

NCTJ Data retention policy

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1. Purpose

This policy ensures that the NCTJ collects, stores, and disposes of data securely and in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. It protects personal information while maintaining essential records for qualifications and assessments.

The NCTJ takes the privacy of our customers seriously and we do not collect personally identifying information from learners or centres except when it is specifically provided, for example for the delivery of examinations and assessments and the issuing of certificates.

Appropriate retention of data when it is specifically provided is necessary for our operational performance and in some cases is required to fulfil statutory or other regulatory requirements. This policy is aimed for use by NCTJ staff and details the systems and processes the NCTJ has in place for the preservation and timely disposal of data, in line with our awarding body requirements and relevant legislation.

2. Scope

Applies to NCTJ staff, learners, centres, training providers, and external agencies involved in:

- The collection, storage, and use of personal and assessment data.
- The retention and disposal of learner records, results, and certificates.

3. Definitions

Learners: Encompasses students, apprentices, or distance learners, at any stage of their journalism training.

Centres: Encompasses training providers, HEIs, FE colleges and commercial centres.

4. Policy statements

The NCTJ will retain information relating to examinations and qualifications, such as a learner's exam record, results and certification history, unless an individual specifically asks us to delete it. Other personal information and exam data will be deleted or archived from our systems and records once there is no longer a requirement or useful purpose for keeping it.

The NCTJ takes all reasonable steps to protect the information provided to us from theft, alteration or unauthorised inspection and has agreements with our data processors that they comply with all GDPR security principles.

The NCTJ may disclose personal information that an individual has provided to us to other parties where this information is required to fulfil a task or activity in relation to the progression of a qualification or programme of study that is being undertaken. This may include colleges, universities, private learning providers, their employees and other agencies.

The NCTJ may disclose personal information, achievement data and statistical information to the Learning Records Service.

5. Procedures

5.1 Data storage - Electronic records storage

All electronic documents, emails, online assessment records and multimedia records must be stored within the appropriate repository (shown below) to ensure that applicable security, backup, retention and disposal controls can be applied. The archive and disposal policy for each record type is also shown below. The individual who creates a document/online record is responsible for ensuring that it is stored in the appropriate location.

Record type	Repository	Archive and disposal policy
Learner registrations, exam bookings, results, e-certificates and information related to reasonable adjustment, special consideration and appeal requests (including application forms and evidence)	Creatio database	Retained indefinitely, unless learner invokes the right to be forgotten. All documents relating to RA/SC and appeal requests are archived in Creatio once processed and can only be accessed securely by the centre that submitted the request, or staff at the NCTJ with the relevant permissions
Exam scripts for online exams	Cirrus, exams team account	Disposed of six years after the exam takes place (retained for longer to be used for statistical analysis)
E-portfolio, e-logbook and end-point assessment documentation submissions	Tomango, NCTJ account	Archived following issue of results; disposed of for students who are archived

Record type	Repository	Archive and disposal policy
		and started their course over three years ago
CFJ assessment submissions	Journalism Skills Academy (e-learning platform) on Moodle and hosted by Skillset	Automatically archived following issue of results; retained indefinitely as long as the learner has an active JSA account
Proctorio recordings for remote exams proctored in Cirrus	Cirrus, exams team account	Automatically disposed of six months after the exam takes place
Video recordings for remote assessments delivered via Zoom	Dropbox, NCTJ private account	Disposed of one year after the assessment takes place
Multimedia for exams delivery (exam footage, exam scripts for VJ, ESJ, BJ and PMJ submissions)	Dropbox, NCTJ private account	Disposed of one year after the exam/assessment takes place
Electronic documents related to accreditation and assessment delivery, including centre documented data, IQA records, EQA reports, spot check feedback etc.	NCTJ local server and synchronized cloud data drive	Archived if centre no longer active; disposed of three years from the end of the year in which the centre ceased to be active
Emails	Held and retained on Google servers	It is the responsibility of individual NCTJ staff to review, at least annually, the emails stored in their accounts and delete any that no longer have a relevant business need, purpose or regulatory requirement

5.2 Data storage - Physical records storage

Certificates must be stored when not in use in the designated cupboards, filing cabinets and pedestals (desk drawers) that have been provided by the NCTJ. All storage units that contain personal and confidential data records must be locked at the end of the working day.

Physical CFJ submissions from learners on PET courses must be stored securely in the second floor storage area of the NCTJ office and automatically disposed of by the NCTJ team (overseen by the head of awarding) **one year** after the assessment takes place.

6. Review arrangements

The NCTJ will review this policy annually as part of the NCTJ's annual self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary, in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback.

If you would like to feedback any views, please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed in September 2025.

7. Contact us

Any queries in relation to the contents of this policy, please contact our head of awarding.

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