the last year we have worked closely with the BBC to develop a training pathway at NQJ level for future recruits to the Local Democracy Reporter Service. This will enable publishers to take on LDRs at trainee level for the first time,

confident that they will develop their skills and careers at the same time as providing a key service to readers.

A new NQJ pathway has also been developed for the trainee level journalists currently employed as part of the Community News Project. Those reporters, serving audiences whose needs had previously been identified as being underserved, will therefore be able to demonstrate their senior skills in an arena that is vital to local communities.

Both these developments have widened access to quality training that will ultimately serve the public interest by producing highly-skilled reporters. A third development with this aim in mind has been the launch of the NCTJ's Journalism Skills Academy (JSA).

For the first time, this has brought all of the NCTJ's direct training schemes under a single umbrella, and enabled the addition of a wide range of new, and freely available resources – including videos on court reporting, media ethics and key aspects of media law.

The NCTJ plans to scale up the JSA in the year ahead, working with external partners to create a significant databank of resources that will enable journalists to develop their skills at whatever stage of their career they might be.

Student Council

The annual meeting of the Student Council is an invaluable way for the NCTJ to hear the views and ideas of students and apprentices.

More than 50 representatives were in attendance at the Student Council conference, hosted by the *Financial Times* on Friday, 31 January 2020.

As well as having the opportunity to discuss their training, attendees also heard from a panel of editors on applying for jobs and standing out from the crowd.



Student representatives share ideas at the 2020 Student Council conference

Professional research and skills information

The NCTJ is committed to an ongoing programme of research to provide the industry with up-to-date labour market information about journalism.

Research conducted is also used to inform our current and future strategy and to help us develop our projects and services so that they benefit everyone the charity helps.

Emerging skills for journalists

The world in which journalists work is fast-changing, therefore it is vital that we understand what is happening, and what will happen, to the skills needs of journalists.

In 2014 we published an independent research report into the emerging skills for journalists, which identified the issues that were affecting journalism and the impacts that these changes were having.



Six years on, the landscape of journalism has again changed considerably, and we will be commissioning a follow-up report in the next year.

This research will feed directly into the provision of journalism training, via the NCTJ's development strategy, and will also contribute to the wider discussion on the development of journalistic skills.

Community News Project evaluation

We have also commissioned Mark Spilsbury, our lead research consultant, to carry out an independent evaluation of the Community News Project throughout its two-year pilot.

His first evaluation, covering the early months of the project, found that community reporters felt they had

brought new perspectives to their newsrooms. The report also found that the project had resulted in coverage of more 'good news' stories, with reporters able to unearth positive items which were previously going unnoticed.

A mid-term evaluation report was also published in autumn 2020, which revealed that the scheme has had a lasting impact on the recruitment processes of publishers.

Many of the publishers involved in the scheme have made long-term changes to the way they recruit and the way the wider business operates, including placing more emphasis on 'traditional' community journalism, and a wider consideration of the diversity of their newsrooms.

The report also demonstrated that the NCTJ's involvement has added value to the project, and the reporters are doing well in their training.



Business and finance review



Despite the challenges of the pandemic, particularly in the charity, awarding organisation and media sectors in which the NCTJ operates, the organisation remains financially stable and continues to invest in its products and services to ensure high journalism standards and to support all journalists and media organisations.

The charity is a well-established and robust organisation with a well-known brand in the industry that enjoys high penetration, employer support and recognition. It is committed to alleviating the pressures on funding for training, facilitating a more equitable, diverse and inclusive journalism workforce, supporting journalists in the digital journalism skills revolution and contributing to the sustainability of quality public interest journalism.

A long-term commitment has been made to foster a culture of continuing professional development for journalists to promote journalism standards and ethics. The new Journalism Skills Academy is designed to support journalists throughout their careers.

Structure, governance and decision making

The National Council for the Training of Journalists is a registered charity (number: 1026685). The training activities of the group are carried out by NCTJ Training Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary. During the year, NCTJ Training Ltd made a charitable donation under deed of covenant of £29,556 to its holding company.

In common with all charities, the NCTJ exists to help create a better society. The principal objective of the charity is the provision, supervision and accreditation of journalism-related training.

The directors have the ultimate responsibility for running the charity and exercising all the powers of the council, and in particular, for its property, finances, strategy and accountability. Operations are delegated to the chief executive, who is appointed by, and reports to, the board, and her management team. Stakeholders are involved through focus groups of editors and trainers, accreditation forums and seminars, the Journalism Skills Conference and the Student Council.

Resources and funding

The net expense to the group amounted to £2,044,848. After the addition of net realised and unrealised gains on investments of £25,727, there was a total reduction of funds amounting to £2,019,120. There was, exclusive of the Journalism Diversity Fund and the Community News Project, a trading deficit of £11,929. This was offset by the revaluations on investments to give a trading surplus before tax, exclusive of JDF and CNP expenditure, of £13,798.

The charity continues to work in partnership with Facebook and nine regional news publishers on the Community News Project. This is a two-year programme with funding of £4.6m and is designed to support local journalism and improve the diversity of journalists in the UK.

The Journalism Diversity Fund, an industry charitable fund, is managed by the NCTJ as a restricted fund. Donations totalling £374,907 were received from the media industry along with private donations of funds raised by the Thomas Read and Claire Prosser families. Expenditure from the fund amounted to £328,981.

The charity has adopted a diversified approach to income generation. The principal funding sources are: donations from strategic partners; income from registrations; apprenticeship and examination fees; sales

of publications and training materials; events and training courses; accreditation fees; sponsorship and donations; and investment income. The charity’s portfolio is invested with the advice of Investec Wealth and Investment.

Reserves

The directors aim to keep funds that meet the identified needs of NCTJ. The policy is to maintain resources that would allow time for re-organisation and restructuring in the event of a downturn in income, protect strategic work and allow the charity to fulfil its objectives and commitments. This currently equates to c£327,000.

At 30 June 2020, the group had funds totalling £3,614,125 of which unrestricted funds amounted to £1,885,336 and restricted funds of £1,728,789. Excluding restricted and designated funds, the charity currently holds free reserves of £1,155,995, including £866,643 in a capital fund. Under the instruction of its trustees, this fund can be accessed to meet the charity’s obligations under the relevant conditions of recognition set by the regulators to protect the interests of learners. This ensures sufficient resources are available to enable the charity to develop, deliver and award qualifications so that every learner has the opportunity to complete their qualifications.

Statement of accounts	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Incoming resources	£1,335,196	£5,870,808	£1,206,096
Expenditure	£3,368,584	£2,012,677	£1,291,816
Operating Surplus / (deficit) for the year	(£2,020,973)	£3,865,168	(£85,720)
Consisting of:			
Restricted fund (deficit) / surplus	(£1,822,327)	£4,046,424	£14,286
Trading (deficit) / surplus after taxation	(£198,646)	(£181,256)	(£17,725)
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2020			
Tangible fixed assets	£401,451	£414,391	£421,368
Investments	£866,638	£840,911	£832,734
Current assets	£2,569,912	£4,536,341	£686,701
Current liabilities	£223,876	£156,545	£170,875
Net current assets	£2,346,036	£4,379,796	£515,826
Net assets	£3,614,125	£5,635,098	£1,769,928

Notes

- 1. This financial information does not constitute statutory accounts within the meaning of Section 394 of the Companies Act 2006
- 2. Copies of the full statutory accounts are available on request

Risk management, safeguarding and whistleblowing

The directors have assessed the major risks to which the group is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity and its trading subsidiary, and compliance with the regulators’ conditions of recognition for awarding organisations. The importance of effective risk management operates at all levels of the organisation.

The charity has safeguarding and whistleblowing policies in place which reflect the services it provides and the people it supports and employs. The charity takes its responsibilities in these areas extremely seriously and requires journalism education and training centres to have their own effective policies and procedures in place. Policies are reviewed in line with changes in policy or guidance from our regulators and other relevant bodies including the Charities Commission.

Strategic partners

The NCTJ works with journalism producers in every part of the industry. Our strategic partners play an especially important role, enabling our work, and benefitting from a close relationship with our activities. Strategic partners help us to innovate, and – by their generosity – build our capacity so that we have the necessary resources to make a difference in the areas where our help is needed most.

Some strategic partners make regular charitable donations to the NCTJ and the Journalism Diversity Fund;

others support the development of specific products and services – for instance by running regular bespoke courses or qualifications for their staff. Others make in-kind contributions to the NCTJ’s work, joining our boards and forums, hosting events, or judging awards.

Thanks to the direct and indirect support of our industry partners, the NCTJ is able to develop its role in a way that serves the needs of the industry.

We are always glad to hear from journalistic organisations which would be interested in becoming a strategic partner of the charity.

Current strategic partners:

Archant
Barnsley Chronicle
BBC
Bloomberg
Bullivant Media
Chronicle Publications
Congleton Chronicle
Daily Mail & General Trust/ Associated Newspapers
DC Thomson
The Enquirer Series
Evening Standard and Independent
Facebook
Financial Times
Google News Initiative
Henley & South Oxfordshire Standard
KM Group
JPIMedia

Maidenhead Advertiser
Mark Allen Group
Methodist Recorder
Midland News Association
Newbury Weekly News Group
Newsquest Media Group
NLA media access
Portfolio Publishing
PA Media
The Printing Charity
Reach PLC
Rotherham & South Yorkshire Advertiser
Shetland Times
Sky UK
Berkshire Media Group
Teesdale Mercury
Thomson Reuters

Our people

Trustees

CHAIRMAN: **Kim Fletcher**, partner, Brunswick Group
VICE-CHAIRMAN: **Laura Adams**, client editorial director, Archant
Gavin Allen, head of news output, BBC
Lynne Anderson, deputy CEO, News Media Association
Abu Bundu-Kamara, global diversity and inclusion lead, Boeing
Andy Cairns, former executive editor, Sky Sports News
Jeremy Clifford, editor-in-chief, JPIMedia
Alan Edmunds, group chief operating officer, Reach plc
Toby Granville, editorial director, Newsquest
Colm Murphy, head of media, film and journalism school, Ulster University
Jas Nijjar, former international finance director, Pearson Vue
Neil O'Brien, commercial director, NLA media access
John Ryley, head of Sky News
Abbie Scott, deputy managing editor, *Financial Times*
Jo Webster, deputy global editor for visuals, Reuters
Martin Wright, editor, *Shropshire Star*

Joanne Butcher, chief executive
Chris Dunham, company secretary

Staff

Nikki Akinola, diversity and inclusion co-ordinator
Joanne Butcher, chief executive
Chris Dunham, head of finance and IT
Kathryn Fladgate, project manager
Will Gore, head of partnerships and projects
Lyn Jones, head of qualifications
Sarah Kenny, marketing and communications manager
Rachel Manby, head of quality and assessment
Nicole Pottle, training co-ordinator
Alison Puttock, assessment manager
Emma Robinson, accreditation manager
Phoebe Rooney, examinations controller
Julie Stanford, examinations controller
Andy Summers, senior examinations controller
Henry Swarbrick, development manager

Lead consultants

Faith Lee, external quality assurance
Mark Spilsbury, research
Paul Watson, editorial

Accreditation board

CHAIRMAN: **Abbie Scott**, deputy managing editor, *Financial Times*
Karen Ballam, chief examiner, shorthand and further education representative

Maria Breslin, executive digital editor, Reach plc
Tim Dawson, president, National Union of Journalists
Graham Dudman, deputy managing editor, News Associates London
Ben Green, head of digital, *The Star*, Sheffield
Louise Hastings, managing editor, Sky News
Mike Hill, course director for MA News Journalism, Cardiff University
Stephanie Marshall, head of BBC West
Ian Reeves, director of learning and teaching, University of Kent

Joanne Butcher, chief executive
Rachel Manby, head of quality and assessment
Emma Robinson, accreditation manager

Journalism qualifications board

CHAIRMAN: **Laura Adams**, client editorial director, Archant
Amanda Ball, NCTJ principal examiner and chief examiner, public affairs
Karen Ballam, chief examiner, shorthand and further education representative
John Dilley, chief examiner, production journalism and practical magazine journalism
Vanessa Edwards, chief examiner, videojournalism for online
Mark Hanna, chief examiner, media law
Catherine Houlihan, chief examiner, broadcast journalism
Andy Martin, chief examiner, National Qualification in Journalism
Simon McEnnis, chief examiner, sports journalism
Rosalind McKenzie, education representative
Nick Nunn, chief examiner, essential journalism
Steve Phillips, chief examiner, press photography and photojournalism
James Porter, journalism training manager, news group partner, BBC Academy
David Rowell, industry representative
Chris Rushton, chief examiner, PR & communications
Laurie Tucker, industry and apprenticeship representative

Quality assurance and standards committee

CHAIRMAN: **Sean Dooley**
Michael Adkins, group editor London and Kent, Archant
Amanda Ball, NCTJ principal examiner
Sarah Cassidy, programme administrator journalism, University of Salford

Joanne Butcher, chief executive
Lyn Jones, head of qualifications
Rachel Manby, head of quality and assessment



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