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As well as being one of the world's leading news organisations and a trusted guide for champions of better business, the FT is proud to be a bright, diverse and inclusive employer.

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We support a range of programmes including the Journalism Diversity Fund, Social Mobility Foundation, The Student View and Creative Access.

DO YOU WANT TO BE A JOURNALIST?

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



PAGE 12

Vaishali Bhardwaj
tells us how she
got into sports
journalism

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- 7 Job roles debunked
- 18 Advice from a BAFTA-winning filmmaker
- 22 How to choose the right route for you
- 27 Directory of courses

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WHY TRAIN AS A JOURNALIST WITH THE NCTJ?



The National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) delivers the premier training scheme for journalists in the UK.

The NCTJ Diploma in Journalism will equip you with the skills you need to become an effective journalist, and is the qualification editors look for.

There are a number of ways to become a trained journalist with the NCTJ, including:

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If you could bring diversity to a newsroom you could be eligible for funding through the Journalism Diversity Fund (JDF).

The JDF could help cover the cost of your NCTJ course fees and/or living expenses while you study.



Head to
PAGE 8
to find out more
about the JDF

What are you waiting for?
Find out more today at www.nctj.com



CONTENTS

- 5** **Introduction** Abbie Scott, deputy managing editor of the *Financial Times*
- 7** **Job roles debunked** We take a look at five journalism roles and what they're all about
- 8-9** **Journalism Diversity Fund** Former students tell us how a bursary kick-started their careers
- 11** **What makes a good data journalist?** JPIMedia's Claire Wilde offers her top tips
- 12-13** **How to become a major player in sports journalism** Vaishali Bhardwaj tells us how she forged her career
- 15-16** **A new type of reporter** How they are making waves in the community
- 18-19** **From fast-track course to BAFTA win** We speak to award-winning documentary filmmaker Patrick Wells
- 21** **Shorthand is as invaluable as ever** The FT's Laura Pitel tells us how she uses the essential skill
- 22-25** **Choose the right route for you** Five NCTJ alumni talk about the different paths they took into successful careers
- 27-30** **Find a course** A directory of all NCTJ-accredited courses in the UK



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*Guardian university league table 2018 and 2019; Complete University Guide 2020

INTRODUCTION

In a turbulent world where everyone has instant access to information and news, the role of a journalist has never been more important. It is vital that news organisations provide the facts that give context and help us tell the difference between news and lies, and between analysis and propaganda.

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.

The students who work hard and achieve the NCTJ diploma will find that lots of opportunities await. You could be working for your local newspaper and writing about the issues that affect your community. Or a foreign correspondent reporting on wars being fought a long way from home. But whatever topic you are passionate about can be rich with stories waiting to be told, whether it is fashion and sports or even movies.

It is also an industry welcoming to people from different backgrounds and open to people of all ethnicities, religions and sexualities. 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 booklet 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 in this guide should help you decide which is the best route 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

THINKING OF A CAREER IN JOURNALISM?

We carry the best roles from the employers across all sectors, including; news (print/ online), broadcast (radio/ TV), consumer/ business and trade publishing, sports and entertainment.

From day 1 of your career we can help! We carry internship roles (paid) right through to Chief Editor roles. Upload your profile and CV, create tailored job alerts and have employers find you!

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JOB ROLES DEBUNKED

Studying for the NCTJ Diploma in Journalism can open doors to careers where your creativity, writing, communication and investigative skills are invaluable. The possibilities are endless.

There are journalism jobs out there that you may not have heard of but could be perfect for you.

WE TAKE A LOOK AT FIVE JOURNALISM ROLES AND WHAT THEY'RE ALL ABOUT:



1. DIGITAL OFFICER

Are you savvy on social media? Digital officers devise, create and publish original content across social media platforms to increase their organisation's online presence. It is a digital officer's job to respond and engage with social media users, monitor audiences and insights to deliver relevant content and to promote the work of the organisation.

4. AUDIENCE AND CONTENT EDITOR

As the key player in the newsroom, it is the responsibility of the audience and content editor to build a brilliant news list for both the newspaper and the website. They drive the stories and are creative and full of ideas. The decisions on what content to publish every day sit with them.



2. VIDEO EDITOR

Being able to create and edit engaging videos are key skills in the newsroom. A video editor works on sourcing, creating and editing videos, using a mix of new and archive footage as well as user-generated shots.



FACT

FAKE NEWS

5. FACT CHECKER

Do you know your fake news from your facts? With the growing spread of misinformation, the role of the fact checker is more important than ever. Using tools to debunk stories that claim to be real, fact checkers ensure that the news out there is verified.



3. DATA JOURNALIST

Finding unique stories from sets of data is the bread and butter of a data journalist's job. They find the data, analyse it and turn it into a compelling and visual story.



Head to page 11 to hear from
data journalist Claire Wilde

DIVERSITY IN JOURNALISM

If you're worried about the costs of training and could bring something different to a newsroom, a bursary from the Journalism Diversity Fund could help.

It's vital that journalists reflect their readers so they can identify and report on issues affecting their communities.

In order to ensure people from all backgrounds can become journalists, it's important that the costs of training are not a barrier to entering the industry. This is why the Journalism Diversity Fund (JDF) was set up.

Administered by the NCTJ and supported by donations from the industry, the fund awards bursaries to diverse aspiring journalists who need financial support for their studies.

The JDF has helped more than 300 people since 2005, and bursaries can help with the costs of NCTJ course fees and/or living expenses while you study.

As well as helping financially, the JDF also offers a mentoring scheme, and helps to provide internship and networking opportunities.

So, if you feel you could bring something different to a newsroom – such as your social background, disability, or ethnicity – the JDF may be able to help.

READ ON TO HEAR FROM THREE PREVIOUS BURSARY RECIPIENTS ABOUT HOW THE JDF HELPED THEM, AND WHERE THEY ARE NOW.

the
Journalism
diversity fund

www.journalismdiversityfund.com



Adam Samuel did his MA in sports journalism at St Mary's University, and recently earned a place on the BBC Journalism Trainee Scheme

Simply put, without the funding and support that the Journalism Diversity Fund provided to me, not only would I not have been able to complete my master's degree, but I also wouldn't have had the success and opportunity that I've enjoyed so far in my career.

Training as a sport journalist for a year has opened doors for me at CNN International and Perform Group, where I have had numerous training opportunities and met countless big-name sports people in an industry that keeps me on my toes every day.

Further, I recently managed to earn a place on the BBC Journalism Trainee Scheme, which was hugely aided by being put into contact with fantastic mentors within the organisation through the JDF.

I take great satisfaction in seeing other recipients of the fund also currently blazing a path through the industry, and would encourage any young prospective journalist to not turn their back on the industry because "no one looks like me". Soon enough the opposite will be true.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY.



Jess Glass studied with News Associates in London and now works as a reporter for PA Media

Getting my NCTJ diploma through the Journalism Diversity Fund opened up possibilities I genuinely could not have imagined when I applied. As well as allowing me to gain the practical skills needed in journalism, the JDF has helped me with my confidence.

It can feel like a pretty hostile time to be a transgender person in the media right now, but I know I deserve my place in this industry thanks in part to the JDF.

I applied after I had been working in journalism for about a year but knew a formal qualification would be useful - I didn't realise at the time just how much of a difference it would make.

I never thought I could make it as a court reporter. I've now covered hundreds of trials and have written for nearly every national paper as an agency reporter due to my NCTJ diploma.

I absolutely loved my training and had so much fun doing it. It was really challenging at times, especially shorthand, but it puts you through your paces and gives you a solid foundation for all sorts of reporting.

IF YOU'RE A STUDENT CONSIDERING A CAREER IN JOURNALISM, KNOW WHAT'S MOTIVATING YOU. THERE'S A LOT OF HARD WORK TO BE DONE, BUT IT REALLY IS WORTH IT.



Brad Grant achieved his NCTJ diploma at The City of Liverpool College, and is now a trainee with ITV News

In order for newsrooms to best reflect our communities, it's vital that schemes such as The Journalism Diversity Fund exist.

Having always wanted to be a journalist, when I left my comprehensive school the sudden realisation of a lack of financial means, no connections and the idea that journalists don't come from one of UK's most deprived areas prevented me from pursuing a career in the industry.

It was through a successful application and interview with the Journalism Diversity Fund that I was able to pursue my NCTJ fast-track qualification at The City of Liverpool College.

The NCTJ diploma is a great qualification to have – it's challenging, but it's worth it. The course has equipped with me some of the fundamental principles needed to be a journalist, particularly media law.

Now I am delighted to say that I have officially begun my dream career as an ITV News trainee with ITV Granada Reports – my regional news programme that I grew up watching.

The JDF doesn't just assess your diversity – it also assesses your financial means and your passion for journalism – the latter being a must.

GOOD LUCK, WORK HARD AND DARE TO DREAM.



MA in Journalism

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**OF GRADUATES
IN WORK OR
FURTHER STUDY**
within six months of graduating
(DHLE Survey, 2016/17)



**NI UNIVERSITY
FOR STUDENT
SATISFACTION**
(National Student Survey, 2018)



**LONELY PLANET'S
TOP REGION TO VISIT
IN 2018**

'I WAS CLUELESS ABOUT SPREADSHEETS, NOW I USE THEM EVERY DAY' Claire Wilde



I'm sure we'd all agree that being a good journalist involves good writing and people skills. But how about maths or even computer coding?

I'm a data journalist for JPIMedia, which runs more than 150 newspaper brands including *i*, *The Yorkshire Post* and *The Scotsman*.

My team and I can often be found analysing spreadsheets, drawing up charts or scraping tables from the web, all in the hunt for a good, old-fashioned story.

For instance, I recently revealed that pilots have reported 312 near-misses with drones in British skies, including 106 where there was a serious risk of collision.



Traditionally, reporters might have thought that anything involving numbers wasn't for them. But as 'big data' grows in scale and official bodies pump out more stats than ever before, we need to have the right tools at our fingertips to interrogate this mass of information.

THREE TIPS FOR BECOMING A DATA JOURNALIST:

Treat your data source like an interviewee. Think about what questions you would ask it, then search it for the answers. Also, just like with any other interviewee, consider whether what they are telling you is accurate. Do they have a hidden agenda or only a partial picture?

Think about how to make fair comparisons. For example, it would be no surprise if London had higher numbers of car thefts than a small town, as there are more people in London. So what is the car theft rate per 100,000 residents?

People relate to human stories. When you write your article, don't present a load of numbers. Instead, find someone affected by the issue and tell their story.

After all, if journalists aren't poring through this stuff to find the stories that need to be told, who will?

I was clueless about spreadsheets until I spent three months on secondment with the BBC's Shared Data Unit, which is on a mission to turn more local reporters into data journalists. Thanks to the training I underwent there, I landed a job running JPIMedia's national investigations team and starting up its new data unit.

Luckily, the skills you need are often pretty straightforward. A good working knowledge of spreadsheet software, such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets, and a willingness to learn will stand you in good stead.

For anyone wanting to be an investigative journalist, you may find your big scoop hidden in a pile of data. So be prepared to dig in!



HOW TO BECOME A MAJOR PLAYER IN SPORTS JOURNALISM

Vaishali Bhardwaj is one of the most recognisable faces in sports journalism.

The 32-year-old from east London has worked across broadcast, print and TV for the likes of BBC Sport, *The Guardian*, Sky Sports, CNN and the *Evening Standard*.

She spoke to the NCTJ about how she forged a career in the industry and why this is the perfect time for women to enter sports journalism.

From the age of 15, I had set my sights on forensic science. I did a bachelor's degree in microbiology at Imperial College London and loved every minute of it.

It wasn't until I started a master's degree in forensic science at Kings College London that I realised I didn't really enjoy the practical side and it wasn't the career for me.

I thought about what I liked – football and writing – and decided to pursue a career in that. I had no idea what it would be like so I decided to get some work experience.

I did the BBC's Blast Sports Reporting scheme which was targeted at people with no previous experience. I realised this was what I wanted to do. There is nothing like the buzz of live sports reporting.

I then applied for, and entered, *The Guardian's* Positive Action Scheme and also got experience on *The Times's* sports desk and, by now, I was 100 per cent sure that this was the career I wanted.

But what next? I felt I was lacking something. That something was training. I wanted the skills, tools and foundations to help me in my career.

At this point, I was freelancing part-time at FourFourTwo football magazine and other publications so the flexibility of studying the NCTJ Diploma in Journalism by distance learning appealed to me.

The sports journalism module was the best. I learnt how to write a match report within a time limit.

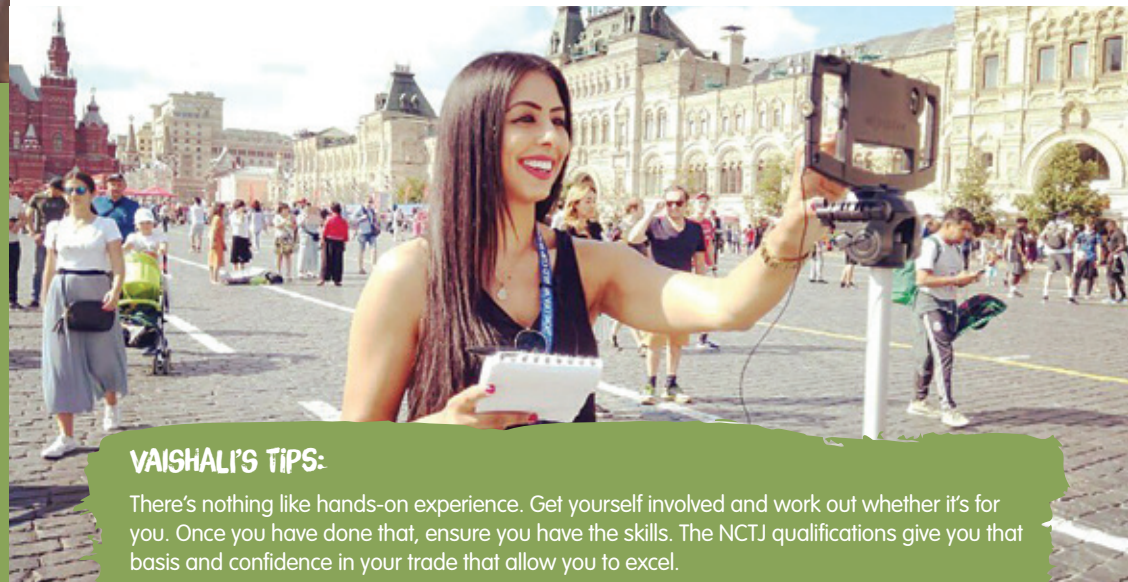
I also loved learning court reporting and media law. When I went into journalism full-time, I felt like I knew what I couldn't write. It gave me the confidence in my trade knowing that I now had the skills.

'THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THE BUZZ OF LIVE SPORTS REPORTING' Vaishali Bhardwaj

The way I write now comes from the principles I learnt through the diploma. It taught me the cleanest way to write. From that foundation, you can add your own colour and style.

It now feels like the perfect time for women to enter sports journalism. There is a genuine will for women to succeed and for women's sport to have a higher profile. It feels like everyone wants to address the issue of diversity. Editors realise that there is a benefit to be had by having a different voice.

So, for those who might be nervous about getting into sports journalism: you can do it; you should do it.



VAISHALI'S TIPS:

There's nothing like hands-on experience. Get yourself involved and work out whether it's for you. Once you have done that, ensure you have the skills. The NCTJ qualifications give you that basis and confidence in your trade that allow you to excel.

Making contacts happens naturally, they are the people you meet along the way. You never know where you will meet again. So, be open and friendly.

You will meet people early on in your career that pop up later. So, everywhere you go, build healthy relationships because you never know where you may need a friend later down the line.

Become a Journalist

PA Training offers the fastest route to your NCTJ Journalism Diploma and excellent prospects of securing a job in the news and media industry.

Part of PA Media Group, with its 150-year Press Association heritage, PA Training offers highly practical journalism tuition which will prepare you for life in a multimedia newsroom. Our links with the industry are unrivalled. Many news organisations, including Sky, ITV, The Telegraph, Racing Post, Archant and Kent Messenger Group send their trainees and apprentices to us.

Trainees on our full-time, fast-track news course spend time on newsroom placements during their training, putting into practice the new journalism skills they're learning and establishing new contacts...in some cases finding employment opportunities on the way.

Our trainers have many years' experience between them in local, regional, national and international news environments. Many are former NCTJ trainees themselves. Trainees can choose from news, sport and magazine options, each leading to the NCTJ Level 3 Diploma...the most sought-after entry-level qualification in UK newsrooms.

OUR COURSES

- 17 Week NCTJ News Reporting
- 17 Week NCTJ Sports Reporting
- 17 Week NCTJ Practical Magazine Journalism
- 38 Week Part-Time NCTJ News Reporting
- 38 Week Part-Time NCTJ Sports Reporting
- Part-time NCTJ Certificate in Foundation Journalism

For those already working there's also a part-time option, with study on Tuesday evenings and Saturdays. And recently added to the PA Training portfolio is the Certificate in Foundation Journalism, pitched at those working in voluntary or community-based journalism roles or wanting to gain their first formal experience in a reporting role. This can also act as a gateway qualification to the full Diploma.

Subjects studied include Essential Journalism, Media Law, Court Reporting, Production Journalism, Public Affairs and Teeline Shorthand. There are also options to cover Sports Journalism and Practical Magazine Journalism. And Diploma trainees also complete a portfolio of work, showcasing their new digital skills, while undertaking their course.

So, if you're looking for a complete journalism training experience, leading to an NCTJ qualification and opening doors to employment, look no further than PA Training.



'HOW WE ARE MAKING WAVES IN THE COMMUNITY'

A new type of reporter has hit the streets and they're making waves in the community.

More than 80 community reporter roles have been created in newsrooms in England, Scotland and Wales thanks to a £4.5million charitable donation from Facebook to the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ).

The reporters have been embedded in communities which don't have a prominent voice in local media, including those living in rural areas, young people and religious and ethnic minority groups.

The roles have been created with nine publishing partners, who were determined to increase diversity in the newsroom by opening up journalism careers to people from all walks of life.

The project aims to improve coverage of communities which have either lost local news services or have never had that news coverage before.

James Preston, editor of the *Maidenhead Advertiser*, said his community reporter, Jade Kidd, has helped his newsroom better cover stories from communities in Twyford and Burnham.

He said: "The community news project has been a fantastic opportunity to go back into an area that we used to cover extensively but because of changes in the way the newsroom works, we haven't been able to.

"We have already had a great response from the community. They are happy to see more coverage and more engagement."

As well as receiving the gold-standard NCTJ training to become fully-trained journalists, all reporters receive digital journalism training from Facebook at quarterly bootcamps to share in their newsrooms.

Sian Cox-Brooker, strategic partner manager at Facebook, said: **"It's wonderful to see the impact the community reporters are having in different regions across the country. From covering previously under reported areas, to engaging with community groups, we're delighted to see the impact they're having."**

The publishers involved are: Reach plc, JPI Media, Newsquest, Archant, Midland News Association, KM Group, *Barnsley Chronicle*, Baylis Media and the *Newbury Weekly News*.





Name: Holly Chant
Age: 28
Newspaper/newsroom:
Hackney Gazette

What were you doing before you started your community reporter role?

I have not had any formal training in journalism so far but I'm looking forward to starting the NCTJ course. Before I started the role, I was in an indie-folk band signed to an independent label. I studied anthropology at university.

How are you finding the job?

The first week was very daunting but over the past few weeks, I have grown in confidence and started to find and write news stories about people, events and places in Hackney. On-the-job experience has been so valuable.

What type of community are you serving and how are you getting to grips with that community?

My patch is the borough of Hackney in London. It is an extremely diverse community made up of many smaller groups of people. I have spent my first few weeks on the job meeting as many people from the community for informal chats and interviews. I have also visited community centres, pubs and community hubs to find out more about the community I serve.

Tell us about a particular story you are proud of and why.

I'm particularly proud of a story I did about a mother campaigning for kids in the area to join the cadets. One of her sons had been the victim of knife crime and had died a few years earlier. She believed the cadets had helped her other son to deal with the loss of his brother. He was awarded the Deputy Lieutenant certificate for his achievements on Armed Forces Day outside Hackney town hall.

I was told by many in the community that the way media often portrays young people is misleading and was glad to be given the opportunity to show a young man in a positive light rather than the victim or perpetrator of a crime.



Name: Stan Skarzynski
Age: 35
Newspaper/newsroom:
Oxford Mail

Do you have any previous journalism experience or training? What were you doing before you started your community reporter role?

I do have a bit of experience. I moved to the UK eight months ago because of work, as I'm the British correspondent for Gazeta Wyborcza, the largest legacy newspaper in Poland. Back in Poland I was a journalist, columnist, reporter, editor and producer for the last 10 years, mostly covering Polish politics.

How are you finding the community reporter role?

Thanks to the absolutely fantastic editorial team at The Oxford Mail and The Oxford Times I am having truly the greatest time of my life. I thought changing language at work was going to be a nightmare, but the editors here patiently help me develop my English writing skills.

The job also allows me to explore Oxford and Oxfordshire from a rather privileged position, as journalists are allowed to ask endless questions. I also cannot wait for September, when I will start my education for a professional qualification at Bournemouth University.

What type of community are you serving and how are you getting to grips with that community?

I work with a variety of communities, mainly those which are still emerging or remain in a state of flux, such as homeless people or EU nationals, who found themselves as a distinguishable group when the Brexit story broke out.

My long interest in theatre has also turned me into a theatre reviewer and I enjoy this very much indeed.

Tell us about a particular story you are proud of and why.

I'm most pleased with a story which made the front page of the Oxford Mail about the impact of Brexit on farmers, who struggle to hire fruit-pickers and other labourers. It was headlined 'Eat all the British strawberries you can, they won't be here next year'.

What I like is that it wasn't a dark story about crime and murder nor breaking news. It was an inconspicuous story about berries, set on a sunny Oxfordshire farm, and it was there for a while, waiting in plain sight for someone to figure it out. Figuring it out and putting it together is what I'm quite proud of.



NCTJ JOURNALISM DIPLOMA (STUDY ROUTE) NCTJ JUNIOR 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.

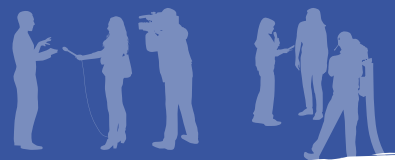
The types of careers students have progressed to include:

- 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**



'I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF MYSELF AS A CHANCER LIVING OUT OF A BACKPACK FOR YEARS'

says BAFTA-winning filmmaker, Patrick Wells

A filmmaker who won a BAFTA for his documentary about the mass slaughter of Rohingya people has credited his journalism training for giving him the confidence to be a self-starter.

Patrick Wells, from Putney, London, directed and filmed *Myanmar's Killing Fields*, which showcased evidence of repression, violence and mass murder of Muslim Rohingyas by Myanmar security forces.

His journalism career began when he trained at the NCTJ-accredited fast-track course at PA Training Newcastle in 2009.

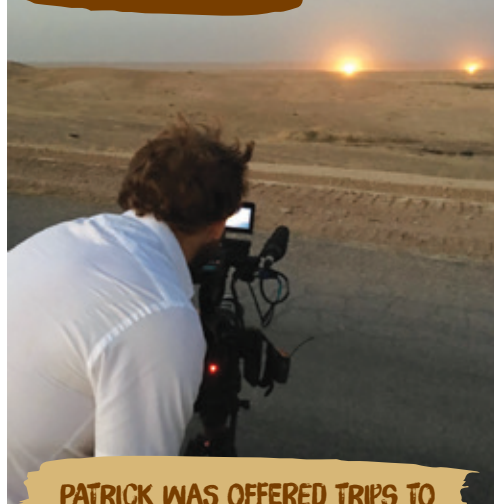
The fast-paced course meant he was soon given a patch to source stories and gained experience in the *Newcastle Chronicle* newsroom.

The 35-year-old said: "The course gave me the ability to be a self-starter and the confidence to go out on my own and start finding stories. I would never have been able to do that without any training.

"After the course I became a freelancer and was operating on my own."

Always wanting to work abroad, he took a chance and went out to Africa.

He said: "A friend of a friend had an apartment in Senegal. I was a complete chancer; I went to see Reuters unannounced. They took pity on me."



PATRICK WAS OFFERED TRIPS TO CHAD AND LIBERIA AND WORKED ON THREE VIDEOS A DAY FOR REUTERS' AFRICA DAILY.

When the Arab Spring uprisings happened in 2011, Patrick then pitched his first documentary *Holding the Line* for Al Jazeera Witness. It involved two months filming rebels and was nominated for the Rory Peck awards.

He said: "That was my first role as a director. I thought that would launch my career but it didn't. I then spent four or five hard years freelancing before I got to work with BBC and Channel 4.

"Now at this stage of my career, people come to me with projects. Production company Mongoose Pictures hired me to do *Myanmar's Killing Fields*."

Speaking about the BAFTA-winning documentary, he said: "It was the hardest film I have ever done, not because it was dangerous, but because of the level of violence we had to watch every day.

"We were face-to-face with hardcore genocide. We had a rough time, it was very difficult."

The sickening and powerful footage meant that the Channel 4 *Dispatches* film was awarded the BAFTA award for best current affairs in 2019.

Patrick said: "To get a BAFTA was amazing. I have always thought myself as a bit of a chancer, working out of a backpack for years, so it was amazing to get the recognition."

His advice to aspiring journalists was to work strategically and don't be afraid to wait for what you want.

He said: "Journalism is about being a real-world operator. Be strategic; work on projects that will be successful. Play the waiting game and don't give up."



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CRISIS:

Almost 700,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled their homes in the northern Rakhine province of Myanmar for neighbouring Bangladesh since August 2017. They were making perilous journeys to escape violence by the security forces. The Myanmar government view the Rohingya people as illegal immigrants and deny them citizenship. Myanmar's military says it is fighting Rohingya militants and denies targeting civilians.



BA (Hons) MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM PROGRAMME

The journalism industry is ever-changing, but whether it's words, sounds, images, video or data, it's still about professional, trained journalists telling stories that matter.

At UCLan, we've been helping people like you be part of this exciting profession for nearly 60 years. Many things have changed, but our commitment to producing employable, creative and multi-skilled journalists is still what we're all about.

Here's why you should find out more about our NCTJ-accredited BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism programme if you are serious about a career in journalism.

- ✓ Students enjoy it! We achieve top scores in the National Student Survey (NSS) for Journalism.
- ✓ UCLan is 1st in the UK for assessment and feedback in the 2019 NSS. We are also 1st in the North West and in the UK top 5 for academic support, as well as being 1st in the North West and in the UK top 20 for teaching quality.
- ✓ The programme is accredited by the NCTJ and the BJTC.
- ✓ You will be taught by professional journalists.
- ✓ The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) is in Preston, a small city with a big personality. It is a lively and diverse place to study with great rail links to Manchester, Liverpool and London.
- ✓ You will be taught in a multi-platform newsroom environment and your stories will be published to a real audience via our website UCLan Live.
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To find out for yourself, book on to one of our Open Days or contact BA (Hons) Multimedia Journalism course leader Caroline Hawtin CHawtin@uclan.ac.uk.



'DITCH YOUR VOICE RECORDER AND PICK UP YOUR PEN - SHORTHAND IS AS INVALUABLE AS EVER'

Laura Pitel



Hunched over an exercise book, carefully practicing the shapes of different letters, some days at my NCTJ course would feel like being back in kindergarten. There was even nightly homework. But I use the things I learned on my 17-week training every day in my role as the *FT's* Turkey correspondent.

The most tangible skill I acquired was Teeline shorthand, a condensed form of writing that uses symbols to allow you to take notes more quickly – and more accurately – than in longhand. Learning it is not difficult, it just takes hours of repetitive dictation practice at ever increasing speeds. The aim was to get to more than 100 words per minute – or faster if possible. Susan, our softly-spoken teacher, would read out passages of text while we grappled with how to draw the right shapes for words such as “exaggerated” or “influenza”.

It might sound old fashioned and unnecessary to learn a handwriting code in an age when everyone has a voice recorder on their mobile. But try listening back through endless sound files when your deadline is 15 minutes away and you just need to find that one pithy quote. Shorthand allows you to quickly flip back through the pages of your notebook and – provided you can decipher your own squiggles – quickly find what you need.

During my time in the UK as a news and politics reporter, my shorthand was essential when



out-and-about collecting interviews and “colour” for stories. It was especially important for reporting in the courts, where recording devices are banned.

Here in Ankara, I use it mainly for street interviews, face-to-face meetings or for jotting down notes while I'm on the move. To my great sadness, I haven't yet found a way to do it in Turkish.



LAURA IS THE FINANCIAL TIMES TURKEY CORRESPONDENT.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT ROUTE FOR YOU

Once you have decided to pursue a career in journalism, it's important to choose the right training path for you. The NCTJ Diploma in Journalism is the qualification that editors look for and will equip you with the skills to succeed. For the best chance of securing a job in journalism, studying for an NCTJ qualification will put you a cut above the rest. We spoke to five journalists about studying on each route.

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE

Mojo Abidi studied on a BA journalism course at the University of Sheffield and graduated in 2017. She now works as a production journalist at ITV News Central.



How did your NCTJ training help you start your career?

I found the practical elements really improved my confidence, so when I went on work experience I was ready to knock on doors and talk to strangers in the street.

Are there any aspects of your training that are particularly helpful in your role now?

I knew the practical elements, media law and ethics would be crucial for my future career. But when I started working, I was really grateful for my public affairs training. It really helped me gain a much better understanding of the UK's political scene, especially as I had just moved to England. And I actually really enjoyed shorthand! It's a bit like learning another language, and I always use it when I'm taking notes.

Why did you pick the BA journalism course?

I picked the BA Journalism course at Sheffield because it's one of the top courses in the country. I went to university open-minded about what area of journalism I wanted to go into, and the course gave me the techniques to produce digital, broadcast and print content. This variety helped me learn what I was most interested in.

Tell us about your job, what does a typical day entail?

One of the best things about my job is that it's really varied. One day I can be producing news bulletins for Good Morning Britain, the next day I could be writing articles for the website and on another day I might be assisting on the main 6 o'clock programme. I have also started to appear on air; producing television news packages and fronting newsroom lives.

Tell us about a proud moment you have had in your career or the best story you have covered.

I recently produced my first television news package. I helped tell the story of how the Hong Kong protests were affecting people in the Midlands, a topic very close to my heart because I was born and raised in the city. Through my connections I found an ex-Hong Kong police

officer who was now living in Birmingham, as well as a teacher who was worried about going back with her young son because of the violent demonstrations. The package focused on the emotional impact the protests were having on the family, who were now afraid to go home. It received lots of positive feedback.

POSTGRADUATE DEGREE

Calum Leslie graduated in 2013 with an MA in multimedia journalism from Glasgow Caledonian University. After university, he worked as a trainee journalist for BBC Scotland and is now at BBC Radio 4 Today.



How did your university degree prepare you for a job in journalism?

The NCTJ training on the course was invaluable. From media law, to shorthand skills and an understanding of public affairs, the subjects gave me the ability to go into newsrooms and put myself to good use right away. Showing I was relatively surefooted also gave editors the

confidence to give me proper work to get stuck into – along with making the odd round of teas, obviously.

Are there any aspects of your training that are particularly helpful in your role now?

It might seem pretty obvious, but media law is something I use every day. The importance of knowing where you are with defamation, contempt, court procedures and reporting restrictions cannot be overestimated. Working for a programme like Today, where interviews are quickly picked up and shared more widely, you have to know these boundaries really well – or you can become part of the news, and not in a good way.

Tell us about your job, what does a typical day entail?

It can vary depending on the specific shifts, but the basics involve contributing ideas for the programme and working on finding the right guests to bring them to life on air. I'll also end up chasing voices on breaking stories and writing briefings for our presenters, as well as taking in and editing pre-recorded interviews.

What advice would you give to any aspiring journalists?

Be enthusiastic. Don't undersell yourself. If you have a good idea for a story, commit to it and make other people realise why it matters. That said, always be willing to take criticism and advice. And watch what people who are really good at their job do on a daily basis; learn from all the little things.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Abbianca Makoni started an apprenticeship on the joint *Evening Standard* and PA scheme in August 2018 and is working as a junior news reporter.



Why did you choose an apprenticeship?

I never thought I would do an apprenticeship. I was set on going to university until about three weeks before my results day when I came across the *Evening Standard* opportunity on Twitter. When I saw it, it made me realise that

it was a way of learning and getting practical experience. I've always been quite a hands-on, practical person. University isn't a route that is for everyone and, for me, this seemed a better path.

Tell us about your job, what does a typical day entail?

I cover a variety of news from crime, courts, foreign news to politics. Being a news reporter gives me the opportunity to pitch stories as well so I have been able to report on subjects I am passionate on such as knife crime. The *Evening Standard* have been very supportive in listening to my ideas and allowing me to learn the kind of reporter I am.

What advice would you give to someone starting out in journalism?

Try to find out what you are interested in and therefore what kind of journalist you can be. What are the issues that are important to you? What can you offer from your own experiences and background? You can find yourself specialising in an issue like immigration or gender and offer a different voice.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Chloe West is a senior reporter at the *Rotherham Advertiser*. After studying on a non-accredited BA course, Chloe found that many employers were asking for an NCTJ qualification as a prerequisite. Chloe secured her first job in journalism at JPIMedia on the proviso that she attained the diploma whilst working. The NCTJ's distance learning option allowed her to do so.

Tell us about your job, what does a typical day entail?

I am predominately the health reporter but I also do day-to-day stories on police, fire and human-interest stories. It's a mix of office reporting and getting out on my patch.

Why did you choose to do distance learning?

I originally studied journalism at the University of Lincoln but the course didn't include an NCTJ qualification at the time. I didn't realise how important it was to have this in the industry until after I graduated and tried to find a job. Luckily though, I was able to find employment at my local newspaper, *Louth & Mablethorpe Leader*,

on the condition that I got the NCTJ Diploma in Journalism alongside my job. So, from then, I had to try to study in my own time in-between working full-time at the *Leader*.

How did you find distance learning?

It was extremely challenging, trying to do it alongside a full-time job. There were moments where I thought I was never going to get there. But I was so determined that I wasn't going to give up on it.

FAST-TRACK

James Ayles is a sports reporter working at Mail Online. James started at the Mail in December 2017 soon after attaining his NCTJ Diploma in Journalism through a fast-track course at News Associates London.



Why did the fast-track in particular appeal to you?

I was working at my local paper as a freelance. I realised that without a qualification my opportunities would be limited so I took the plunge and moved to London to do the fast-track course and look for a job. The fast-track worked well for me because I felt ready to work and was ready for the intensity and specialisation of the course.

How has it prepared you for your career?

It was really interesting and a valuable thing to go through because I could constantly apply it to my job. The shorthand was very, very useful. Everyone asks whether shorthand should be relaxed these days but I still think it's as paramount as ever to get your shorthand. Media law is also extremely important because I find I have to keep it in mind for so many stories on my busy news patch.

How has it prepared you for your career?

It has given me the knowledge and skills in my trade. It also gave me the qualification which employers need. I was offered a job with still a month to go on my course.

Tell us about your job, what does a typical day entail?

At Mail Online, you can work either day shifts or evening shifts, meaning there's a lot of variety. During the day you will look for stories, often from social media or good lines from elsewhere, and the news editors will send you stories to write and build for the site. I will also sift through press releases and event diaries for anything interesting or relevant so I can pitch my own ideas. There may also be phone interviews or press events I have planned to cover, so you do get out of the office.

What advice would you give to someone considering a fast-track course?

You have to be ready to go. If you slack off, you will find yourself behind. This option is for people who are ready to get stuck in. So, I would say, do some work experience beforehand so you can be sure that this is right for you. Once you've done that then you can really focus on your career in a fast-track course.

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