

DO YOU WANT TO BE A JOURNALIST?

YOUR GUIDE TO GETTING INTO ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING CAREERS AROUND.

WHAT'S INSIDE:

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Nadine White tells us how it felt to expose one of the biggest stories of the year

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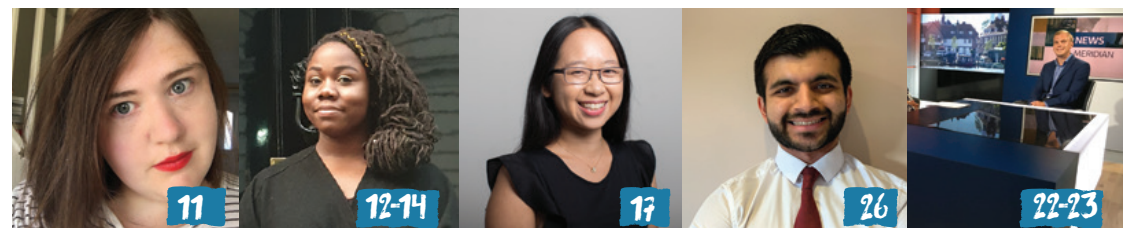
Head to
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to find out more
about the JDF

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INTRODUCTION

The world is full of stories waiting to be told and we need you to tell them!

The role of a journalist has never been more important. We need news organisations to provide the facts that give context and help us understand the difference between truth and lies. But we also need the excitement of sports and fashion journalism to entertain us.

Whatever types of stories you want to tell, at the *Financial Times* we believe that journalism is the most exciting and rewarding job you can have. We are looking for people who are curious about the world, and who have integrity and ambition. We are proud to work with the National Council for the Training of Journalists, and help underline the importance of gold standard journalism training in our industry.

We want students from all backgrounds regardless of ethnicity, religion and sexuality to feel welcome in our newsrooms and have successful journalism careers. The Journalism Diversity Fund is managed by the NCTJ and works to support a diverse range of students, enabling them to get access to the training they need.

This guide is intended to give you an idea of the jobs available in journalism now and inspire you to make journalism your career. The information contained here should help you decide which is the best course for you. Whatever choice you make, all of the NCTJ courses are intended to equip you with the skills you need to begin an exciting and successful career in journalism.



ALL OF THE JOURNALISTS AND STAFF AT THE FT ENCOURAGE YOU TO STUDY HARD AND JOIN US IN TELLING THE STORIES THAT THE WORLD NEEDS TO KNOW. GOOD LUCK!

Abbie Scott
Deputy managing editor,
Financial Times

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WHAT MAKES A GOOD JOURNALIST?

Are you thinking of a career in journalism but wonder whether the job is the right fit?

HERE'S A LIST OF ATTRIBUTES THAT OFTEN MAKE A GOOD JOURNALIST. PERHAPS THEY SOUND LIKE YOU?

1. CURIOSITY

"Curiosity killed the cat, but a lack of curiosity killed the reporter" says the proverb.

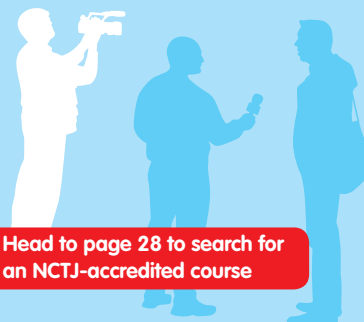
Are you interested in the world around you and holding people to account? Does investigating stories and getting answers about the unknown pique your interest? If you don't understand something, do you ask questions until you do? Every day, journalists who are driven by simple curiosity unearth stories that are interesting, informative and entertaining.

With the increase in fake news, it's crucial to challenge the facts, too. As a curious journalist, you will always be willing to find out more, to dig deeper and ask questions that haven't been asked yet.

FAKE NEWS

2. BEING A PEOPLE PERSON

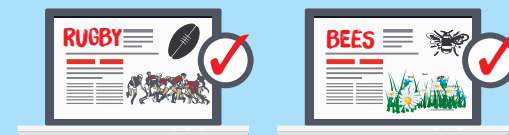
Would you like to spend your day talking to people and learning their stories? Do you enjoy getting to know new people? Are you good at keeping people at ease? Then journalism could be the career for you. Being a chatty and natural conversationalist is not something that you can learn in a classroom but is a crucial skill as a reporter.



Head to page 28 to search for an NCTJ-accredited course

3. PASSION

Do you have a passion for a particular subject? Maybe you're into a specific sport, or perhaps you care strongly about the environment? Having that passion for your chosen subject gives you a niche, and means that you may have contacts in that field and would want to write about it. Editors love it when you bring stories to the table. Your news outlet will be that much richer with stories you have sourced and have an interest in.



4. A HUNGER FOR NEWS

As a journalist, you will be expected to keep your finger on the pulse of what's going on nationally and locally. An interest in the world around you and the latest events stands you in good stead as a journalist, helping you to come up with timely ideas for stories.



5. A DESIRE TO LEARN

A flair for writing or technical prowess doesn't come naturally to everybody.

But that's where the NCTJ comes in. Studying on an NCTJ-accredited course helps you hone those skills and learn new techniques to become a journalist performing at the industry standard.



DIFFERENT AREAS OF JOURNALISM

As a trained journalist, there are lots of different journalism jobs you can do. Whether sport is your passion or you're a natural presenter, there are roles to suit all interests – not all of them in traditional fields.



RADIO

"It's a lot of music, a lot of talk, a lot of guests and a lot of fun."

That is how award-winning journalist and presenter Rakeem Hyatt describes his BBC West Midlands radio show *Second City Social*.

"As it's a local station, it's very hands-on. I bring in lots of ideas and guests and do an hour of group chat, which is a chance to bring in regular listeners of the show. It's full of positivity and games.

"We also deal with topical issues at the beginning of the show, and have touched on subjects such as knife crime. It goes from dark to light."

After studying journalism at university, Rakeem spent time as a runner for the BBC, getting experience on community radio and producing his own content on podcasts.

He secured his job at BBC West Midlands after appearing as a guest on an evening show, showing his passion by bringing in new ideas and shadowing presenters.

As well as his radio presenting Rakeem works as a community news reporter at BirminghamLive, writing about ethnic minority communities in Birmingham and giving a voice to those who are often under-represented. He won the Reporting Communities award at the Regional Press Awards 2020.

Rakeem said: "It's great to be one of these community reporters who are bringing something new and needed to the newsroom. It's amazing to be able to change people's lives and share the stories of people who are unable to do it themselves."



FASHION JOURNALISM

Roseanne Bradley spends her days writing about stylish products for Harrods.com.

The 24-year-old from Derby graduated from the BA Journalism course at the University of Sunderland in 2017 and did internships at *Harper's Bazaar*, *Cosmo* and *Elle*.

Describing her typical working day, she said: "I work in a photography studio and each day there are items to be shot on models, or on flatlays or mannequins. I then write copy to match the images.

"I can cover about 45 products a day – and it's not all fashion. Today I am writing about fancy cutlery sets, perfume and pyjamas. It keeps you on your toes!"

Roseanne credits her NCTJ training and her time as editor of the university's *Fashion North* magazine for helping to get her to where she is today.

"I learnt so much and found all the modules really interesting, especially videojournalism and media law. It's really important to know your media law, as we have quite a lot of products that have specific copyright issues."

Giving her advice to aspiring fashion journalists, Roseanne highlighted the value of work experience: "It's hard to imagine how a magazine works if you haven't been there. And you can never start applying too early.

"Also, explore your ways of writing if there's an opportunity at a school or college magazine or on blog posts. Finding your own tone of voice is key."



PODCASTING

Kayleigh Brookfield is a video editor for the Express and produces two weekly podcasts.

The 23-year-old, who graduated from the BA Multimedia Journalism course at the University of Bournemouth in 2018, started shifts at the national newspaper after she was approached on LinkedIn. That led to a permanent job on the video team.

Over the last year, she has also been working on new podcasts – *Brexit: The Final Countdown*, and *Netflixd* – researching topics, interviewing guests and producing each episode.

She said: "On the Brexit podcast, we get different guests on every week depending on what the news agenda is, such as MPs, economists or campaigners.

"The Netflix podcast is more relaxed, more conversational and targeted towards a much younger audience. We generally see what Netflix show is trending that week and our TV reporters discuss the themes, characters and their thoughts on the show. It's much more interactive on social media too.

"I find it really exciting, because it's something different and you can have a podcast about anything.

"There is a lot of potential to expand. It's a new element in the industry."

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'BEING A HEALTH REPORTER DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC THRUST ME INTO THE SPOTLIGHT'

Erin Lyons



When the coronavirus pandemic hit the UK, Erin Lyons' role as a health reporter for the *Oxford Mail* took on even greater significance.

Erin achieved the gold standard Diploma in Journalism on the MA/PgDip Journalism course at the University of Sheffield and gained the senior level National Qualification in Journalism (NQJ) in 2017.

As the coronavirus pandemic took hold in the UK, almost every story in the newsroom suddenly related to my role, which I'd only taken on in 2019.

Keeping sight of how the virus is affecting local people and their experiences has been particularly important.

After all, my job has always been about giving a voice to people's concerns and holding health organisations at every level to account.

At the height of the crisis I was able to ask a question at the national daily press briefing about an Oxford hospital worker who died of coronavirus after raising concerns he didn't have access to any PPE.

It happened to be at the height of the Dominic Cummings scandal, and at the last minute it was confirmed that Boris Johnson would be taking the briefing for the first time in weeks.

While I knew the national reporters would be asking about the actions of the Prime Minister's chief aide, I wanted to bring it back to an Oxford doctor who had been in the same position as Mr Cummings but followed what he saw as clear guidance to stay at home.

For me it got to the heart of the anger many in Oxfordshire and beyond felt over what had happened.

I hope one of the positives to come out of the lockdown is the regular presence of local reporters – who speak to their communities every day – at national press conferences, to ask tough and insightful questions on behalf of their readers.



'THE PRINCIPLE OF SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER FAR OUTWEIGHED THE FEAR'



We caught up with former Journalism Diversity Fund recipient Nadine White, who now works at HuffPost UK and worked on one of the biggest investigative stories of 2019.

Tell us about your career to date.

I've been a news reporter at HuffPost UK for two years now, covering current affairs, race and social issues. Prior to that, I was a part-time news journalist at *The Voice* – Britain's longest running Black newspaper. At the same time, I was finishing university, where I read English literature, and then doing my NCTJ training at News Associates, London.

My entry into journalism actually started with entertainment reporting for a community publication called *Vision Newspaper*. London is a hub of talent with lots of cultural, creative activities taking place, so I was never short of events and music to write about.

Why did you want to become a journalist, and where does your passion come from?

I'd been painfully aware of the lack of diverse representation in news for as long as I can remember. I grew up in Brixton, south London, which was one of London's most socially disenfranchised areas.

Watching the TV bulletins, I rarely saw reporters or anchors who looked like me. Plus, the perspectives being told in the news media didn't mirror my own or those who came from areas that I did. It left me feeling othered and I always knew this was a huge problem because we live in a diverse, multicultural society...so news should reflect that.

I DECIDED TO VENTURE INTO JOURNALISM TO HELP BE THE CHANGE I WANTED TO SEE. BUT MY PASSION FOR JOURNALISM HAS NEVER BEEN JUST FOR ME; IT'S VERY MUCH FOR COMMUNITIES LIKE MINE – AND EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE. THAT'S THE KEY REASON WHY I REPORT SO HEAVILY ON MARGINALISED PERSPECTIVES.

You worked on a high-profile investigation which exposed the SPAC Nation scandal, can you tell us a bit about that?

SPAC Nation is a church that has been widely lauded for its positive outreach work with gang members and efforts to tackle knife crime.

In November 2019, I – along with a colleague, Emma Youle – published an investigation about how this pioneering church, hailed by politicians as a beacon of hope for ex-gang members, creates the conditions for fraudsters to flourish within its ranks and is failing to act on accusations about some of its pastors financially exploiting the young people it claims to help.

How did the story first come about?

I'd been hearing a lot about the church and read lots of positive coverage from other publications about its outreach work with some of London's at-risk young people. One described it as a young, dynamic, predominantly Black church "where drugs and knives are left at the altar". I suggested to the team at HuffPost that I go along to a service to see for myself what it was like and interview some of the leaders there.

Within ten minutes of stepping into the service, I began to feel uneasy. The body language of some of the clergy caused me discomfort and new members were accosted and harassed into documenting their personal data on iPads. After the service, pastors struggled to answer my questions about how the church is funded.

It was apparent to me that there was more to SPAC Nation than met the eye. I told my editor, Jess Brammar, about my experience and about a very alarming tip from a contact of mine which seemed to confirm my suspicions. Jess immediately scheduled a meeting with Emma Youle, our brilliant investigations reporter, and we agreed to dedicate time to looking into the church.

What was it like to publish the investigation, and to see it get the reaction it did?

It was both exciting and daunting. It was the first investigation I'd worked on and a lot of hard work went into it over six months. So, to see it come to fruition, be read so widely and have real impact was fulfilling. I anticipated it would ruffle a lot of feathers among supporters and attendees of the church, which was nerve-wracking. Also, I was conscious about being a Black reporter, exposing scandals taking place within a Black church. It occurred to me that some Black people might perceive me as being a "sell out".

TURN OVER TO CONTINUE



That said, part of the reason why I was able to convince many former SPAC Nation members to go on the record as sources for our investigation was precisely because I'm a Black journalist and they trusted me to tell their stories. The sense of obligation to them and the principle of speaking truth to power far outweighed the fear I had about backlash or negative personal perceptions.

SHORTLY AFTER OUR WORK WAS PUBLISHED, THE CHARITY COMMISSION ALSO LAUNCHED AN INVESTIGATION AND SPAC NATION WAS DEBATED IN PARLIAMENT TOO.

Following your investigation, the Met Police are investigating various individuals linked to the controversial church. How does that feel?

I'm very pleased with the impact. The core purpose of this investigation was always to uncover the truth and see the authorities take the appropriate action to ensure that congregation members aren't exploited.

You were shortlisted for the prestigious Paul Foot Award for your work on this investigation, what did that mean to you?

It was truly an honour to be nominated for this prestigious award and so early on in my career! Alongside one other entrant, I made history as the first Black reporter to be named in the award's history!

What do you love the most about your job?

Amplifying perspectives within marginalised communities and helping to place them where they should be: at the forefront of the news agenda. That's my reason for wanting to become a journalist in the first place. I see it as an innate responsibility and a privilege.

What is your advice to someone wondering whether journalism is for them?

Reflect on what your reason for wanting to become a journalist is and always hold onto it, harness it. A deep sense of purpose will propel you forward and invariably enrich your work.

I see journalism as a service. I try and use my writing to amplify the perspectives of other people — particularly those at the fringe of society whose views are too often overlooked. My career is not just for me; those people in particular are why I get up in the morning.

— Nadine White, HuffPost Journalist

USING SOCIAL MEDIA AS A JOURNALIST

Lydia Stephens

I'm a trainee reporter at WalesOnline, producing news in digital and print.

I started work with the newspaper in June 2019 after completing my NCTJ studies at Cardiff University.

I'd already done work experience at WalesOnline and had realised then how social media is one of the best newsgathering tools.

A tweet can tip you off to a live incident, a breaking news story, or lead you to a news feature within minutes.

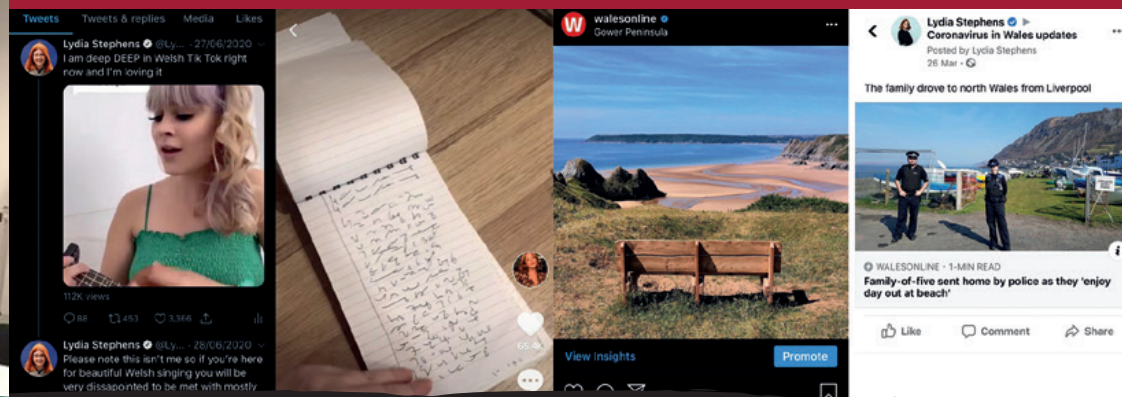
Social media is also a brilliant way to share your stories to wider audiences.

One way I do this is through Facebook. I have a professional journalism page which I use to join Facebook groups to share stories, engage in local news content, and draw more readers to my page. WalesOnline also has its own Facebook groups: one dedicated to coronavirus updates has 40,000 members. I also run WalesOnline's Instagram page where I post picturesque images of Wales, and use the swipe up tool on stories to share our articles with our 86,000 followers.

My personal social media brand is a little bit different. If you have ever searched #shorthand on TikTok before, it is likely you would have seen one of my videos. One clip of me using shorthand has so far earned half a million views and has allowed me to engage with a younger audience.

Twitter is also a great place to build your personal brand. For instance, I connected with my Welsh audience by sharing a TikTok video of a Welsh song – it was viewed more than 110,000 times.

SO, AS A ROUND-UP, SOCIAL MEDIA IS GREAT FOR NEWSGATHERING, PAGE VIEWS, BUILDING A FOLLOWING AND BUILDING A BRAND. ALL THESE THINGS BENEFIT ONE ANOTHER AND ARE ESSENTIAL TO JOURNALISM IN THE DIGITAL WORLD.



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'ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS MEANS QUESTIONING BOTH PEOPLE AND NUMBERS'

Joanna S. Kao

**There are many paths into journalism
– at the *Financial Times*, we have
former artists, chefs and chemists.**

My path started while intending to pursue medicine and later studying computer science. While neither of these careers seem like the ideal place to prepare for journalism, they taught me how to learn quickly, ask good questions and present complicated information, which are staples in my daily work.

As a visual and data journalist at the *Financial Times*, asking good questions means questioning both people and numbers. Data and digital skills – anywhere from analysing large spreadsheets to transforming web pages into structured data, to creating visual representations of complicated information – help me uncover stories and fact-check narratives.

In school, we're often told that there's only one correct answer when it comes to maths. But in the real world, numbers can just as easily mislead you as a person can, just by the way the data is collected or interpreted. Getting comfortable with spreadsheets and knowing how the numbers end up in one, help put stories into perspective. Data can reveal the scale of an event, the significance of a large-scale policy change and help hold people accountable.

These skills are most useful when combined with what we do best as journalists – following leads, having a deep understanding of how our topic areas relate to the larger context and explaining it to our audiences. Being able to analyse

data provides an edge in interviews and helps develop questions that might not be so obvious on the surface.

At a time when our readers want information in bite-sized formats in an increasingly complex and fast-paced society, developing the ability to keep up with the ways our communities consume content best, is crucial. At the *FT*, that could mean anything from personalising stories with an interactive experience or game to condensing millions of rows of data into a chart for Instagram. Learning how to learn and ask questions is the key to keeping up with a globalising world and digital landscape that continue to evolve around us.



**JOANNA IS A VISUAL
& DATA JOURNALIST
AT THE *FINANCIAL TIMES***

DIVERSITY IN JOURNALISM



If you feel inspired to become a journalist, but are worried about the costs of training – or whether the industry is for you – the Journalism Diversity Fund (JDF) may be able to help.

The JDF has supported almost 400 people from different backgrounds through their NCTJ training since 2005. Bursaries can help with the costs of course fees and/or living expenses while studying.

If you could bring diversity to a newsroom – such as your socio-economic background, ethnicity or disability – you may be eligible for a bursary.

We spoke to former bursary recipient April Roach to find out how the JDF helped her, and where she is now.

April Roach studied for her diploma with PA Training in 2017 and is now a digital reporter at the *Evening Standard*.

WHEN DID YOU FIRST DECIDE YOU WANTED TO BE A JOURNALIST?

I joined *The Boar*, Warwick University's student newspaper, when I was doing my degree. I enjoyed telling stories and meeting people from across the university.

I also did some work experience at the local paper, the *Leamington Courier*, and at PA Media. These experiences confirmed my interest in a journalism career.

But even before university I'd always enjoyed writing. At primary school I put together a monthly class newspaper with a friend.

WHAT LED YOU TO DECIDE TO DO AN NCTJ DIPLOMA?

I decided to do an NCTJ because I saw how students from my university newspaper had benefited from the course. After doing a lot of research I decided it was the best way for me to get qualified and secure a journalism job.

I knew from the outset that paying for the course might be difficult as my family don't live in the UK and managing London rent, bills and paying for the course was going to be tricky. I looked into the Journalism Diversity Fund and knew instantly that it was something I wanted to apply for.

WAS YOUR DIPLOMA COURSE TOUGH?

I did the four month fast-track course at PA Training, which was pretty challenging as you have to learn a lot of new things in a short period of time. But you learn things like shorthand faster because you're completely immersed.



We had a good teacher who always encouraged us to apply what we'd learned in class to current high-profile cases and stories in the media. I now use that knowledge every day in my job.

AND HOW ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE OF DEALING WITH THE NCTJ AND THE JDF?

From the outset, the JDF was able to help with advice about getting work experience while studying for my diploma and offered networking opportunities with experienced journo.

Having the JDF bursary meant I was able to devote most of my time to my studies and I definitely wouldn't be where I am now in my career if it wasn't for the fund.

DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS FOR PEOPLE WANTING TO GET INTO THE NEWS MEDIA BUSINESS?

Try to get as much newsroom experience as possible, networking with journalists and building a portfolio that you can show future employers.

And be persistent, whether that's pursuing what you think is a good news story, or applying for jobs.

I'd recommend local newspapers as a stepping stone into the world of media. They're a great training ground and will get you immediately working on using your investigative and news sourcing skills.

HOW DO I APPLY?

You will need to first secure a place on an eligible NCTJ-accredited diploma course. You must also be a British citizen.

Applications are open four times per year on the JDF website.

If your application is shortlisted, you will attend a final-stage interview with a panel of industry professionals.

Find out more at
www.journalismdiversityfund.com



Introducing the Journalism Skills Academy

An interactive e-learning platform from the NCTJ



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INTRODUCING THE CERTIFICATE IN FOUNDATION JOURNALISM (CFJ)

Studying the diploma is a big commitment.

It is absolutely the right step for those who know journalism is the right career for them. It is what you should do if you are ready to dive in and start training for the qualification you need to get that first job.

But what if you aren't sure? What do you do if you like the sound of a career in journalism but feel like you need to find out more about the industry and the skills you will need?

THAT'S WHERE THE CFJ COMES IN.

This qualification is much less intense than the diploma. It takes less time to complete and there are no exams – only submissions of your work which are marked. But it is still a recognised qualification, carrying a UCAS tariff of 16 points.

You will learn how to gather and record information, then how to use that to write a news story. You will learn how to write for digital platforms and gain a broad understanding of the legal issues journalists need to be aware of.

You can study this qualification remotely with the NCTJ and can start out by buying just one of the units for £40.20. Brunel University and PA Training also offer courses which deliver the qualification.

Here are two projects the NCTJ have run recently, using the CFJ qualification to introduce students to journalism.

Academy for disabled journalists

In May 2020, the NCTJ partnered with Ability Today to launch a CFJ course for aspiring journalists with disabilities.

Ability Today is a social enterprise and online platform which provides news and resources to help support people with disabilities.

Thirteen students enrolled on the course which is delivered completely online through webinars, learning materials and assignments. Students will take between six months and two years to complete the course – depending on their particular needs.

Women's sports journalism course with Nike

The NCTJ, Nike and PA Training partnered in October 2019 to provide a **free journalism course focusing towards women's sport** and offering the CFJ.

The 11-week course was taught in London and 25 students reported live from football matches and had guest speakers every week – from Telegraph Women's Sports editor Anna Kessel to Chelsea women's manager Emma Hayes.

There was also a behind-the-scenes visit to Sky Sports News. It was fantastic to see students realise that journalism really is the career they want to pursue.



RECOVERING ALCOHOLIC BATTLES LIVER DISEASE TO START HIS JOURNALISM CAREER AT FOUR YEARS SOBER

Toby Winson

A recovering alcoholic has proved he is able to overcome adversity to start his journalism career. Toby Winson, from Kent, is studying for the NCTJ Diploma in Journalism via distance learning in a bid to start his career as a broadcast journalist at ITV.



Within three months of commencing his studies, the 30-year-old has passed three exams with flying colours – something he could never have imagined as an alcoholic, dependant on a bottle of vodka a day.

He said: "I started drinking at 14 and loved it. When I went to university, I started drinking almost every day and by second year, I was a full-blown alcoholic.

"I got into the habit of drinking at least a bottle of vodka every evening. One morning I felt so rough, I thought 'I may as well drink this morning'. Before I knew it, I was drinking 24/7 and was dependant on alcohol."

After university, Toby's drinking spiralled and he spent three months in rehab, though he soon relapsed after leaving.

He said: "In 2015, when I was 25, I walked past the mirror in my flat and the whites in my eyes had gone yellow. I knew something was seriously wrong, so I eventually called an ambulance. I spent a month in Kings Hospital in London and was diagnosed with liver disease.

"I was in a wheelchair because the alcohol had damaged the nerves in my feet. My liver had stopped working. It didn't look like I was going to make it."

Thanks to the efforts of doctors, Toby recovered and had a further stint in rehab. But again, he reached for the bottle.

He said: "I would tell myself that I would never drink alcohol again, but I never truly accepted that fact, so I carried on relapsing. But my periods of sobriety between lapses were now getting longer.

"I eventually started talking honestly about what was going on inside my head. If I wanted a drink, I would talk about it and not bottle it up anymore. That was the real turning point.

"And I finally accepted that I could never have a single drop of alcohol again."

Toby last touched alcohol at the age of 26. He spent the following two years battling emotions the alcohol had long blocked out – anger, anxiety and guilt.

He said: "I had all this information in my head about addiction and recovery and I wanted to help others. That's why I started writing my blog."

Toby's mum noticed he had a flair for writing and encouraged him to apply for the Media Trust's Breaking into News competition, which is run in partnership with ITV News and aims to discover new diverse talent.

Grasping the chance to create his own news report on the lack of alcohol and addiction education in schools, Toby was crowned the winner, much to his astonishment.

Toby also gained work experience and short contracts at ITV newsrooms in Leeds and Southampton, further inspiring his enthusiasm for journalism and his bid to make it in the industry.

He said: "I absolutely loved it, I got stuck in and helped find stories. I was helping to produce shorter news bulletins, creating content for online, planning, going out on vox pops and doing timings in the gallery.

"I asked people about how to become a journalist and everyone in the newsroom spoke about the NCTJ and how the diploma is the industry's qualification. Almost everyone in the newsroom had it and were big advocates for it, saying it's what editors look for and what they need.

"They particularly said about how it was so important to have that grounding in media law."

During lockdown, Toby moved back home to Kent and got stuck into the NCTJ diploma distance learning course. His motivation to succeed has meant he has studied every day, completing three exams in media law, ethics and essential journalism in quick succession.

Following a six-week contract at ITV Meridian, Toby has secured a permanent production journalist role and will be studying for the diploma around his job.

Toby's success in kicking his alcohol addiction, battling the effects of liver disease and starting down the road to a career in journalism just proves that hard work and determination really do pay off.

Q&A:

Q: How are you finding distance learning?

A: It's going well in terms of studying. It's pretty straightforward, I like the way the study guide is set out and it tells you which chapter you need. Whenever I have had any problems, I've rung the NCTJ and they have been really quick to help.

Q: Do you have any advice for people considering studying the diploma by distance learning?

A: You are going to need the time to do the distance learning but the benefit of it is that you can fit it around your life and commitments. During lockdown, I managed to dedicate three months to it but it will be different fitting it around a job. You have got to be really motivated. A tip for media law is to learn the case studies because it helps you learn how the law works. Plus, you get extra marks for mentioning them in the exam!



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CHOOSE THE RIGHT ROUTE FOR YOU

So, you want to study journalism, but where do you start? For the best chance of securing a job in journalism, studying for the NCTJ Diploma in Journalism will put you a cut above the rest - and there are several study routes available. We spoke to five recent graduates about the path they chose, and where they are now.

POSTGRADUATE DEGREE

Hayley Bouma joined STV News in Dundee two years ago as a multimedia journalist. She reports in the Tayside area, shooting and editing her own stories for broadcast and online. She also presents the local news bulletins from Dundee. Before joining STV, Hayley completed her master's at Glasgow Caledonian University, having previously worked offshore for the oil and gas industry.

What does a typical day entail?

A typical day... I really don't have one, with news you can always start with a plan but inevitably something will change throughout the day! As they say, breaking news changes everything!

But, the day ALWAYS starts with coffee, hairspray and a good amount of make up because I'm on screen just about every day.

How did your NCTJ training prepare you for a job in journalism?

Coming from a science and technology background I felt quite green to writing for broadcast. But the course gave me the skills and confidence to do that plus other useful skills such as camera handling and writing for social media and online.



Why did you want to become a journalist?

In short, I love to talk! And I'm interested in a wide range of things. These two attributes serve me well as a journalist because your stories are all about people, where they're from, what's affecting them and why they should care about your story.

Any tips for aspiring journalists?

Be bold, be a team player and work hard. It's a competitive industry but rewarding. Don't make the mistake of thinking you have to be perfect before you apply for jobs. News teams want people who are keen to learn and become a better journalist.



NCTJ JOURNALISM DIPLOMA (STUDY ROUTE) NCTJ JOURNALIST (APPRENTICESHIP)

NCTJ training will equip you with the practical skills and the professional qualification essential for anyone seeking a career in the world of multimedia. At Darlington we are offering study routes for students, apprentices and community reporters.

The types of careers students have progressed to include:

- Newspaper reporters
- Public Relations specialists
- Broadcast journalists, including television and radio
- Sports Journalism is available as an additional optional module

(Generally one evening per week over 18 weeks).

FOLLOW IN THEIR FOOTSTEPS AT DARLINGTON COLLEGE



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NCTJ JOURNALISM PLEASE VISIT:
WWW.DARLINGTON.AC.UK OR CALL **01325 503050**

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

Ben Coley works as a radio presenter and producer for BFBS The Forces Station, which provides music and informative content for the UK armed forces. A big part of Ben's job is interviewing people for stories, putting together packages and finding original stories that would be of interest to his audience.

I would say my NCTJ course gave me my job now – I got it on my journalistic merits, and the NCTJ diploma seriously makes you a journalist.

I know you hear that age-old phrase 'transferable skills' all the time, but the NCTJ pushed me to edit, interview and create insightful stories, which are things I have to do in my job every day.

For me, picking the multimedia journalism undergraduate course at Bournemouth University was a no-brainer, not least because it was NCTJ-accredited. The NCTJ is so well-recognised throughout any media industry – the number of times I would go to a job interview and have a conversation about the NCTJ was ridiculous!

The word 'multimedia' also sold it for me – it was very appealing to try out journalism across a range of platforms to really find the one I liked best.

For anyone wanting to do a journalism degree, I would say first, look for NCTJ accreditation. And once you're on course, don't be afraid to spot a crazy story and go for it. Creating something different not only tests you as a journalist but more importantly your story stands out and you'll get recognised for it. Mainly though, just enjoy what you're working on and be passionate about it because it's a heck of a fun subject.



FAST-TRACK

Kumail Jaffer, 23, is a reporter at the *Daily Mail*. He studied the fast-track course at News Associates London, earning a gold standard Diploma in Journalism.

Why did a fast-track route appeal to you?

I was looking to get into journalism after completing a degree at the University of Warwick. I had managed to get to the final stage of the *Daily Mail* trainee scheme interviews and they recommended the fast-track course. I wanted to be able to study for the diploma quickly so I could come back and apply in the next round.

How has your NCTJ training helped in your career?

It was the most intense 22 weeks but you could tell that every day you were becoming a better reporter. One of the first tasks they gave us was to go out for two hours and get a story. I was suddenly brimming with ideas. Shorthand is also a big one. When interviewing someone on the doorstep and on the phone, it has proved invaluable. On a personal level, the course helped me defy my introverted nature in terms of approaching people.

Tell us about your role at the *Daily Mail*.

I started in Glasgow and I was there during the 2019 election period. Since coming back to London, I am usually on three night shifts a week and have to turn around copy really quickly. One highlight was going out with the National Crime Agency and the home secretary to report on a dawn raid.

Any advice for people considering a fast-track option?

You get out what you put into it: so, be ready to give 100 per cent. And try to keep up with shorthand from day one!



APPRENTICESHIP

Yohannes Lowe graduated from university in 2017 and wasn't sure what he wanted to do next. He began working as a teaching assistant before seeing an advertisement for a journalism apprenticeship at *The Telegraph*.

It was an entry-level position and included training so I thought it would be good to take a leap of faith. It was important to me that the apprenticeship was accessible to anyone from any background, because you hear that contacts are a good way to get you into journalism and I didn't have any. The apprenticeship puts everyone on a level playing field.

The encouragement and teaching at PA Training was vital: I reached 100 words per minute in six months and went on to get 120 words per

minute. I use it every time I go to court now. Having a good grasp of media law meant I was also sent out to courts earlier than others as editors trusted I had that sound knowledge. Public affairs lessons felt boring at the time but knowing about the structure of the NHS, local councils and how they are run meant I was able to do the job quicker and hit the ground running.

There is a lot to be said for the university experience. But if you are dead set on becoming a journalist and know that is exactly what you want to do, then an apprenticeship is for you.

YOHANNES WON THE NCTJ APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD IN 2019.



COLLEGE COURSE

Caoimhe O'Neill, Liverpool reporter at *The Athletic*, graduated from City of Liverpool College in January 2019.

I work as a Liverpool reporter for *The Athletic* after a previous stint working as a senior football writer at the *Liverpool Echo*. I absolutely love my job. Being able to report on the team I have grown up supporting is such an honour. Writing for *The Athletic* and being able to produce in-depth Liverpool pieces for our subscribers is a complete dream come true.

After almost pursuing a career in teaching I had a change of heart and decided instead to become a journalist. With no idea of how to break into sports journalism, I spoke to a journalist friend who advised me that studying for an NCTJ diploma would be a perfect first step in the right direction. That person was right as it was the diploma which helped open the door to the industry and since then I haven't looked back.

Without having studied at the City of Liverpool College I would not be writing for one of the most

well-respected sporting content providers in the world. It has changed my life. Without it, I just wouldn't be living my dream. I went from not knowing what I wanted to do to interviewing Jurgen Klopp in a matter of months. The NCTJ training gave me the skills and opportunities to be able to do that.

The training also gave me the fundamentals of writing journalistically: you really don't know how to do that until someone teaches you. Shorthand is vital as well. It allows you to take accurate notes while you interview and bails you out when you have technical difficulties. The video journalism module opened up a whole new world for me and taught me practical skills. To have a clear understanding of media law is also crucial for journalists. The NCTJ training has been massively beneficial to me and if you are thinking of pursuing a career in journalism then this is your first step. I can't recommend it enough!



FIND AN NCTJ-ACCREDITED COURSE

For the best chance of securing a job in journalism, an NCTJ-accredited course will put you a cut above the rest.

We accredit journalism courses in news reporting as well as magazine, sport and broadcast journalism, delivered at universities, colleges and independent providers throughout the UK.

Here is a full list of NCTJ-accredited courses. For the most up-to-date list, head to www.nctj.com.

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

Highbury College, Portsmouth
28-week Diploma in Journalism
www.highbury.ac.uk

University of Brighton
BA (Hons) Journalism
BA (Hons) Sports Journalism
MA Journalism
MA Sport Journalism
www.brighton.ac.uk

University of Kent
BA (Hons) Journalism
MA Multimedia Journalism
Year in Journalism
www.kent.ac.uk

University of Portsmouth
BA (Hons) Journalism
www.port.ac.uk

GREATER LONDON

Brunel University
News Diploma
www.brunel.ac.uk

Kingston University
MA/PgDip Journalism
www.kingston.ac.uk

News Associates London

Fast-track Multimedia Journalism
Multimedia Sports Journalism
Part-time Diploma in Multimedia Journalism
BA (Hons) Journalism (in partnership with Plymouth Marjon University)
www.newsassociates.co.uk

PA Training

Fast-track Diploma in Multimedia Journalism (news, sport and magazine pathways)
Part-time Diploma in Multimedia Journalism
www.becomeajournalist.co.uk

St Mary's University

MA Sports Journalism
www.stmarys.ac.uk

Sutton College

Fast-track Diploma in Journalism
www.suttoncollege.ac.uk

WALES

Cardiff University
MA in News Journalism
www.cardiff.ac.uk

SCOTLAND

Glasgow Caledonian University
BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism
MA Multimedia Journalism
www.gcu.ac.uk

Glasgow Clyde College
Fast-track Diploma in Journalism
www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk

NCTJ Fast-Track Diploma in Journalism



Study the NCTJ Diploma at the Liverpool School of Journalism at The City of Liverpool College – Merseyside's only under-graduate NCTJ-accredited course.

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City of Wolverhampton College
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NORTH EAST ENGLAND

Darlington College
Diploma in Journalism one year
www.darlington.ac.uk

Teesside University

BA (Hons) Sports Journalism
BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism
www.tees.ac.uk

University of Sunderland

BA (Hons) Fashion Journalism
BA (Hons) Journalism
BA (Hons) Sports Journalism
MA Journalism
MA Sports Journalism
www.sunderland.ac.uk

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One year Diploma in Journalism
Fast-track Diploma in Journalism
www.liv-coll.ac.uk

Liverpool John Moores University
MA Journalism
MA Sports Journalism
www.ljmu.ac.uk

News Associates Manchester
Fast-track Multimedia Journalism
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Part-time Diploma in Multimedia Journalism
BA (Hons) Journalism (in partnership with Plymouth Marjon University)
www.newsassociates.co.uk

University of Central Lancashire
BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism
www.uclan.ac.uk



University of Salford

MA Journalism
www.salford.ac.uk

EAST MIDLANDS

Nottingham Trent University

BA (Hons) Journalism
 MA Magazine Journalism
 MA News Journalism
www.ntu.ac.uk

University of Lincoln

BA (Hons) Journalism
 BA Sports Journalism
www.lincoln.ac.uk

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Bournemouth University

BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism
www.bournemouth.ac.uk

Falmouth University

BA (Hons) Journalism
 BA (Hons) Sports Journalism
www.falmouth.ac.uk

University of Gloucestershire

BA (Hons) Journalism
www.glos.ac.uk

EAST OF ENGLAND

Harlow College

Diploma in Journalism (news
 and magazine pathways)
www.harlow-college.ac.uk

University of Essex

BA Multimedia Journalism
www.essex.ac.uk

YORKSHIRE

Leeds Trinity University

BA (Hons) Journalism
 MA Journalism
www.leedstrinity.ac.uk

The Sheffield College

Fast-track multimedia diploma
www.sheffcol.ac.uk

University of Sheffield

BA Journalism Studies
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www.sheffield.ac.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND

North West Regional College

One year Diploma in Journalism
www.nwrc.ac.uk

Ulster University

MA Journalism
www.ulster.ac.uk



Degree of difference

Connor Stringer has just completed his BA (Hons) in Multimedia Journalism and landed a job at *The Brighton Argus*, where he plans to investigate crime and work in the community.

During his time at BU, Connor presented a live TV election programme, hosted a televised debate, was the Editor of *Nerve* magazine, and secured a front-page exclusive story in the local daily paper (*The Daily Echo*) during a news day investigation.



Connor Stringer @connor_stringer · Jul 27

Delighted to be graduating with a First Class Honours in Multimedia Journalism. If you'd told me three years ago that I'd leave the countryside of Co.Antrim to win awards, have a front page and make lifelong friends, I'd have laughed at you. To everyone at @Journalism_BU, thank you.

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