

**National Council for the  
Training of Journalists**

**NCTJ Level 7  
Leadership and Management for  
Journalists  
Qualification Specification**

Qualification No: 610/4145/2

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

## **1. Rationale**

The Level 7 Leadership and Management for Journalists qualification is designed for current and future editorial executives. The development of this qualification included consultation with industry representatives and the award is recognised by employers as an industry standard for editorial managers and executives.

## **2. Aims and objectives**

The qualification aims to equip learners with the knowledge and skills required across the media industry to develop the quality of leadership and management skills for journalists, creating effective editorial executives with the ability to better contribute towards strategic and commercial business goals. Leading media employers were consulted on the structure and content of the qualification.

## **3. Progression**

Gaining this higher-level qualification provides continuing professional development for an editorial executive, developing their knowledge and skills to progress to a more senior management level within the media industry.

## **4. Target groups and entry details**

This syllabus provides opportunities for continuing professional development for editorial executives who are engaged in careers managing and leading professional journalists. To be eligible to sit the qualification, it is recommended that learners have completed the NCTJ's senior journalist qualification, the Level 6 National Qualification in Journalism. The NQJ can be entered for after eighteen months employment within the industry (or a minimum twelve months in exceptional circumstances). Sector specific and/or individual employer requirements may also apply.

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

## **5. Total Qualification Time**

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

TQT is made up of two components:

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

This syllabus incorporates a programme of study that includes an estimated 165 hours guided learning (*the estimated minimum time an average learner may expect to spend under direct instruction or supervision of a tutor or trainer*).

An average learner can also reasonably expect to spend an estimated 195 hours in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by, but not under direct supervision of a tutor, trainer or other appropriate training provider.

The total qualification time an average learner can expect to take to complete the qualification is 360 hours.

## 6. Assessment

There are two online assessments: leadership and management for journalists' exam and completion of a portfolio of evidence. To gain the qualification, learners must achieve a minimum 60 per cent mark for each assessment. The final percentages in each section will be aggregated and divided by two to establish an overall percentage. Any half mark will be rounded up. An overall grade will be awarded: Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Assessment criteria, how marks are awarded and grade descriptors on which learners' levels of attainment will be differentiated are described in the programme of study which will be read by the learner alongside this specification. The grade descriptors for each assessment clearly specify the standard that the learner is expected to meet in order to demonstrate that the learning outcomes have been achieved. The assessments in this qualification follows the NCTJ's robust quality assurance processes and procedures as per the requirements for a regulated qualification according to the regulators' conditions of recognition.

## 7. Overall grading and specified levels of attainment

An overall grade of Pass, Merit or Distinction will be awarded. Learners must achieve a minimum of 60 marks in each of the assessments to gain a Pass. Final marks in each section will be expressed as a percentage. The final percentages in each section will be aggregated and divided by two to establish an overall percentage. Any half mark will be rounded up.

The grading scale used to signify performance differentiation within the qualification is Pass, Merit or Distinction which will be awarded as an overall grade. Grades are awarded for Level 7 Leadership and Management for Journalists based on the following overall percentage marks achieved:

70+	per cent	-	Distinction
65-69	per cent	-	Merit
60-64	per cent	-	Pass

## 8. Availability of examinations and assessments

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

## 9. Duration of examination

The exam is structured so that the duration provides opportunities for all learners to demonstrate achievement within a set time-frame. Time allowed for the exam is 2 hours and 30 minutes.

## 10. Fair access to assessment

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

## 11. Validity of syllabus

The general syllabus for this qualification is valid until 31 March 2027. We monitor the validity of this qualification annually ensuring that the qualification continues to meet the needs of learners and employers. Methods used to support this strategy may include:

- Monitoring outcomes from quality assurance visits to centres
- 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 centres, employers, learners and any other stakeholders
- Consultation/survey activities with users
- Review of progression details
- Review of exam questions and performance
- Assessment comparability of findings if and when applicable.

## **12. Repeats of examinations**

Where a learner is not able to reach the minimum standard in each of the assessments, application for re-examination of a particular assessment is permitted i.e. if a learner fails to achieve 60 marks in one of the assessments, they will only need to re-sit that section.

## **13. Issue of results**

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

## **14. Language and bias**

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

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

## **15. Confidentiality**

In order to ensure that the qualification reflects an accurate measure of attainment, the NCTJ will take all reasonable steps to ensure that such confidentiality is maintained. Where any breach of such confidentiality (including through the loss or theft of assessment materials) is either suspected by the NCTJ or alleged by any other person, the NCTJ will investigate that breach.

## **16. Learner registrations**

Each learner that registers for this qualification is uniquely identified by a Unique Reference Number (URN) generated by the NCTJ's database of learner records. Training providers enrolling a learner to take an NCTJ qualification are responsible for confirming the identity of the learner when they are enrolled. Learners registered with training providers may be given an Individual Learner Record (ILR) for which the NCTJ supplies the relevant data to the Learning Records Service.

## **17. Qualification specification**

This qualification is designed to examine all-round competence in a range of knowledge and skills at a level appropriate to a editorial executive/manager who has completed a formative training programme. It aims to enhance and improve the quality of leadership and management across the media industry. Each assessment in the Level 7 Leadership and Management for Journalists has a specific purpose:

### **Leadership and Management for Journalists exam**

This is an online exam in which learners must demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge on the following subject areas: leading the team and communication; change management; strategy; innovation and creativity; and workplace wellbeing.

### **Portfolio of evidence**

The object of the portfolio is to ensure that a learner can demonstrate they have gained sufficient experience to complete a series of assignments covering seven categories and subsequently demonstrate their leadership qualities and ability to operate effectively in a management position.

## **18. Grade descriptors**

### **Distinction**

#### **70+ per cent**

The learner has consistently reached exacting standards to meet the learning outcomes. Sophisticated and expert theoretical and technical knowledge has been demonstrated in practical and complex contexts. Consistently excellent at analysing, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, concepts and ideas. Shows outstanding awareness of the nature and scope of the area of study or work. Demonstrates excellent understanding of different perspectives, approaches and schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.

### **Merit**

#### **65-69 per cent**

The learner has reached good standards to meet the learning outcomes. A very good grasp of theoretical and technical knowledge has been demonstrated in practical and complex contexts. Consistently good at analysing, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, concepts and ideas. Shows good awareness of the nature and scope of the area of study or work. Demonstrates good understanding of different perspectives, approaches and schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.

### **Pass**

#### **60-64 per cent**

The learner has met the learning outcomes. A satisfactory grasp of theoretical and technical knowledge has been demonstrated in practical and complex contexts. Consistently satisfactory at analysing, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, concepts and ideas. Shows satisfactory awareness of the nature and scope of the area of study or work. Demonstrates an understanding of different perspectives, approaches and schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.

### **Fail**

#### **0-59 per cent**

The learner has not met all the learning outcomes. Demonstrates limited, poor or no relevant practical, theoretical and technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to find ways forward in broadly defined, complex contexts. Demonstrates limited, poor or no relevant knowledge or ability at analysing, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, concepts and ideas. Shows limited, poor or no relevant awareness of the nature and scope of the area of study or work. Demonstrates limited, poor or no relevant understanding of different perspectives, approaches and schools of thought and the reasoning behind them.