

NCTJ Safeguarding policy

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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the NCTJ's commitment to safeguarding, ensuring a safe and trusted environment for all individuals involved in its activities, including learners, staff, representatives, and centres.

This policy is designed to help safeguard the people using the services offered by the NCTJ. They also help ensure that the NCTJ and our centres take positive action in response to safeguarding concerns.

This document sets out the procedure that must be followed if a person wishes to raise a safeguarding issue with the NCTJ.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- NCTJ staff and representatives: All staff and representatives involved in the development, delivery, and support of NCTJ qualifications and services.
- Learners: Individuals undertaking NCTJ qualifications, units, or end-point assessments.
- Centres: Organisations approved to deliver NCTJ qualifications and end-point assessments.

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.
- Safeguarding: Protecting individuals from harm, including physical, emotional, or any form of exploitation.
- Vulnerable adults: Individuals aged 18 or over who may need special care, support, or protection.

4. Policy statements

4.1 Principles

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

Prevention and risk management: Implementing measures to minimize risks.

Equality and inclusion: Ensuring safeguarding procedures are fair and non-discriminatory in accordance with equality legislation.

Transparency: Clear reporting and response procedures for safeguarding concerns.

Training: Regular training for staff, representatives, and centres to promote awareness and compliance.

Collaboration: Working with centres to ensure effective safeguarding practices.

4.2 NCTJ commitment to safeguarding

The NCTJ is committed to creating a safe environment and taking action to protect individuals from harm. The NCTJ takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. In line with advice from the Charity Commission, we agree that safeguarding must be a priority for all charities, not just those working with groups traditionally considered ‘at risk’.

Safeguarding responsibilities extend beyond preventing physical abuse to include protecting people from harm generally, including neglect, emotional abuse, exploitation, radicalisation, terrorism, extremism, and the consequences of the misuse of personal data..

This policy is based on the standards of safeguarding that the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) have adopted, and these standards reflect current government and Charity Commission guidance, ensuring best practices in safeguarding.

We have fostered an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding, so that it is safe for those affected to come forward and report incidents and concerns with the assurance they will be handled sensitively and properly.

There are normally three key areas in which safeguarding issues may be raised in relation to our work:

- The conduct of NCTJ permanent staff or representatives towards learners whether in person or online
- The appropriateness of our products and services
- Disclosure of information regarding personal welfare, or the welfare of one of their peers, to the permanent staff or representative of the NCTJ, whether directly or through written responses or on social media.

4.3 Safeguarding and journalism

Journalists play a vital role in democracies by providing information in the public interest. It is crucial to protect their right to work safely, free from harassment, violence, or threats, to uphold freedom of the press and expression.

Aspiring journalists must understand that the profession involves facing challenging situations. Educators, trainers, and employers should prepare and support them for these realities. The NCTJ helps uphold training standards and shares best practices.

4.4 Regulated activity: children and vulnerable adults

NCTJ learners have normally reached the age of 18 when they come into contact with the NCTJ and our representatives, and we therefore do not normally work with children.

We are aware that we may come into contact with vulnerable adults, but this will be very infrequent, and our work is not within the definition of 'regulated activity'.

4.5 Roles and responsibilities

- NCTJ: Develops and enforces safeguarding policies, trains staff and representatives, and monitors safeguarding compliance. We record and monitor safeguarding issues and ensure that appropriate action is taken.
- NCTJ centres: Hold primary responsibility for learners' welfare and are required to have effective safeguarding policies and meet the NCTJ's performance standards for journalism training. Centres must always ensure that a responsible adult accompanies NCTJ staff and representatives, at all times.
- NCTJ staff and representatives: Uphold safeguarding standards and report concerns appropriately. NCTJ staff know should not engage in 'regulated activity' as they must not be left unaccompanied with learners who are children and vulnerable adults. The NCTJ has codes of behaviour that set out acceptable standards of behaviour and good practice for staff and representatives.
- Safeguarding officer: Oversees safeguarding implementation and responds to reported concerns. NCTJ's safeguarding officer is the head of awarding.

5. Procedures

5.1 Reporting concerns

Safeguarding issues should be reported to the NCTJ safeguarding officer with as much information as possible, as soon as possible. The information provided should include:

- Who is submitting the safeguarding issue and their relationship to the individual
- Where and when it happened

- Who was involved
- Any contact details of the person involved e.g. name, address, telephone number
- What action, if any, has already been taken.

The NCTJ will acknowledge your issue within 1 working day.

If studying at a centre, learners should raise their concern directly with the centre as they should have a safeguarding policy in place. If for any reason you feel unable to do this, please contact the NCTJ safeguarding officer to discuss your situation.

5.2 Response and investigation

Concerns about the conduct of permanent NCTJ staff are investigated in line with disciplinary procedures.

Concerns about the conduct of NCTJ representatives will also be formally investigated and dealt with in line with the terms and conditions of their third party agreements with us.

Concerns not relating to the conduct of a member of permanent staff or representative are referred to the appropriate protection authority for resolution, with follow-up from the NCTJ.

5.3 Complaints

Dissatisfaction with how safeguarding issues are handled can be addressed through the NCTJ complaints procedure.

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 2026.

7. Contact us

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

Telephone: 01799 544014

Email: info@nctj.com