



Edge Hill University

CAREERS CENTRE

Training to be a Journalist

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Inclusive Learning

It is Edge Hill's aim to make our services and provision accessible to all our users. If you need us to present our information in a different format (eg: electronic copy, large print), or need any other modifications to this publication, please contact The Careers Centre and we will do our best to accommodate your requirements.

Edge Hill Careers Centre
Contact Details: Tel: 01695 584866

Website; www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers

Opening hours:

Term-time: Monday – Thursday 9.00 am – 4.45 pm
Friday 9.00 am – 4.00 pm

Vacation periods: Mon – Fri 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
(closed for lunch 12.30 pm – 1.30 pm)

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WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A DEGREE IN JOURNALISM?

Introduction

This guide has been written for students studying Journalism and aims to highlight some of the popular employment routes. It has also been designed to help you determine the important skills that you will have used and developed during your course and what today's employers are looking for in a graduate recruit.

In addition, there is information about Edge Hill Careers Centre and the useful resources that are available to you. These are also detailed on our website at www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers. You will also find some examples of recent vacancies and some key website addresses to help you begin your research and job hunting strategy. We hope that you find this booklet an informative and useful resource as you begin your career research and planning.

Anne Higham
Edge Hill Careers Centre
June 2007

Using the Careers Centre

Edge Hill Careers Centre Website: www.edgehill.ac.uk/careers

A good way to begin your career planning is to visit the Edge Hill Careers website and familiarise yourself with all of the information that is available there. Searching the web can be very time consuming and it can be difficult to locate the information that you require. To help we have tried to provide you with the key information that you need and to signpost some of the most useful websites.

To access this information simply click on *Student* at the top of the opening page and you will be linked to the extensive career resource available to you from your computer. These include:

Careers News – with details of the latest opportunities – these can be very diverse e.g. closing dates for graduate jobs, opportunities for work experience which we know are in demand such as media, summer work abroad opportunities and much more.

Unclear of a Career – the website will signpost you to useful resources that include computerised guidance tools and questionnaires that you can complete in college and on the web to help you identify your skills, strengths and motivations.

Careers Resources – these include booklets that have been specifically written by the Careers Centre staff for Edge Hill students on a variety of topics - most of which you can download and print off yourself. This section also includes a list of all of the careers books that are available in the LRC for you to access.

Further Study - information on options for further study including taught and research opportunities and funding with links to key websites.

Job Hunting - methods, applications, advice on CVs, interviews, assessment centres, work experience & voluntary opportunities, part time jobs & vacancies and self-employment.

Employability – details of work experience and voluntary opportunities and Information & advice for those of you interested in starting up your own business.

Prospects Website: www.prospects.ac.uk

Prospects is THE ESSENTIAL Careers website for all undergraduate and postgraduate students. It includes a database of national job opportunities and a comprehensive database of UK postgraduate opportunities.

For subject specific careers information locate *Careers Centre* on the home page and from the drop down menu select *Options with your subject*. Click on specific degree disciplines to find information related to options following relevant degrees. You will find information about specific careers including entry and training

requirements and further information resources in the section called *Explore Types of Job* under *Jobs & Work*. You may also be interested in the information in the briefings that look at sectors related to particular fields of employment. This includes a look at each sector and hot links to information relating to key roles within it. Together these sections will provide you with information regarding the skills that you should be acquiring from your degree and to information relating to specific relevant careers.

Direct links to these pages can be obtained by keying:

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/signposts>

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/options>

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/occupations>

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/sectorbs>

You can also find an analysis of career areas entered by graduates from different degree disciplines on graduation. Updated annually the survey is called "What Do Graduates Do?" and it is on-line at: <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/wdgd>

The whole site is a vast careers library of information that includes a wide range of career profiles, labour market information and a career guidance programme called Prospects Planner.

You can access the on-line version of *Prospects Planner* via:

<http://www.prospects.ac.uk/links/ppanner>

This is a particularly useful tool for career changers or students who are not sure what they want to do. To complete the programme you will need to register with My Prospects so that they can store your details confidentially. Details on how to do this are available as you access Prospects Planner and from the [prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) home page in the left hand tool bar under My Prospects.

It is advisable to talk to a careers adviser before using Prospects Planner

Training to be a Journalist

Want to be a Journalist?

Journalism is definitely in the competitive group of careers. Many people are attracted to the career because of the perceived image of interviews with the rich and famous, reporting from war zones, foreign travel, the constant variety of work and in some cases journalists themselves become famous. On the other hand it is important to have a realistic picture about the career. Journalism can be routine just ask the reporter who covers the “births, deaths and marriages” section of the local paper. It may attract a lower salary at the beginning of training so before deciding to pursue a career as a journalist it is important to get your facts right. Journalism is changing rapidly as the internet is providing the platform for newspaper and magazine titles. Increasingly journalism graduates are expected to have multimedia skills- to be at ease producing and editing a video item, creating a podcast, writing a story or blogging.

Qualities of a good Journalist.

A good starting point would be to take a look at the skills and qualities required to be a journalist:

- an interest in current affairs at all levels
- a lively interest in people, places and events
- an ability to write in a style which is easy to understand
- good spelling, grammar and punctuation
- an appreciation of the part of a local newspaper plays in the community
- a willingness to accept irregular hours
- an ability to work under pressure to meet deadlines
- determination and persistence
- an ability to ask tactful yet perceptive questions and sometimes not take no for an answer
- an ability to follow editorial policy regardless of individual principals and values

In a thriving industry where competition is fierce a portfolio of work which demonstrates that the candidate has gone the extra mile can pay dividends. If the portfolio includes multimedia as well as print then that would help to set them apart in a crowded market. This could include keeping an online blog, experimenting with recording a podcast or making a web-based documentary.

Getting Experience.

It is extremely important for students to maximize the amount of work experience before they apply for postgraduate study or direct training. There are two ways to gain experience and develop your skills. One way is to contact a local paper to see if there is any work you may be able to do. The other is to write articles and try to get them published either in a paper or magazine. Try writing for College publications, community magazines or if you have a hobby or interest write about it and see if you can get it published in a related magazine. The more work you have in your portfolio the better chance you have of impressing a potential employer or course leader. Within this booklet there are a number of email and contact addresses which may be useful contacts for work experience.

If you are interested in broadcast journalism, then contact (on several occasions, don't give up after the first rejection) local radio stations or hospital radio. Television is even more competitive, national work experience programmes are offered by the BBC www.bbc.co.uk/workexperience but they are always oversubscribed. It could also be worth trying local cable stations.

If you are on the BA Journalism Degree at Edge Hill you will already have work experience built in to the course. This experience is very useful but it is important to add other work experience of your own.

Getting in to Newspaper Journalism

There are two ways of getting into journalism, either by going on a postgraduate or pre-entry course or applying directly to a newspaper as a direct entrant.

The National Council for the training of Journalists (NCTJ) has a list of accredited courses. Competition is extremely competitive so it is advisable to apply as early as you can after applications open. Check www.nctj.com for an up to date list.

Some newspapers offer training contracts for trainee journalists. To find out which newspapers offer direct entry schemes you could try looking at the Newspaper Society web site which links to all regional and national newspapers www.newspaperssoc.org.uk

In the past the following have offered graduate schemes:

The Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, the times, Financial Times and Reuters

Training contracts for direct entry schemes usually last for two years. Under the contract trainees take the NCTJ Preliminary exams after approximately six months and then the final proof of competence the NCTJ National Certificate at the end of the contract.

Useful websites:

www.nuj.org.uk National Union of Journalists

Student membership is available for those on vocational courses and for those on other courses who are working on student publications and intend to become journalists.

www.nctj.com

National Council for the Training of Journalists

www.nujtraining.org.uk

Includes a “ Careers in Journalism” section

www.pressassociation.co.uk

The Press Association

www.johnstonepress.co.uk

Johnstone Press

www.archant.co.uk

Archant newspapers

www.trinitymirror.com

Trinity Mirror plc

Magazine Journalism

Gaining some relevant experience if you have not already got any is a good way of getting a foot in the industry door. Think about the sort of magazine that interests you – have you interests and hobbies which have helped you build up specialist knowledge that maybe useful on a particular magazine? Do you have specialist knowledge or skills which may prove invaluable to a busy team? Apply in writing with your CV enclosing some examples of your work.

Many job opportunities are not advertised at all and speculative applications are a common way of securing a job. When there is no central recruiting point you should apply directly to the editor of the magazine or journal. Look for editors details in Writers and Artists Yearbook

If considering freelancing make sure you target the right magazines for your article and consider ringing editors with an idea for an article relevant to their publication. Keep an eye out for events or stories with a local interest and you maybe able to persuade your local newspaper to publish your work.

The Periodical Publishers Association website has a very useful Careers and Training section www.ppa.co.uk

Broadcast Journalism

The Broadcast Journalism Training Council has a list of accredited postgraduate training courses www.bjtc.org.uk . The courses are heavily oversubscribed possibly because they include placements as part of the training in either the BBC or one of the commercial television/radio broadcasters. Direct entry into a broadcasting organisation offering full training is the other route into the profession. A tiny minority will get on to one of the BBC schemes however the majority of those who enter broadcast journalism directly do so through local television and radio.

Journalism Traineeship for 2007/8 with ITV

ITV Granada and ITV Yorkshire are 2 of the regions included in this scheme. It begins on the 1st October for a period of 12 months. There is no guarantee of

permanent employment at the end of the scheme and applicants cannot be guaranteed their location preference.

The purpose of the scheme is to nurture and develop talented entry level journalists to a very high standard and 90% of the trainees from the 05/06 traineeship were employed on a permanent basis with regional news.

Short-listed candidates are invited to a one day Assessment Centre at ITV Central Birmingham on a number of days in July

Applications for the 2007/8 scheme had to be made online by 25th May 2007

Check www.itv.com for information on future schemes.

Check the following websites:

www.sky.com/jobs contains information on current vacancies and work experience which is available in Sky News and other areas

www.channel4.com lists current vacancies and gives information on how to apply for jobs and work experience however there are an extremely limited number of short term work experience placements

www.mtv.co.uk information on applying for jobs and work experience with MTV Europe

www.startintv.com useful site but you do need to pay to register for access to some sections

If you are currently on the Edge Hill Journalism degree on graduation you should have completed the NCTJ Preliminary exams. Students would then apply for jobs directly in newspapers usually undertaking an 18 month contract to complete their training, take the final exams and gain the NCTJ National Certificate.

Examples of recent vacancies

Company: Leading Business Weekly

Post: Trainee reporter

Salary: £18,000 - £24,000

Description:

This is a job reporting on the business end of commercial law covering the firms, the cases and the personalities for our client's weekly newsmagazine and daily news website.

As one of their team of reporters, you will be developing and nurturing contacts within the City and breaking big stories on a daily basis - hopefully those worthy of being picked up by the nationals.

Key to this role, aside from superb business and general finance reporting skills, will be your ability to mix with the big guns in corporate law firms. You need to be smart, sharp and confident to gain the trust of your contacts in the field.

While there is a largely UK-centric focus to the title's content, there is also international coverage, particularly on Europe, the US and the Far East, and languages would be considered a bonus.

Length of experience as a reporter is less important than talent, enthusiasm, presentation and solid academic credentials. On offer is the chance to join a leading weekly business title within a first division publishing house, with excellent prospects for future development.

Responsibilities:

- Source, write and break news and exclusives to both daily and weekly deadlines for the online portal and print weekly
- Develop superb contacts within key law firms, from property litigation partners to finance teams
- Generate analysis and features pieces when required
- Contribute to the daily e-commentaries and e-bulletins when required
- Contribute to the various supplements when necessary
- Attend City functions and other events where necessary

Requirements:

- Strong academic background with postgrad journalism training or equivalent experience preferred
- Burning desire to break City exclusives day-in, day-out
- Exceptional news sourcing and writing skills
- Strong interpersonal skills with an ability to mix with City bigwigs and legal hotshots
- Experience in, or exposure to, quality business or financial journalism a plus

- Ability to produce well-written, punchy and accurate exclusives to tight deadlines essential
- Extra languages a bonus
- Flexibility in working times essential, as the job will involve evening functions and socials
- Knowledge of City and corporate law sector would be an advantage

Company: Cornwall & Devon Media

Post: Trainee Reporter

Salary: £14,500 reviewed after 6, 12 and 18 months

Description: To be based in the Bodmin office primarily producing copy for the Cornish Guardian but also for sister papers the West Briton and the Cornishman plus the website and on occasions the portfolio of niche magazines. A pre-entry qualification in newspaper journalism would be ideal To be a confident responsible self starter who is not daunted by being expected to shoulder a heavy workload and major responsibilities early in their career. To be happy to work in a small team where responsibilities can stretch across a number of journalistic disciplines

This vacancy was advertised on www.nctj.com/vacancies

Company: Bishop's Stortford Herald

Post: Trainee Reporter

Salary: Not stated

Description: You will have completed an NCTJ recognised training course will need to be enthusiastic, hard working and have the talent to ensure that the newspaper is brimming with excellent local news each week. The successful applicant will be able to write concise, accurate copy to tight deadlines and in house style. You will need the ability to develop contacts and find off-diary stories.

This vacancy was advertised on www.nctj.com/vacancies

Company: Soccer Saturday

Post: Statistician

Salary: Not stated

Description: We offer the nations No1 Sports choice and we need great people to ensure we continue to be our customers No.1 choice and we are therefore looking

for a Statistician to play a vital role on Soccer Saturday, both in its preparation and live transmission.

You will produce a weekly stats pack for presenter Jeff Stelling and the rest of the team, covering all leagues from the Premiership to the Conference and the SPL to the Scottish third division. Clearly an excellent football knowledge is essential. The ability to research and present stats in an accurate and interesting form to deadlines is also needed.

You will also oversee the stats for the midweek Soccer Special programmes, liaising with freelancers who produce stats packs for these shows as well as working with the Soccer Special presenter before and during the show.

This is an important role in the production gallery during our live programme so Live television experience would be an advantage, but the enthusiasm and intelligence to learn quickly would be equally important.

While football stats is clearly the main part of the job, you will also be expected to contribute much to the overall production of the programme both practically and editorially. You must be able to organise a demanding individual work schedule while also playing a full part in a small, hard-working team.

Method of Application: Apply online You will also need to submit 300 words on a match you have seen recently including statistics as part of your application.

This vacancy was advertised on www.nctj.com/vacancies

Company: Congleton Chronicle

Post: Trainee reporter

Salary: £13,000 approx will pay for resits, refresher courses and the NCE

Description: A traditional paid for weekly newspaper specialising in all parish pump stories that are great for a thorough grounding in journalism requires a trainee. Need to have completed the NCTJ pre-entry course.

Method of Application: Send CV and/or any enquiries via email

This vacancy was advertised on www.nctj.com/vacancies

What have previous Edge Hill Graduates done?

In the last two years many journalism graduates entered the sector.

Examples are:

Trainee reporters with a variety of newspapers
Freelance radio reporter with a radio station
Media sales executive with a publishing company
Online advertising executive with an internet consultancy
Production Assistant for Golf TV
Freelance media liaison officer with a football club
Pre press operator with a newspaper
Newspaper editor and Assistant radio producer with a mail order company

PUBLICATIONS – available in the LRC

The Guardian Careers Guide – News Journalism 1997 [070.4 VAR]
Getting into Broadcasting 1997 [384.54 RUS]
A Career Handbook for TV, Radio, Film, Video and Interactive Media 2000 Skillset [791.402341 LLE]
Radio 2003 [791.44 SHI]
Journalism Uncovered 2003 [070.4 CAP]
Media Uncovered 2004 [302.2302341 HAR]
Inside Journalism, 1996 [070.4 NIB]
Press Gazette, Quantum Publishing, weekly
Understanding Journalism 2002 [070.4 BUR]
Willings Press Guide, Annual [050.25 WIL]
Writers' and Artists' Yearbook, Annual [029.6 WRI]

WEBSITES

General

Prospects	www.prospects.ac.uk
National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ)	www.nctj.com
Broadcast Journalism Training Council	www.bjtc.org.uk
Periodicals Training Council	www.ppa.co.uk

Newspapers

The Newspaper Society	www.newspapersoc.org.uk
National Union of Journalists	www.nuj.org.uk
Hold the Front Page	www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk
Journalism.co.uk	www.journalism.co.uk
The Media Network	www.tmn.co.uk
Paperboy	www.thepaperboy.com
The Press Complaints Commission	www.pcc.org.uk

National Press

Daily Mail	www.dailymail.co.uk
Daily Telegraph	www.telegraph.co.uk
FT	www.ft.com
Guardian	www.guardian.co.uk
Independent	www.independent.co.uk
Daily Star	www.megastar.co.uk
Daily Mirror	www.mirror.co.uk
The Observer	www.observer.co.uk
The People	www.people.co.uk
The Sun	www.thesun.co.uk
The Times	www.timesonline.co.uk

Local Press

LANCASHIRE	
Blackpool Gazette Blackpool Reporter	www.blackpoolonline.co.uk
Chorley Guardian	www.chorleytoday.co.uk
Garstang Guardian	www.garstangtoday.co.uk
Lancashire Evening Post	www.lep.co.uk
Lancashire Telegraph The Bolton News Bury Times Blackpool Citizen Preston & Leyland Citizen Lancaster & Morecambe Citizen Chorley Citizen Burnley Citizen Blackburn Citizen Leigh Journal Prestwich & Whitefield Guide St Helens Star Asian Image	www.thisislancashire.co.uk
Wigan Evening Post Wigan Reporter Wigan Observer	www.wiganonline.co.uk

MERSEYSIDE	
Liverpool Echo Liverpool Daily Post	http://icliverpool.icnetwork.co.uk
Southport Visiter Ormskirk Advertiser Crosby Herald Formby times Bootle Times Skelmersdale Advertiser Maghull & Aintree Star	http://icseftonandwestlancs.icnetwork.co.uk
Wirral Globe	www.thisiswirral.co.uk

GREATER MANCHESTER	
Manchester Evening News	www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk www.manchesteronline.co.uk
Rochdale Observer	www.rochdaleobserver.co.uk
Oldham Evening Chronicle	www.oldham-chronicle.co.uk
Salford Advertiser	www.salfordadvertiser.co.uk

CHESHIRE

Cheshire Newspapers

www.thisischeshire.co.uk**BROADCAST JOURNALISM**

BBC

<http://jobs.bbc.co.uk>

Skillset

www.skillset.org

Radio Lancashire

www.bbc.co.uk/england/radiolancashire

Radio Merseyside

www.bbc.co.uk/england/radiomerseyside

Independent Radio

www.irn.co.uk

Broadcasting - Radio

www.ofcom.org.uk

The Radio Magazine

www.theradiomagazine.co.uk

Channel 4 News

www.channel4.com/news

Channel 5 News

www.channel5.co.uk/news

CNN Europe Edition

www.europe.cnn.com

ITV News

www.itv.com/news**MAGAZINE JOURNALISM**

EMAP

www.emap.co.uk

IPC Media

www.ipcmedia.com

Magazine Boy

www.themagazineboy.com

Anne Higham
Edge Hill Careers Centre
June 2007



Edge Hill University
CAREERS CENTRE

CUSTOMER VIEWS

Your views are important to us and help us to continually improve the quality of our services.

We would appreciate it if you could complete this form and tell us what you thought of the information we've given you.

Publication title :

Will this publication help you?

YES / NO

Did you find the information easy to understand?

YES / NO

Was the publication interesting?

YES / NO

Did you like the design of the publication?

YES / NO

Do you have any other comments about Edge Hill's Careers Centre of the information we've given?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.
Please return it to the Careers Centre