

Centre withdrawal policy and procedure for NCTJ-accredited courses

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the interests of learners are protected in the case of withdrawal of an NCTJ-accredited course.

This document sets out the policy and procedure that must be followed if a centre wishes to withdraw an NCTJ-accredited course or if the NCTJ withdraws accreditation for an NCTJ-accredited course.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all centres.

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

4.1 NCTJ's withdrawal of an NCTJ-accredited course

A decision to withdraw accreditation for an NCTJ-accredited course may be taken as part of the NCTJ's application of its sanctions policy and procedure, and the arrangements set out in the accreditation agreement signed by centres.

4.2 Centre withdrawal of an NCTJ-accredited course

When a centre wishes to no longer offer an NCTJ-accredited course, they should provide the NCTJ with a minimum eight weeks' notice and follow the withdrawal procedure outlined below.

In some instances, centres may cease to operate due to financial circumstances and may have no opportunity to provide the NCTJ with due notice. In such circumstances the NCTJ should be notified immediately by the centre and the withdrawal process will be initiated.

4.3 Roles and responsibilities

NCTJ centres:

- Ensure staff are aware of this policy
- Complete the centre withdrawal notice when required

NCTJ staff: Guide centres through the withdrawal process

NCTJ head of awarding: Oversees the withdrawal process and ensures compliance with this policy.

5. Procedures

5.1 Centres

If a centre has requested to withdraw an NCTJ-accredited course, then the centre will be required to complete sections 1 and 2 of the centre withdrawal notice for NCTJ-accredited courses.

Section 1 of the withdrawal notice requires:

- centre name
- course title(s)
- proposed withdrawal date
- last date for certification
- number of registered learners
- names of existing learners registered on the course(s) that would be affected by the withdrawal.

Section 2 of the withdrawal process requires a rationale for the withdrawal and details of the centre's plans to support learners to ensure their interests are protected.

The person completing the form will also be required to complete the declaration at the end of the document.

The centre should also ensure:

- any outstanding NCTJ invoices are paid immediately
- they inform all stakeholders that course accreditation has been withdrawn
- they remove the NCTJ logo and all references to NCTJ from all marketing materials for the course.

5.2 What the NCTJ will do next

Once the centre has returned the 'centre withdrawal notice for NCTJ-accredited courses' form and taken all actions required, the NCTJ will process the withdrawal request.

The NCTJ will work with the centre to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to protect the interests of any learners affected by the withdrawal of an NCTJ-accredited course. For example:

- we will work with the centre and/or any learners affected by the withdrawal to transfer them – where possible and feasible – to another centre delivering an NCTJ-accredited course to enable them to continue their studies and to complete their NCTJ qualification
- we will ensure that all learners impacted by the course withdrawal have not been disadvantaged and the centre can support those who wish to complete the NCTJ qualification if that is what they expected when signing up for the course
- if no alternative centres are available/suitable for any learners affected by the withdrawal, and/or the learners do not wish to carry on with the qualification(s), we will seek to ensure the learners are certificated for any credit they have achieved to date in accordance with the requirements of the associated qualification specification(s).
- update the centre's records, upon activation of the withdrawal, to reflect the fact the centre no longer has the course accredited.

At all times the NCTJ will seek to ensure that all parties affected by the withdrawal are kept appropriately informed throughout.

6. Regulatory references

UK regulators require all awarding organisations to establish and maintain their compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. As part of this process, policies that relate to NCTJ's status as an awarding organisation will reference any conditions and criteria that they address.

This policy addresses the following regulatory criteria and conditions:

Regulator	Regulatory document	Conditions of Recognition
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	C1; C2
CCEA	General Conditions of Recognition	C1; C2
Qualifications Wales	Standard Conditions of Recognition	C1; C2

7. 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 2027.

8. Contact us

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

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