

**National Council
for the
Training of Journalists**

**NCTJ
Level 3 End-Point Assessment for ST0105
Content Creator
Qualification Specification**

Qualification No: 610/2176/3
The Register of Regulated Qualifications

1. Rationale

The end-point assessment (EPA) for a content creator is a vocationally-related qualification that provides a holistic assessment of the core skills, knowledge and behaviours required to operate effectively as a competent content creator. This qualification was developed by a trailblazer group of employers representing a broad range of businesses, ranging from public, private and third sector employers. This may include charities, social media employers, digital agencies and broadcasters and publishers. The broad purpose of the occupation is to develop and create written and audio visual content that can be used across a variety of platforms and media. This may include social media, broadcast or in print.

2. Aims and objectives

The EPA aims to meet the needs of content creator apprentices and employers to equip apprentices with the knowledge, skills and behaviours to operate effectively as a content creator across a wide range of settings. The EPA is designed to assess the skills, knowledge and behaviours at the appropriate level for a content creator across a broad range of businesses.

3. Progression

The content creator apprenticeship standard may provide professional development to the level 5 journalist apprenticeship standard [here](#). It may also provide progression for content creators wanting to develop their roles within their organisation to a senior level.

4. Target groups and entry requirements

The minimum age for entry to any apprenticeship standard is 16 years. Individual employers will identify any relevant entry requirements in terms of previous qualifications, training, work experience or other criteria. Whilst any entry requirements will be a matter for individual employers, an apprentice will be expected to have achieved Level 2 English and maths prior to progressing to the end-point assessment (gateway) and completing the apprenticeship.

Apprentices must progress through 'gateway' to the EPA for the content creator standard. The gateway requirements for the EPA are:

- achieved English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules
- for the professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence, submit a portfolio of evidence

Full-time apprentices will typically spend 15 months on-programme (before the gateway) working towards the occupational standard, with a minimum of 20 per cent off-the-job training. All apprentices must spend a minimum of 12 months on-programme. Apprentices will typically have 3 months to complete the end-point assessment and pass the apprenticeship.

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

5. Fair access to assessment

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

6. Validity of the qualification

The NCTJ level 3 end-point assessment for ST0105 content creator is valid until 31 January 2026. We monitor the validity of this qualification ensuring that the qualification continues to meet the needs of apprentices and employers. Methods used to support this strategy include:

- monitoring outcomes from quality assurance observations on assessment methods
- monitoring outcomes from quality assurance standardisation activities i.e. marking and moderation
- review of malpractice and/or maladministration investigations
- review of complaints
- review of enquiries and appeals
- review of requests for reasonable adjustments and/or special considerations
- review of feedback from employers, training providers, apprentices and any other stakeholders
- consultation/survey activities with users
- assessment comparability of findings if and when applicable.

7. Resits and re-takes

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit or a re-take. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does. The apprentice's employer must agree that either a re-sit or re-take is an appropriate course of action. An apprentice who fails an assessment method, and therefore the EPA in the first instance, will only be required to re-sit or re-take the failed assessment method(s). Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to merit or from merit to distinction. Where any assessment method has to be re-sat or re-taken, the apprentice will be awarded a maximum EPA grade of pass, unless the NCTJ determines there are exceptional circumstances requiring a re-sit or re-take.

The timescales for a re-sit/re-take are agreed between the employer and the NCTJ. A re-sit is typically taken within two months of the EPA outcome notification. The timescale for a re-take is dependent on how much re-training is required and is typically taken within three months of the EPA outcome notification. All assessment methods must be taken within a three-month period otherwise the entire EPA will need to be re-sat/re-taken.

8. Issue of results

Results will normally be issued within five weeks of completion of all assessments to allow for marking, moderation and quality assurance procedures. This time is necessary to ensure that all results are properly standardised and checked by the NCTJ.

9. Language and bias

Every effort has been made to ensure that the EPA procedures, assessments and associated mark schemes and any other materials are free from any form of bias and refer to explicit content.

10. Confidentiality

In order to ensure that the end-point assessment 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.

11. Apprentice registrations

Each apprentice that registers with the NCTJ is uniquely identified by a Unique Reference Number (URN) generated by the NCTJ's Creatio database of learner records. Training

providers or employers enrolling apprentices to take an NCTJ qualification are responsible for confirming the identity of the apprentice when they are enrolled.

12. Gateway requirements

The EPA period should only start, and the EPA be arranged, once the employer is satisfied that the apprentice is deemed to be consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard and all of the pre-requisite gateway requirements for EPA have been met and can be evidenced to the NCTJ. As a gateway requirement, and prior to taking the EPA, apprentices must achieve English and mathematics at level 2. Apprentices must also submit a portfolio of evidence at gateway and the NCTJ will confirm that the apprentice has completed a project from which they can produce an evaluative report and additional/new content.

Portfolio requirements

Apprentices must compile a portfolio of evidence during the on-programme period of the apprenticeship. The portfolio of evidence is submitted to the EPAO at the gateway. It is not directly assessed, but underpins the professional discussion and therefore it is not be marked:

- the portfolio will typically contain 10 discrete pieces of evidence
- it must contain evidence related to the KSBs that will be assessed by the professional discussion
- evidence must be mapped against the KSBs
- evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one KSB
- evidence sources may include:
 - content created or showreels;
 - work products;
 - contribution or response to brief;
 - safety documentation;
 - company policies and procedures as appropriate to the activities;
 - reference materials & research undertaken;
 - workplace documentation/records, for example workplace policies/procedures, records;
 - colleague feedback/witness statements.

This is not a definitive list; other evidence sources are possible. It should not include reflective accounts or any methods of self-assessment. Employer contributions should focus on direct observation of performance (for example colleague feedback/statements) rather than opinions. The evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice and must contain a statement from the employer and apprentice confirming this.

Apprentices without English and mathematics at level 2 must achieve level 2 prior to taking their EPA. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. British Sign Language (BSL) qualifications are an alternative to English qualifications for those who have BSL as their primary language.

The EPA must be completed within an EPA period lasting typically 3 months, after the EPA gateway.

13. Knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs)

The EPA will holistically assess the knowledge, skills and behaviours as listed in the published content creator apprenticeship standard ST0105 and confirm the apprentice has achieved competence as a journalist. See link on page 6 below.

14. Methods of assessment

The EPA consists of two discrete assessment methods:

AM 1: Evaluative report and presentation of additional/new content with questions

This assessment method includes two components:

1. an evaluative report based on a project or campaign the apprentice has contributed to, and developed content for, in the last six months
2. presentation of additional/new content with questions

The apprentice will produce an evaluative report based on the evaluation of a project or campaign that the apprentice has contributed to, and developed content for, in the last six months leading to gateway. The apprentice may have worked as part of a team to complete the pre gateway project which could include technical, internal or external support. However, the evaluative report output must be the apprentice's own work and reflective of their own role and contribution.

The apprentice must start the evaluative report after the gateway. They must complete and submit the report to the NCTJ within four weeks of the start of the EPA period. The employer must ensure the apprentice has the time and resources, within this period, to plan and complete their evaluative report. The apprentice must complete their evaluative report and the production of its components unaided. The apprentice and their employer must confirm that the evaluative report and additional/new content is the apprentice's own work when it is submitted.

The report must include at least:

- an introduction
- analysis of the performance of a campaign against the original brief and branding requirements.
- data or evidence used as a base for future improvements. This should include consideration of user experience, audience segmentation, the use of platforms, and budget requirements.
- a summary of findings including lessons learnt.
- appendices which include complete customer journey mapping, along with a copy of the original brief.

The project report has a word count of 1500 words. A tolerance of 10% above or below the word count is allowed at the apprentice's discretion. Appendices, references and diagrams are not included in this total. The project report must map, in an appendix, how it evidences the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

In the presentation with questions the apprentice will present their additional/new content to the independent assessor. As part of the presentation, the apprentice will:

- develop new content
- pitch their recommendations and explain the expected impact of the new content
- justify how they considered the most appropriate delivery platform
- reference the evidence used to inform the recommendations
- produce and present a mood board or other visual aid

- produce and present planning documents such as a storyboard and outline script ideas to support content production
- describe the lessons learnt.

The presentation and questions must last 30 minutes. This will typically include a presentation of 15 minutes and questioning lasting 15 minutes. The independent assessor will ask a minimum of five questions following the presentation. The apprentice must prepare and submit their presentation speaker notes and supporting materials to the NCTJ at the same time as the report; within four weeks of the start of the EPA period.

The evidence from the evaluative report, presentation of additional/new content and questioning will be assessed holistically. Apprentices will be awarded a grade for this assessment: Fail / Pass / Distinction

AM 2: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

A professional discussion is a two-way discussion which involves both the independent assessor and the apprentice actively listening and participating in a formal conversation. It gives the apprentice the opportunity to make detailed and proactive contributions to confirm their competency across the KSBs mapped to this method.

It enables synoptic assessment of knowledge, skills and behaviours. This method also helps to assess the apprentice's in-depth understanding of their work and covers aspects of the occupation that are difficult to observe and take place in restricted and confidential settings. It allows the assessor to robustly evaluate their knowledge, skills and behaviours, underpinned by the apprentice's portfolio. The professional discussion will last for 60 minutes and the independent assessor will ask at least seven questions. The topics and themes that will be covered are:

- regulatory requirements
- written content
- audio-visual content
- content management
- planning
- collaboration
- continuous professional development (CPD)

Apprentices will be awarded a grade for this assessment: Fail / Pass / Distinction

15. Overall grading

Performance in the EPA will determine the overall apprenticeship standard grade of:

- Fail
- Pass
- Merit
- Distinction

Both assessment methods are weighted equally in their contribution to the overall EPA grade. All EPA methods must be passed for the EPA to be passed overall. Apprentices must gain a distinction in both assessment methods to gain a distinction overall.

Grades from individual assessment methods will be combined in the following way to determine the grade of the EPA as a whole:

Assessment method 1 Journalism project	Assessment method 2 Professional discussion	Overall grading
Fail	Any grade	Fail
Any grade	Fail	Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Merit
Pass	Distinction	Merit
Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

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view the published apprenticeship standard for a content creator and accompanying assessment plan here:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/content-creator-v1-1>

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