



Magazine Journalism Course

Syllabus and other details

The course leads to the NCTJ's Preliminary Certificate - the most widely respected trainee journalism qualification in the UK. It gets you on short-lists for job interviews.

Many of our graduates have jobs on magazines and websites - you can join them!

How the course works

Foundation Journalism

We will train you in every aspect of practical journalism, one module at a time. Teaching material will be sent to you online. Each subject unit is accompanied by appropriate exercises and assignments.

You will study the module, email back any queries, problems etc and then complete the exercises and assignments.

Exercises will be paper-based - re-writes of handouts etc.

Assignments will be practical - you will have to go out and find a certain type of story (human interest, reviews, features, profiles etc) and write them up.

We also teach you how to write for other feature and news platforms. So you will get the chance to:

- Write your own blog
- Upload stories to our student website
- Write SMS text alerts - and send them
- Write news tickers
- Write e-mail bulletins
- Stimulate reader dialogue
- Record stories for podcasts or use on the radio
- Take news photos and upload them to our student website

Once you have completed the exercises and assignments, you can email them for marking. They will be marked and returned to you with a Grade, comments etc.

Once you have completed the module to an acceptable standard, you will be sent the next one, together with exercises and assignments.

Foundation Journalism also includes Sub Editing - an essential skill for all magazine journalists.

You will be taught the essential subbing skills, so that you will be able to sit the NCTJ Sub Editing Exam.

You will also be able to use our online workshops in Quark Xpress, Adobe Photoshop and Dreamweaver - again, essential software packages for magazine journalists.

The software is *not* included in the course fee, but we will be able to get it for you at a heavily discounted student price.

Once you demonstrate an acceptable degree of competence in your Foundation Journalism skills, you will be sent mock NCTJ Multi-Platform News Writing papers, and Sub Editing papers, for you to complete and return.

You will be given specialist guidance to prepare you for your exams. You will also be given help building your NCTJ Magazine Portfolio.

Specialist Journalism

Once you have covered the Foundation Journalism Modules, you will be able to move on to your chosen Specialist Area:

- Sports journalism (with NCTJ exam)
- Celebrity journalism
- Fashion journalism
- Education writing
- Freelance journalism
- Web writing
- Investigative journalism
- Travel writing
- Political journalism
- Opinion writing and reviewing

You can study additional Specialist Areas for £80 each if you want to.

You will be able to get subbing practice and use your desktop publishing skills to produce pages for us to mark - and you can upload them onto our student website.

Shorthand

You study T-line from a recommended textbook.

We also provide you with websites where you can access shorthand theory lessons and dictation passages.

And we provide you with MP3 files for speed practice.

Law

The course deals with every aspect of magazine law, one module at a time, in the same way as foundation journalism (above). Some of the teaching will be from approved textbooks.

Exercises will be paper-based - mainly tackling old NCTJ Pt 2 (General Law) exam questions relevant to the subject.

Once you have completed the exercises, you can email them for marking. They will be marked and returned to you with a Grade, comments etc.

Once you have completed the module to an acceptable standard, you will be sent the next one, together with exercises and assignments.

You will also be given specialist guidance to prepare you for your exams.

Public Affairs

The course deals with every aspect of central government, one module at a time, in the same way as foundation journalism (above).

Exercises will be paper-based, mainly tackling old Part 2 (Central Government) exam questions relevant to the subject.

Once you have completed the exercises, you can email them for marking. They will be marked and returned to you with a Grade, comments etc.

Once you have completed the module to an acceptable standard, you will be sent the next module, together with exercises and assignments.

You will also be given specialist guidance to prepare you for your exams.

Study approach

You will study journalism (Foundation and Specialist) and shorthand for the duration of the course and will *simultaneously* study PA, and then Law one after the other.

The assignments and exercises are NOT compulsory, although it is highly recommended that you do as many of them as you can.

You will need to fit in as many as you can, according to the time you have available to do the course.

Attachment

You will be encouraged to find work attachment at appropriate media organisations, depending on how much spare time you have available. Support will be given in helping you find work attachment.

Exams

You will be told to enter the three NCTJ preliminary exams when you are ready. The exams are:

- News Writing
- Law 2 - General Reporting
- Public Affairs 2 - Central Government
- Sub Editing
- Sports Journalism (if you do Sport as your specialist option)

plus

- The NCTJ Portfolio of work

The NCTJ will make arrangements for you to sit the exam papers at a college or exam centre that should be near to your home.

Students living abroad may need to sit the exams with the help of the British Council.

You will need to give proof of identity before sitting the exams.

Your Career path

The NCTJ qualifications are an open door to a career in journalism. And the online course will prepare you to work in every sphere of magazine journalism.

Once you have completed the course and have passed your exams, you will be ready to begin looking for work. And we will give you help and advice on where to find jobs, how to apply for them and how to prepare for interviews.

Cleland Thom has wide-ranging contacts in all areas of journalism and is well placed to help you find work.

He has helped hundreds of young - and not so young - journalists into jobs over the years. Many of his former students are now working on national magazines, websites and radio stations all over the UK and abroad.

Career Development Loans

For information on financial assistance to support your learning, please visit www.direct.gov.uk/adultlearning or contact 0800 100 900.

If you want a chat

If you would like to discuss the course or chat about your prospects in journalism, email us at e-courses@ctjt.biz or call us on 01243 381998 or 07733 145 620.