



Journalists at Work

Their views on training, recruitment and conditions

An independent survey by the Journalism Training Forum

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Editors who distributed questionnaires to their staff and all the journalists who took part in the survey.

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Key facts and figures

- There are between 60,000 and 70,000 journalists in the UK
- By 2010, industry forecasts suggest that there will be an increase of 20,000 journalists on current levels
- Journalism is one of the few professions to have an equal split between the sexes, with 51 per cent being men and 49 per cent women
- The profession is young: 70 per cent of journalists are under 40
- 41 per cent of journalists are single, widowed or divorced and 77 per cent have no dependent children
- 96 per cent of journalists are white with very small proportions from ethnic minority groups
- 55 per cent of journalists work in London and the South East
- Journalism is increasingly becoming middle and upper-middle class in its composition. Only 3 per cent of new entrants came from families headed by someone in a semi or unskilled job
- The profession is very highly qualified, with 98 per cent of all journalists having an undergraduate, or postgraduate, degree level qualification
- 58 per cent of journalists hold a qualification in journalism
- The majority of journalists (76 per cent) had undertaken some learning activities in the previous year
- 60 per cent of journalists believe that there are new or additional skills they need in order to be more efficient at their work
- The average working week for journalists is 41.6 hours. Although the majority (86 per cent) work longer than the average 35 hours worked across UK industry, the majority (85 per cent) think their working hours are reasonable. The majority of journalists agree with the statement that 'journalism is a job that I enjoy doing' and 'I intend to stay working in journalism'
- The average salary is £22,500, with 10 per cent earning less than £12,000, 18 per cent less than £15,000 and 34 per cent less than £20,000. 18 per cent earn more than £40,000
- 17 per cent of journalists believe that they have been discriminated against at work



Foreword

In recent years, few subjects have caused such heated internal debate among journalists as training. Rapid changes in technology, media ownership and government policy have led some to the conclusion that journalists are no longer being effectively equipped with the skills they need.

This piece of research does not corroborate such a pessimistic outlook, but it does confirm that we face great challenges if we are to ensure that the news industry prospers and the public is served by well-trained and educated journalists.

You will see from the findings of this survey, which is probably the largest ever conducted across all branches of journalism, that a number of points stand out.

The first is that demand for journalists is growing and is expected to grow further. In the next eight years, there will probably be a need for an additional 20,000 journalists, on top of the 70,000 already working in the industry.

The second is that journalism is no longer, if it ever was, an occupation that draws upon the strengths and talents of the whole of our society. This research confirms what has long been suspected, that not only has journalism become a graduate-only occupation (a good thing), but it has also become an occupation to which entry is very nearly impossible for young people from non-middle class homes.

That picture is made even more challenging when viewed from the perspective of Britain's growing ethnic minority communities. Given that so much journalism is concentrated in London and the South East, and other urban centres, the numbers of black and Asian journalists working in Britain is pitifully small.

A third, noteworthy finding of this survey is that although journalists value training and most continue to receive good quality training throughout their careers, too many do not. The message here from journalists is that they do not, everywhere, feel adequately supported in their ambitions to learn and develop.

It would be wrong, however, to suggest that the media sector is performing worse than other industries. The evidence, in fact, is that performance in the journalism business is in line with UK norms. But how many stories have we all read, or written, in recent years drawing attention to the fact that Britain does not perform well enough by international standards in education, training and professional development? We need to raise our ambitions and our standards.

The motivation for such an improvement combines commercial self-interest with a wider national and public interest. A healthy democracy demands to be served by well-educated, well-trained journalists. Healthy media companies need to draw upon the brightest and best talent from all sections of society.

If journalists are to understand, reflect and serve the UK in all its social and ethnic complexity, the community of journalists also needs to be diverse. If advertisers are to increase their support for newspapers, radio, television and new media, they need to be confident that we are capable of being fully in touch with our audiences.

In terms of government policy, we are still in the middle of a major change in the approach to lifelong learning in the UK. In April 2001 a new local network of Learning and Skills Councils was established, along with the newly empowered Regional Development Agencies. At a sectoral level, the National Training Organisation network is to be replaced by larger Sector Skills Councils.

The action to be taken in the light of the findings of this survey are a matter for individual companies and for the two national training bodies whose members employ most journalists: the Publishing National Training Organisation and Skillset, now in the process of being re-born as the Sector Skills Council for the audio visual industries.

The survey itself has been designed and overseen by the Journalism Training Forum, a body established last year by the Publishing NTO and Skillset to advise it about journalism training issues.

The Forum's central aim has been to place in the public domain some high quality data to inform the industry's deliberations. Its members have also discussed what needs to be done in the light of the survey findings.

In our view, the case for a programme of action to address the issues of social and ethnic diversity raised in the survey is compelling and we look forward to discussing our ideas in more detail with our parent bodies.

We also commend to the two training organisations, and to other relevant players in government and the industry, the problems identified by journalists in this survey in the structure of training and the status and clarity of some qualifications.

If you would like to comment on any aspect of the report, or its implications, please do so by e-mail, fax or post to the Publishing NTO or Skillset at the addresses to the left.

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“ ”

By 2010, industry forecasts suggest that there will be an additional 20,000 journalists, pointing to a significant demand upon the industry's training.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

This report is the work of the national training organisations of the industries that employ most of the UK's journalists. The Publishing National Training Organisation covers book, journal, newspaper, magazine, directory, database and interactive publishing and Skillset (recently renamed the Sector Skills Council for the audio visual industries) covers broadcasting. Both organisations are advised by the Journalism Training Forum, which was set up in 2001 to advise on issues that affect the recruitment, training and education of journalists.

In order to improve the quality of information informing the training and education debate, the Forum conducted a large-scale self-completion survey among UK journalists. This has been supplemented where appropriate with existing data from a variety of sources, but mainly from the Publishing NTO, Skillset and the National Union of Journalists (NUJ). The survey yielded 1,238 completed questionnaires, which is sufficient to provide reliable and robust information.

Overview

Based on the survey and other data, we estimate that there are approximately 70,000 journalists in the UK. Of these, roughly 60,000 journalists work in publishing and 10,000 in broadcasting. By 2010, industry forecasts suggest that there will be an additional 20,000 journalists, pointing to a significant demand upon the industry's training, education and recruitment infrastructure.

Newspaper publishing accounts for the largest proportion of journalists with 30 per cent working for regional/local newspapers and 11 per cent for national newspapers. A quarter of journalists work for magazines, with business magazines providing the largest sub-sector (15 per cent of journalists). Just over a fifth (21 per cent) work in broadcasting, with 11 per cent in radio and 10 per cent in television. Although there are many journalists and ex-journalists working in the area of public relations, our survey has not sought to identify these.

Over half, 55 per cent, of journalists are located in London (44 per cent) and the South East (11 per cent), which reflects the geographical distribution of the publishing and broadcasting industries in the UK. However, within this, some sub-sectors (magazines, national newspapers and television) are heavily biased towards London.

Personal background and qualifications of journalists

Journalism is one of the few professions to have an equal split between the sexes. The profession is also young: a third (35 per cent) are aged between 20 and 29 and a further third (32 per cent) between 30 and 39. A high proportion are single, widowed or divorced (41 per cent). Strikingly, 77 per cent have no dependent children.

However, this picture varies considerably by sector. In national newspapers, 55 per cent of journalists are male and 46 per cent over the age of 40. Other sectors (particularly regional newspapers, magazines and radio) have higher proportions of young people, with 46, 40 and 38 per cent respectively of journalists in these sectors being aged below 30.

In some important respects, journalism does not reflect the diversity of the UK population, either in terms of ethnic mix or social background.

- > Some 96 per cent of journalists are white, with small proportions from ethnic minority groups. Given the predominance of the industry in London and the South East, and in other urban areas, this suggests that the industry has not succeeded in reflecting the balance of the populations it serves.
- > New entrants to the industry (those who started their first journalism job in the last three years) are being drawn overwhelmingly from families headed by individuals working in professional or other high level, middle class occupations. Only 3 per cent came from families headed by someone in a semi or unskilled job. This data confirms the suspicion that journalism is increasingly becoming middle and upper middle class in its composition.

This social background is also reflected in the fact that journalism is now, in effect, a graduates-only occupation. The survey found that 98 per cent of all journalists have a degree or postgraduate degree level qualification. The only journalists who do not have these high level qualifications are older journalists who have been in the profession for a long time.

Working patterns

The findings of this research indicate that being a journalist is a relatively stable profession, in that:

- > the vast majority of respondents were working (96 per cent); and
- > had been in continuous employment for substantial periods of time (53 per cent for more than five years, 76 per cent for more than two years).

There is, however, a substantial proportion of the workforce which are on non-permanent contracts, either working for their own company (3 per cent), on fixed-term contracts (6 per cent), working as freelances (4 per cent) or on a trainee contract (3 per cent).

The data supports the view that there are well-established progression routes, with journalists tending to:

- > move into national newspapers from regional newspapers and magazines. Of those currently working in national newspapers, 35 per cent have previously worked for a regional newspaper and 18 per cent for magazines;
- > move into television from radio. About a fifth of those currently employed in television previously worked in radio. However, a more common route is within the television sector, with a move from regional television into national television.

The 'entry points' for journalists are regional newspapers, radio and, to a lesser extent, magazines, which is consistent with the younger average age of journalists working in those sectors.

Entering the profession and student debt

Respondents tended to hear about their first jobs either via an advertisement (30 per cent) or by directly making contact with companies (28 per cent). The nature of these first jobs are a mixture of traineeships (44 per cent) and directly into a journalist's job (27 per cent).

58 per cent of journalists hold a journalism qualification and a further 3 per cent are working towards one. 38 per cent do not hold such a qualification. Those who held a qualification regard it as having been important in getting them their first job and relevant to their work as journalists. The likelihood of holding a journalism qualification varies by sector, in that 75 per cent of journalists in regional newspapers have a qualification compared to 42 per cent in magazines.

Looking only at new entrants to the profession (those who have entered in the last three years), 68 per cent had debts incurred during their education when they started work. The average level of this debt is £4,750. This is not out of line with the average level of debt of students who are leaving education generally.

Journalists react positively to statements that 'journalism is a job that they enjoy doing', that 'they intend to stay working in journalism' and that 'journalism has lived up to all aspirations as a job'. They tend to react more sceptically to the statement 'journalism is an open and receptive profession'.

Training, learning and development

The majority of journalists (76 per cent) have undertaken some learning activity in the previous year, which is in line with national trends. The likelihood of a journalist to have undertaken learning varies by sector, from a low of 57 per cent in national newspapers to 82 per cent in magazines.

The majority of this learning is employment-related in that:

- > the majority (84 per cent) is related to a current or previous job. In less than a quarter (23 per cent) of cases the learning was for personal interest;
- > in the majority of cases the learning related to the development of professional skills;
- > the learning was paid for by an employer in over two-thirds of cases.

60 per cent of journalists believe that there are new or additional skills needed in order to be more efficient at their work. This finding clashes with information from employer surveys, which tend to state that editorial staff are fully efficient in their work. The main area of new skills required are related to the core requirements of the job: journalistic skills (particularly shorthand or advanced shorthand) and sub-editing; IT and new media skills; and other professional skills such as law. There is a smaller demand for business and management skills.

Of the journalists who thought there was a skill that needed further development, two thirds (64 per cent) had tried to undertake learning (34 per cent had not). Nearly all (94 per cent) these journalists had faced barriers to obtaining this learning, with the barriers being mainly particularly employer-related: of not being able to get time off from work (44 per cent) or persuading the employer to pay for it (24 per cent).

Perhaps because of this, 34 per cent of journalists stated that their management had not been helpful when they had tried to obtain learning. However, more journalists (58 per cent) said that their management had been very or fairly helpful.

Working conditions

Whilst there is a wide range in the 'normal' working week of journalists, the majority (86 per cent) work longer than the average 35 hours worked across all UK industry. However, the image of journalism as having a particularly long-hours culture is not supported by this survey: the average working week across all journalists is 41.6 hours. This varies relatively little across the sectors (from 40.8 hours in radio to 42.2 hours in television). Men work an average of 42.8 hours compared to 40.7 hours for women – a difference accounted for by a small minority of women (eight per cent) who work part time (compared to three per cent of men). In most cases (85 per cent) journalists thought that their working hours were reasonable.

As with hours worked, there is a wide range of incomes. The average salary is £22,500, with 10 per cent earning less than £12,000, 18 per cent less than £15,000 and 34 per cent less than £20,000. Just less than a fifth (18 per cent) earn more than £40,000

Women receive an average of £5,000 less than men. On the face of it this may appear surprising, as women are employed in each of the main job groups in the same proportion as men. However, the gap would appear to be at least partly explained by the younger average age of women, the corresponding fewer years of experience and relatively higher proportion of employment in low paying sectors.

Given the range of salaries, it is no surprise that there are differing views: 50 per cent believe that they are fairly rewarded for their work, 48 per cent believe that they are not. Patterns of dissatisfaction do not exactly follow the distribution of average salaries – journalists who work in radio (a sector with one of the lowest levels of pay) are the most likely to say that they are fairly rewarded for their work. Generally speaking, journalists at the outset of their careers express most dissatisfaction about pay levels.

Just less than a fifth (17 per cent) of journalists believe that they have been discriminated against at work. Women journalists and journalists from non-white ethnic groups are twice as likely to believe that they have been discriminated against than men or those from white ethnic groups.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Publishing NTO (which covers book, journal, newspaper, magazine, directory, database and interactive publishing) and Skillset (the Sector Skills Council for the audio visual industries) are jointly responsible for overseeing the education and training of journalists in the UK. The Publishing NTO and Skillset have a cross-sector Journalism Training Forum (JTF) to advise on a strategy for journalism education and training.

In order to develop this strategy the Journalism Training Forum has commissioned this research to provide up-to-date and consistent information across sectors on the journalism profession.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

1.2.1 Overview

The main body of this report is based on data produced by a self-completion survey distributed to journalists across the UK. This has been supplemented where possible and where appropriate with existing data from a variety of sources, but mainly from the Publishing NTO, Skillset and the National Union of Journalists (NUJ).

1.2.2 Questionnaire development

The questionnaire was developed by the Publishing NTO, with comments from members of the JTF. It was piloted at two employers in publishing and broadcasting with staff at different levels of seniority. Following this, two versions of the questionnaire were finalised:

- a paper version, for distribution by post;
- an electronic version, which was both e-mailed and made available on the Publishing NTO's website.

1.2.3 Development of a sample frame

The development of an adequate sampling frame was identified early in the process as being one of the most problematic areas, as there is no central, all-inclusive list of journalists. A multiple approach has been used:

- approaches to employers. This was a letter from the NTO to all employers in the trade associations, explaining the purposes of the project, asking them if they wished to take part, and if so whether they wanted a 'paper' version of the questionnaire (and how many) or an e-mail version, that they could circulate internally;
- a sub-set of a list of NUJ members, complete with home addresses, was given by the NUJ, stratified by age and sex;
- a complete list of people currently registered by the National Council for the Training of Journalists was given, with work addresses;

- > Key to this process was the BBC, obviously a major employer in the broadcasting sector. The BBC co-operated fully and provided a complete list of all their journalists and factual researchers. All these could not be used as this would have distorted the publishing/broadcast balance of journalists (estimated to be 83:17) and so a random selection was taken.

1.2.4 Distribution and return of the questionnaire

In the final analysis, some 10,737 questionnaires were mailed out, in addition to the e-mail version. It is difficult to give exact figures for those who received the e-mail version as it was sent to employers who had requested it, who then circulated to as many journalists as they wished.

Return of the questionnaires was via a freepost address set up at the Publishing NTO or via e-mail back to the NTO.

All employers who had expressed an interest in taking part in the research were asked to remind their journalists about the survey and the need to complete it. Further publicity was also generated by the Publishing NTO and Skillset websites.

In total 1,238 completed and usable questionnaires were returned. This response is in-line with typical response rates of other comparable postal surveys, particularly those that are relying on the goodwill of participants to respond. The sample size is sufficient to provide reliable and robust information, particularly as there is no sign of bias in the response pattern¹.

1.3 Structure of the report

The remainder of the report is structured in the following manner:

- > section 2 gives a brief overview of journalism in the UK, looking at how jobs are defined, estimates of the numbers employed and the sectors in which journalists work;
- > section 3 gives a profile of journalists in terms of their personal characteristics, qualification levels and social class;
- > section 4 examines journalists' working patterns, looking at how long they have been working as a journalist, their current working status, the nature of the contract under which they work and patterns of job change within the sector;
- > section 5 looks at how journalists enter the profession, looking at the role of journalism qualifications, the issue of debt when starting out as a journalist and views that new entrants have of the profession;
- > section 6 examines skill needs and learning opportunities for journalists;
- > section 7 examines working conditions, including hours of work, income, work-life balance and existence of discrimination; and
- > section 8 contains thoughts on the main findings and implications of this research, that will ultimately lead to recommendations to be taken forward.

¹ See further discussions in section 2 on the response by job title and sector

It is worth noting at this stage that the report contains many tables, and standard reporting conventions have been used:

- > all percentages have been rounded to whole numbers. This may mean on occasion that percentages do not sum total 100%; and
- > a "**" indicates that the value is less than 0.5%.

In addition to the quantitative, statistical data, responding journalists were invited to add any other comments they felt where appropriate. These have been added in to the commentary where it was felt that they further explain or expand a point. Some care needs to be taken when interpreting these. They are not statistically representative and also tend towards the negative: as a rule people only tend to take time to write in these comments when they feel that a criticism needs to be made. Relatively few comment positively.

Also, where appropriate, reference is made in the text to other reports and data sources that throw further light on the employment of journalists in the UK. When this is done, full reference sources are provided.

The background features a blurred image of a document with a pen resting on it. A hand is visible, pointing to a specific line of text. The overall color scheme is a warm, golden-brown hue. The text on the document is partially legible, mentioning 'Mappleton' and 'Varying the size, edition and color of the...'.

“ ”

Almost half of journalists mainly work in London, with a further 11 per cent being in the South East.

2 JOURNALISTS IN THE UK

2.1 Introduction

This section gives a brief overview of journalism in the UK, looking at how journalist's jobs are defined, estimates of the numbers employed and the sectors in which they work.

2.2 Defining journalism

What is meant when reference is made to a 'journalist' needs to be made clear at the outset. For an initial indication, the official occupational definitions (the Standard Occupational Classification, 2000 [SOC], produced by the Office for National Statistics [ONS] that describes job roles) states that the job roles for **journalists, newspaper and periodical editors** are to:

- determine subject matter and undertake research by interviewing, attending public meetings, seeking out records, reviewing written work, attending film and stage performances, etc;
- write articles and features and submit draft manuscripts to newspaper, magazine or periodical editors;
- select material for publication, check style, grammar, accuracy and legality of content and arrange for any necessary revisions; and
- liaise with production staff in checking final proof copies immediately prior to printing.

The ONS definition for **broadcasting associate professionals** defines their roles as being to present, direct and produce television and radio broadcasts, in particular:

- introduce radio and television programmes;
- conduct interviews and prepare reports for news broadcasts, current affairs programmes and documentaries;
- direct actors and brief designers, camera operators, sound recordists and editors on the effects to be achieved;
- assume financial responsibility for the completion of programmes on time and in budget; and
- edit film and videotape to assemble shots in the required sequence.

A problem that exists, particularly with the SOC categorisation, is that there is no real distinction of hierarchy in the various job categories. All journalists are grouped together, whether they are relatively new entrants or have several years' experience.

The survey asked, 'What job title do you normally use to describe what you do?'. In the first instance these jobs have been reported more or less as they have been described in the questionnaires, although they have been grouped into types, that also reflect relative seniority. Collapsing a wide range of job titles into a broader grouping is never a perfect exercise, being a balance between generating a useful summary list that can be the basis for illuminating further analysis and jobs that have little relationship to each other. The full list of job titles is given at Annexe 1.

All the jobs of the journalists have been collapsed into six broad groups:

- > **general management** – a relatively small group who have senior management roles;
- > **editorial management**: one of the largest groups containing those who have a degree of overall editorial management;
- > **section heads**: a smallish group of journalists who are responsible for a section;
- > **reporters**: writers and reporters have been split into two sections which are:
 - writers and reporters – newspapers & magazines**: those who work in publishing media – writing and reporting for newspapers, magazines and books. This is the largest single group;
 - broadcast reporters**: reporters who work mainly in the media of TV and radio;
- > **production**: those involved in production of newspapers, books and magazines, or 'behind camera/microphone';
- > **other**: any that do not fit in any of the above categories.

Table 1 Job titles of respondents

General management	1
Editorial management	28
Section heads	6
Writers and reporters – newspapers & magazines	35
Broadcast reporters	13
Production	16
Other	2
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*



The likelihood of being in these different levels of jobs varies by age (and therefore also by experience). Journalists at the beginning of their careers (those aged under 25) are much more likely to be writers or reporters (63 per cent) and less likely to be in more senior roles of editorial management or section heads (three per cent). As the age of journalists increases, they are more likely to be in these editorial management roles, although this peaks for the 40–49 year old age group.

There is little difference in distribution of job title by sex. There does not appear to be much evidence that women are not progressing to senior roles but there are more men than women in editorial management roles.

Table 2 Job titles of respondents by age and sex

	General management	Editorial management	Section heads	Writers and reporters	Reporters	Production	Other
Total	1	28	6	35	13	16	2
Age							
Under 25	0	10	3	63	14	9	2
25 - 29	*	22	5	44	16	12	2
30 - 39	1	32	8	25	14	18	1
40 - 49	1	40	4	25	11	18	1
50 and over	1	34	7	29	8	19	2
Sex							
Men	*	31	6	34	13	16	1
Women	1	25	6	37	13	16	2

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

2.3 Numbers of journalists

Estimating the number of journalists in the UK using national data sources is problematic, as these are very limited and subject to a wide margin of error. The main data source for occupational employment is the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This is conducted quarterly, with a sample size of about 140,000 each quarter.

In the 2001 LFS summer survey, a total of 239 cases were people who stated that they worked as 'authors, writers or journalists'. This definition is by no means the most useful: there are many writers who would not consider themselves to be journalists. However, the survey suggests that, grossed up, there are 115,000 journalists in the UK. These LFS estimates do appear to be a considerable over-estimate of the number of journalists in the economy, in that:

- > research on the number of broadcast journalists in 1995/96² suggests that the number of economically active journalists was in the region of 7,300. More up-to-date information from the audio-visual industries' 2000 census put the total number of employees and freelances working in journalism as being 11,158;
- > estimates of the number of journalists in publishing indicate that this is in the region of 50,000 - 60,000³.

There are obvious inconsistencies in calculating the total number of journalists working in the UK, and it is better to work with a 'safe' estimate that may under-estimate the total number rather than make exaggerated claims that cannot be later substantiated. Therefore, the 'best' estimates suggest that the total number of journalists (both on permanent contracts and freelance) is in the region of 60,000- 70,000.

Whatever the current number of journalists is, it seems clear that the numbers will continue to grow in the future. Occupational forecasts are not available purely for journalists, but are available for the wider occupational group, of which they are part ('media associate professionals'). Data shows that employment is forecast to increase by 31 per cent (by 55,000, from 175,000 to 230,000) over the next 10 years at an annual growth per year of 2.5 per cent. At the same time, overall employment in the UK is forecast to grow by eight per cent, at a growth rate of less than one per cent per year.

² *Broadcast journalists: employment patterns and training needs*, Woolf, Holly and Connor, Skillset, 1995/96
³ *Skills Foresight, 2001, Publishing NTO*

Assuming that this growth rate is accurate, this suggests that the media industries will face an increasing demand for trained journalists in coming years. By 2010 there will be between 80,000 and 90,000 journalists – an increase of about 20,000 on current levels. This suggests that the media industries face a large demand for the training of journalists in coming years.

Table 3 Occupational projections

	Numbers employed		Change, 1999 – 2010		
	1999	2010	N	Total	% p.a.
Media associate professionals	175,000	230,000	55,000	31	2.5
All occupations	27,456,000	29,673,000	2,127,000	8	0.7

Source: *Projections of Occupations and Qualifications, 2000/2001, Institute of Employment Research, 2001*

2.4 Sector

It is clear that journalists work across a number of sectors. In broad terms these have been identified as publishing and broadcasting media, but the responses show that there is a wider spread of sectors and a degree of subdivisions within each of these.

The majority of journalists work in a publishing medium, with 41 per cent working in newspapers (30 per cent in regional or local newspapers and 11 per cent in national newspapers), and 25 per cent in magazines (15 per cent in business magazines and 8 per cent in consumer or leisure magazines). The proportions working in radio and television are roughly similar, with 11 per cent in radio (7 per cent in regional and local, 4 per cent in national) and 10 per cent in television. Of the remainder, four per cent work in on-line media, 2 per cent for independent production companies, one per cent in books and 1 per cent in public relations. Within the 'other' category, the only substantial category is the 1 per cent of journalists who work for news agencies.

The only comparable data source is the NUJ's membership database, which also records the main sector of work. This shows that 30 per cent of the NUJ's members work in newspapers, 24 per cent in magazines, 9 per cent in television, 9 per cent in radio, 15 per cent in press and public relations and 18 per cent in 'other' (7 per cent in books, 4 per cent in news agencies, 2 per cent in on-line and 5 per cent in other). The comparison between the NUJ membership list and that of the journalism survey in the table is not 'like-for-like' and therefore we should expect some differences. However, there are enough similarities to be reassured that the journalism survey has received responses from across all sectors in numbers that roughly represent their real distribution.

Table 4 Sector

Newspapers	41
Regional/local newspapers	30
National newspapers	11
Magazines	25
Business magazines	15
Consumer/leisure magazines	8
Other magazines	2
Radio	11
Regional/local radio	7
National radio	4
Television	10
National TV	6
Regional TV	4
Cable or satellite TV	*
Other	8
On-line	4
Independent production company	2
Books	1
Public relations	1
Other	2
Answered more than one sector	4
Not answered	1
Unweighted base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

2.5 Geographical employment patterns

Looking at data for all employment (ie all industries and occupations) it can be seen that London and the South East have the highest proportion at 12 and 15 per cent respectively. Just over a quarter of all employment is located in these two regions.

Data from the Publishing NTO Skills Foresight and from Skillset's research has confirmed that much of publishing and broadcasting activity is located in London and the South East, with relatively smaller proportions of employers and employment distributed across the UK. Two-thirds (66 per cent) of all broadcasting employment is located in London and the South East, as is more than half (54 per cent) of all publishing employment. This data is shown in the table below, showing all employment in the sectors, not solely that of journalists.

The data from the journalists survey confirms this geographical concentration. Almost half of journalists mainly work in London, with a further 11 per cent being in the South East.

Table 5 Employment in the publishing & broadcast Industry & journalists place of work by region and devolved nation

%

	All employment			Journalists ³
	All UK employment ¹	Publishing ²	Broadcasting ²	
South East	15	21	12	11
South West	9	8	6	7
London	12	33	54	44
West Midlands	9	5	3	5
East Midlands	7	3	2	1
East/ East Anglia	10	4	4	2
Yorkshire & Humberside	8	6	2	4
North West	11	7	4	8
North	4	3	3	3
Scotland	8	6	4	7
Wales	4	2	4	3
Northern Ireland	3	2	2	3
Not answered/don't know	-	-	-	1

Sources: (1) Labour Force Survey, 2001, from Labour Market Trends, April 2002; (2) Publishing NTO Skills Foresight, 2001 & Audio Visual Industries Census, 2000; (3) Journalists at work, 2002

The geographical distribution of the employment of journalists varies, much as would be expected, according to sector. Although some care needs to be taken with relatively small sample sizes, it can be seen that for some sectors, employment is very much concentrated in London and the South East: 73 per cent of journalists working for magazines work in London, as do 70 per cent of journalists working for national newspapers, 70 per cent of those working in the 'other' sector and 54 per cent of those in television. The only sectors which do not have such a London and South East bias are regional newspapers and radio.

This geographic concentration of employment is thought to create both advantages and problems. Advantages come from the concentration of abilities and talent in a small space, leading to what are increasingly called positive clusters: these are thought, especially in creative industries, to lead to greater productivity and competitiveness. The disadvantages include the costs of living and working in London and the South East (costs that fall on both employers

Table 6 Employment of journalists main sector and region

	All journalists	National newspapers	Regional newspapers	Magazines	Radio	Television	Other
South East	11	6	14	12	13	9	7
South West	7	2	9	7	9	6	5
London	44	70	3	73	31	54	70
West Midlands	5	0	11	1	8	1	5
East Midlands	1	1	2	*	5	0	0
East/ East Anglia	2	0	4	1	4	2	1
Yorkshire & Humberside	4	2	9	*	6	2	4
North West	8	1	21	1	8	0	2
North	3	0	8	*	5	3	1
Scotland	7	10	11	3	6	4	4
Wales	3	2	7	1	2	3	1
Northern Ireland	3	6	1	*	3	16	0
Unweighted base	1,238	136	366	311	128	124	100

Source: Journalists at work, 2002

and employees) and difficulties in retaining staff in a market where there are many alternative opportunities. In addition, a number of respondents who were not working in London and the South East offered comments that suggest a sense of resentment against the London-centric nature of much of the industry:



'In Scotland we are limited in terms of choice of employer and it seems that to be successful, a move down south is essential. Scotland's talent is being pushed out of the country.'
Woman, aged 24, broadcast journalist, regional/local radio

2.6 Summary

Journalists are responsible for the selection, development and presentation of content. The actual number of job titles that journalists use to describe their job is lengthy (over 60 were used by the respondents to the survey), indicating a complexity in terms of job content and hierarchies.

There is no one single reliable data source that allows for a definitive number of journalists to be given. Best estimates indicate that there are in the region of 60- 70,000 journalists in the UK, split such that 50-60,000 work in publishing and 10,000 in broadcasting. The number of journalists is forecast to grow: We estimate that by 2010 there may be an increase of 20,000 on current levels.

This split is reflected by the sectors in which the journalists work. Newspaper publishing accounts for the largest proportion, with 30 per cent working for regional/local newspapers and 11 per cent for national newspapers. A quarter of journalists work for magazines, with business magazines being the largest sub-sector (15 per cent of journalists). Just over a fifth (21 per cent) work in broadcasting, with 11 per cent in radio and 10 per cent in television. Although there are many journalists and ex-journalists working in the area of public relations, our survey has not sought to identify these.

Over half of journalists are located in London (44 per cent) and the South East (11 per cent), which reflects the geographical distribution of the publishing and broadcasting industries in the UK. However, within this, some sub-sectors (magazines, national newspapers and television) are mainly based in and around London, with journalists in regional newspapers and radio being more evenly spread around the country.

3 PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF JOURNALISTS

3.1 Introduction

This section examines the personal characteristics of journalists. This has been the subject of some discussion in recent times, in that the way journalists represent the world must be shared to some extent by their own backgrounds.

3.2 Personal characteristics

The personal characteristics of the respondents to the survey are set out in table 7. These show that:

- > age: journalists are young – over a third (35 per cent) are aged between 22 – 29. A further third (32 per cent) are aged between 30 – 39. There are few journalists below the age of 22, which is most likely because of the mainly graduate-entry nature of the profession, which precludes entry until the early 20s;
- > sex: gender balance is good – 51 per cent male and 49 per cent female;
- > ethnicity: the profession is predominantly white (96 per cent). Representation from the minority ethnic groups is lower than that needed for them to be fairly represented in the occupation. While the proportion of whites roughly reflects the overall proportion in the workforce (94 per cent⁴), it must be remembered that other factors would lead to a higher proportion of non-whites, particularly that:
 - journalists are predominantly employed in London and the South East and in other urban areas, which have a higher proportion of people from ethnic minorities. For example, London's black and ethnic minority population is currently estimated at being 24 per cent, and predicted to rise to 30 per cent by 2016⁵; and
 - journalists are young, and it would again be expected to find a higher proportion of ethnic minorities in younger age groups;
- > disability: only a minority of respondents (three per cent) have health problems or disabilities that limits the type of work that they do. The majority of the respondents (97 per cent) do not have any health problems or disabilities;
- > over a third of respondents (41 per cent) are single, widowed or divorced, a relatively high proportion that nevertheless is consistent with the age profile discussed above. 59 per cent are married or in a long-term relationship;
- > just over three-quarters (77 per cent) of the respondents do not have any dependent children.

Again, the main data against which these findings are compared is the NUJ's membership database and this shows a reasonable level of comparability. In the NUJ's sample:

- > age: 4 per cent are under 24 years of age, 31 per cent of the NUJ members are between 25 and 35, 57 per cent aged 35 – 54, 8 per cent aged over 55;
- > sex: 62 per cent of members are men, 38 per cent women;
- > ethnicity: 2 per cent of the NUJ are from African/Caribbean minority groups, 1 per cent from black African and 2 per cent from Asian groups;
- > disability: 4 per cent of the NUJ membership identified themselves as being disabled.

All these findings show a distribution broadly comparable with that found in the journalism survey, with the exception that the NUJ membership has a higher proportion of men, a difference that may be explained by the lower penetration of NUJ membership among magazine journalists, which employ a higher proportion of females as a sector.

Table 7 Personal characteristics

		%
Age		
19 – 21		2
22 – 24		12
25 – 29		23
30 – 34		18
35 – 39		14
40 – 49		19
50 – 59		11
60 +		2
Sex		
Men		51
Women		49
Ethnicity		
White		96
Asian/Asian British		1
Black/Black British		1
Chinese		*
Other		2
Marital status		
Single/divorced/widowed		41
Married or in long term relationship		59
Dependent children		
None		77
1 or 2		20
More than 2		3
Health problems/disabilities		
Have health problem/disability		3
Do not have health problem/disability		97
Base		1,238

Source: Journalists at work, 2002
Base: all respondents, except those who did not give a response which have been removed from the calculations

Table 8 Personal characteristics: age and sex

	All	Men	Women
Age			
19 – 21	2	2	3
22 – 24	12	10	14
25 – 29	23	19	26
30 – 34	18	15	21
35 – 39	14	13	14
40 – 49	19	23	14
50 – 59	11	15	6
60 +	2	3	2
Base	1,220	621	598

Source: Journalists at work, 2002
Base: all respondents

Women journalists tend to be younger than men with 41 per cent of male journalists over the age of 40, compared to 22 per cent of women. Conversely 43 per cent of women are aged less than 30, compared to 31 per cent of men.

Some of these personal characteristics vary by sector:

- > sex: the proportion of females in each sub-sector varies. Some sectors, notably national and regional newspapers, retain a higher proportion of men (55 per cent). In other sectors, women are now in a majority, particularly magazines (55 per cent of journalists) and television (54 per cent female);
- > age: regional newspapers and radio have a higher proportion of young people aged under 25 (25 and 18 per cent respectively). National newspapers and television have the lowest proportion of young journalists at 5 and 6 per cent respectively). This accords with the image of regional newspapers and radio being 'entry-points' for the industry. Roughly one in five of journalists in national newspapers (20 per cent) and regional newspapers (17 per cent) are aged over 50, compared with about one in ten in radio (10 per cent) and magazines (8 per cent).

Table 9 Personal characteristics

	All journalists	National newspapers	Regional newspapers	Magazines	Radio	Television	Other
Sex							
Men	50	55	55	46	51	46	49
Women	49	45	45	55	49	54	51
Age							
Under 25	15	5	25	12	18	6	8
25 – 29	23	18	21	28	21	18	29
30 – 39	32	31	19	38	33	55	32
40 – 49	18	26	17	13	19	20	16
Over 50	12	20	17	8	10	2	16
Unweighted base	1,238	136	366	311	128	124	100

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Some comments about the 'youth culture':



'It's a sad fact, but unless you are going for a senior position, employers do not appear interested in taking on people over the age of 35.'
Man, aged 43, journalist, regional/local newspaper

3.3 Qualification level

Previous research in the sector suggests that the profession is one where a degree, and increasingly likely a postgraduate degree, is the entry-level requirement. For example, in 1995/96 71% of broadcast journalists completed their education at age 20 or older and 43% had a postgraduate qualification.⁶ Within the publishing industry, 70 per cent of those who work in 'associate professional and technical occupations' (which includes 'authors, writers and journalists' as a sub-group), have at least a level 4 qualification (degree level)⁷.

Pre-entry postgraduate vocational training is an important characteristic of journalists and is becoming more prevalent. Courses tend to be approved by the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), the Broadcast Journalists Training Council (BJTC) and the Periodicals Training Council (PTC).

A comparison of the two Standard Occupational Classification indicates that the entry requirement to the profession has changed somewhat over the last 10 years. The 1990 SOC suggests that 'entry is possible with GCSE/SCEs. Holders of higher academic qualifications are also recruited. Some occupations require post-graduate qualifications'. By 2000 this had changed to suggest that although there are 'no formal academic qualifications, entrants normally possess a degree. A variety of postgraduate diplomas are available'.

This upgrading of qualifications is certainly supported by the data, with journalists being very highly qualified. Almost half, have a Level 5 qualification (which equates to a postgraduate qualification in journalism or another subject), 55 per cent have a Level 4 qualification (an undergraduate degree in journalism or some other subject). Very few have qualification levels below this.

⁶ Woolf et al

⁷ Skills Foresight, 2001, Publishing NTO

Table 10 Highest qualification held

Level 5	43
Level 4	55
Level 3	1
Level 2	1
No qualifications	1
Base	11,091

Source: Journalists at work, 2002
 Base: all who could give adequate answer

The proportion of men and women qualified to Level 4 and above is similar (97 and 98 per cent respectively). However, women are more likely to have postgraduate qualifications – 46 per cent have a postgraduate degree, compared to 40 per cent of men.

Nearly all young people under the age of 30 are qualified to Level 4 and above. As the age group increases, so does the likelihood that they will have no qualification. Nearly one in ten (eight per cent) of the oldest age group (those aged over 50) have no qualifications. Older journalists are less likely to have a degree level qualification.

Table 11 Highest qualification level and personal characteristics

	Level 5	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	No quals
Total	43	55	1	1	1
Sex					
Men	40	57	1	1	2
Women	46	52	1	1	*
Age					
Under 25	44	54	1	0	0
25 – 29	51	49	*	0	0
30 – 39	47	52	1	1	0
40 – 49	32	64	2	1	1
Over 50	27	60	3	2	8
Ethnicity					
White	42	55	1	1	1
Non-white	52	48	0	0	0

Source: Journalists at work, 2002

The relationship between having no qualification levels and age is confirmed by the data on length of service. Of the 10 respondents who have no qualifications, eight have worked in journalism for more than 26 years and the other two for between 16 and 25 years.

3.4 Socio-economic status

Despite this increasing need for a postgraduate qualification, mandatory grants are not available for such training and discretionary grants are extremely rare. This is leading to concern that the industry is one in which people 'pay to enter', either via postgraduate courses or by working on unpaid work placements. The term 'the Samantha Syndrome' has been coined⁸ to describe the tendency of journalism to be increasingly middle and upper class in its composition. The need to have wealthy parents to fund courses, or the willingness to face considerable debt, may be deterring potentially good students from entering journalism.

Obtaining data on social class is a difficult exercise, particularly for people of working age. All statistics refer to the occupational standing of the individual themselves and not of their parents. What people are now can be determined, not necessarily where they have come from.

To address this issue journalists who have entered the profession in the last three years (predominantly young people) were asked what is, or was, their parents' main job. This has been coded to the Standard Occupational Classification and shown in the table below. Where information on two occupations (for both parents) has been given, the individual has been coded to the higher occupation of the two.

The results are quite clear: new entrants to the journalism profession are much more likely to have a parent from one of the highest occupational orders than would be expected given the distribution of all employment in the economy. 21 per cent of new entrants had a parent who was a manager or senior official (compared to 13 per cent of all employment), 47 per cent were from professional occupations (compared to 11 per cent) and 16 per cent from associate professional and technical professions. Only 3 per cent of new entrants have a parent whose job was in an unskilled occupation (1 per cent of process, plant and machinery operatives, 2 per cent in elementary occupations) compared to just under one in four (23 per cent) of people working in the wider economy. This finding is common to men and women, to journalists from white and non-white ethnic groups and to journalists employed in all sectors.

This data therefore confirms the view of the industry as being one whose new entrants come from a relatively small section of society. However, the data does not support the view that people who enter journalism are particularly likely to have a parent who is a journalist. Only four per cent of new entrants have a parent who is in a 'culture, media and sports' occupation (the broad group which contains journalists), with the biggest single grouping being in teaching and research professionals (24 per cent).

Table 12 Occupation of new entrants' parents and of all employed in the UK

	Occupation of new entrants parent 1	Occupational distribution of all employed in UK
Managers & Senior Officials	21	13
Professional Occupations	47	11
Associate Professional & Technical	16	13
Administrative, Clerical & Secretarial	5	15
Skilled Trades	4	14
Leisure & Other Personal Service	1	6
Sales & Customer Service	4	7
Process, Plant & Machine Operatives	1	9
Elementary	2	14
Base	313	27,546,000

Sources: (1) *Journalists at work, 2002*; (2) *Projections of Occupations and Qualifications, 2000/2001*, Institute of Employment Research, 2001

Base: for journalism survey is all who have entered into their first journalism job in the last three years.

⁸ by Professor Brian Winston at the University of Westminster

This is recognised by many journalists working in the industry:

“ ”

'Someone needs to give the less well-off the confidence and resources to go into journalism. It's sickeningly full of middle to upper class people. We want to hear more regional accents.'

Man, aged 29, reporter, national TV

3.5 Summary

Journalism is one of the few professions to have an equal split between the sexes. The profession is also young: a third (35 per cent) are aged between 20 and 29 and a further third (32 per cent) between 30 and 39. A high proportion are single, widowed or divorced (41 per cent) and furthermore 75 per cent have no dependent children.

However, this varies considerably by sector. Some sectors conform more to the 'older and male' image, particularly national newspapers, in which 55 per cent of journalists are male and 46 per cent over the age of 40. Other sectors (particularly regional newspapers, magazines and radio) have higher proportions of young people, with 46, 40 and 38 per cent respectively of journalists in these sectors being aged below 30.

There are concerns about the level of diversity in the industry, in particular relating to the fact that:

- > the occupation is not ethnically representative – more than nine out of ten (96 per cent) are white, with small proportions from ethnic minority groups. Given the predominance of the industry in London and the South East and in other urban areas, it might be expected that the occupation would have a greater proportion of people from ethnic minority backgrounds;
- > new entrants to the industry (those who started their first journalist job in the last three years) are much more likely to have a parent from one of the higher level occupations than would be expected, given the occupation employment distribution of all the workforce. Relatively few new entrants (three per cent) to journalism have their head of household in a semi or unskilled job. This data largely confirms the view that journalism is increasingly becoming middle and upper-middle class in its composition.
- > The profession is very highly qualified with 98 per cent of all journalists having a degree or postgraduate degree-level qualification. The only journalists who do not have these high-level qualifications are older journalists who have been in the profession for a long time.

4 WORKING PATTERNS

4.1 Introduction

This section examines journalists' working patterns, looking at how long they have been working as a journalist, their current working status, the nature of the contract on which they work and patterns of job change within the sector.

4.2 Length of time as a journalist

The respondents were asked what year they started their first job in journalism. The range of the number of years of experience stretches from those who have just started their careers to 50 years. However, consistent with the relatively young age of people in the profession, 55 per cent have been working as a journalist for less than 10 years.

Table 13 **Number of years since starting first job in journalism**

Within last 2 years	16
3 – 5 years	21
6 – 10 years	18
11 – 15 years	13
16 – 20 years	9
21 – 25 years	8
26 years and more	16
Not answered	1

Base **1,238**

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

The length of experience of working as a journalist varies by sector. Just under a quarter (24 per cent) of those in regional newspapers have worked as a journalist for less than two years, as have 19 per cent of those in radio and 17 per cent of those in magazines. However, regional newspapers also have one of the highest proportions of very experienced journalists – 23 per cent have worked as a journalist for more than 26 years.

Table 14 **Personal characteristics**

	All journalists	National newspapers	Regional newspapers	Magazines	Radio	Television	Other
Within last 2 years	16	4	24	17	19	6	13
3 – 5 years	21	10	22	27	22	15	21
6 – 10 years	18	20	10	20	17	25	28
11 – 15 years	13	17	7	13	13	28	9
16 – 25 years	17	24	14	15	21	21	9
26 years and more	16	25	23	7	9	6	22
Unweighted base	1,238	138	365	313	127	126	102

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

4.3 Current working situation

The majority of journalists (96 per cent) who responded to the survey were currently working, with only two per cent stating that they were not.

This is a high proportion and may be the result of the nature of distribution of the questionnaires that was (mainly) via employers. The only journalists who were not currently working who would have received a questionnaire would have been via the NUJ's list of members.

Table 15 Current working status



Working	96
Not working	2
Not answered	2
Base	1,238


Source: Journalists at work, 2002

Even among those not working, the majority had been in work recently: 36 per cent finished their last contract/period of work within the last month, 21 per cent between one and three months previously. There is no evidence from this survey of large-scale or sustained unemployment.

4.4 Length of continuous work

The respondents had been in work for long periods of time. More than half (53 per cent) had been in continuous work for more than five years, with a further 23 per cent having been in continuous work for between two and five years.

Table 16 Length of current or last period of continuous work



Less than 6 months	5
6 months but less than a year	6
12 months or more, but less than 2 years	12
Two years or more, but less than five years	23
More than five years	53
Not answered	2
Base	1,238

Source: Journalists at work, 2002

4.5 Nature of contract

A key issue in the management of skills in the industry is the use of freelances. Research by the PTC⁹ notes that in the publishing industry the 'use of freelances is almost universal', with particularly high usage in larger companies to compensate for leaner staffing levels. This research suggests that companies were using as many journalistic freelances as they employ full-time editorial staff, particularly for feature writing and design. Demand is particularly high for experienced freelances. However, the image of freelances has changed: they no longer have the image of a journalist who cannot find full-time employment anywhere. Freelances are now often senior professionals who either are seeking greater flexibility in the way that they work or who do not wish to progress into management roles.

The position in broadcasting is somewhat different. Nearly nine out of ten of broadcast journalists in 1995/96 were employed either as staff or on long-term contracts (Woolf et al). While an increase in freelance work had been noted, only 12 per cent of broadcast journalists were employed as freelances on contracts of less than one year. Permanent and full-time employment appeared at that time to be the norm. This had changed slightly by the time of the Employment Census in 2000, with the proportion of journalists who were freelance being estimated as being 17 per cent.

In the current survey, four-fifths of respondents (81 per cent) were working on permanent contracts, with the remainder on a variety of fixed term or freelance contracts.

This would suggest that the survey under-represents freelance journalists: the NUJ database has a higher proportion of freelancers than this 4 – 7 per cent found in the survey. This is probably because the route by which many of the questionnaires were distributed (*ie* via employers) may have excluded freelancers. It appears that employers distributed these only to their permanent employees. To identify the needs of freelance journalists, further research may be necessary.

Table 17 Contract status

	%
Permanent contract	81
Fixed term contract	6
Trainee	3
Working for own company	3
Freelance contract of less than one year	3
Freelance contract of more than one year	1
Volunteer on an unpaid basis	*
Work placement	*
Other	1
Not answered	1
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

The likelihood of having a permanent contract as opposed to any other form of contract only varies slightly according to a number of factors:

- > sector: journalists who work in magazines are most likely to have a permanent contract (87 per cent) while those in television and 'other' the least likely (75 per cent);
- > region: there is no difference between London, the South East and the rest of the UK in the likelihood of having a permanent contract;

- > sex: men are more likely to have a permanent contract than women (84 per cent compared to 79 per cent of women);
- > journalists at either end of the age spectrum are more likely to be working on a non-permanent contract. There are likely to be different circumstances underpinning journalists at either end of this spectrum: younger journalists working on non-permanent contract while they gain experience; experienced journalists taking advantage of their experience to gain the benefits of flexible working;
- > ethnicity: care needs to be taken with the size of the sample, but the data indicates that journalists from white ethnic groups are more likely to be on a permanent contract than those from non-white groups. This will partly be caused by the relative younger age of those in non-white ethnic groups;
- > disability: those with a disability or health problem are more likely to be working on a non-permanent contract – although care is again needed with the relatively small sample sizes.

%

Table 18 Variations in contact status

	Permanent	Non-permanent	Unweighted base
All journalists	81	9	1,216
Sector			
National newspapers	83	17	136
Regional newspapers	84	16	367
Magazines	87	13	312
Radio	80	20	128
Television	75	25	127
Other	75	25	102
Grouped region			
London	82	18	539
South east	81	19	19
Rest of UK	82	18	537
Sex			
Men	84	16	620
Women	79	21	604
Age			
Under 25	70	30	175
25 – 29	85	15	274
30 – 39	87	13	388
40 – 49	84	16	225
Over 50	74	26	152
Ethnicity			
White	82	18	1,129
Other ethnic group	76	24	42
Disability			
No disability	82	18	1,167
Disability or health problem	65	35	40

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

4.6 Changing sectors

The received wisdom in the industry is that there are 'traditional' progression routes:

- > in newspaper journalism: entry in local and regional press, from which there is a transition to work in national press;
- > in broadcasting, from radio to television.

Previously there has been no hard evidence to support this and so respondents were asked to list the sectors in which they work. Using this data it has been possible to plot a 'progression'. This shows that a progression does exist, in that:

- > of the journalists who currently work in national newspapers, 35 per cent had previously worked for regional newspapers, 18 per cent for magazines, with 9 per cent having worked across a range of sectors;
- > there is a similar drift into television from radio, but this is limited – about a fifth (18 per cent of those who currently work in television previously worked in radio). A more significant drift is into national television from regional and cable television. Of journalists who currently work in national television, 58 per cent held previous positions in cable or regional television.

This confirms data seen earlier on the ages and years of experience of journalists who work in different sectors. The data suggests that the industry has a number of entry points – radio (particularly local radio), regional and local newspapers and, to a lesser extent, magazines. From these entry points there is a movement into other sectors, namely national newspapers and television.

4.7 Summary

The findings of this research indicate that being a journalist is a relatively stable profession, in that:

- > the vast majority of respondents were working (96 per cent); and
- > had been in continuous employment for substantial periods of time (53 per cent for more than five years, 76 per cent for more than two years).

There is, however, a substantial proportion of the workforce that is on non-permanent contracts, either working for their own company (3 per cent), on fixed-term contracts (6 per cent), working as freelances (4 per cent) or on a trainee contract (3 per cent).

The data supports the view that there are well-established progression routes, with journalists tending to:

- > move into national newspapers from regional newspapers and magazines. Of those currently working in national newspapers, 35 per cent have previously worked for a regional newspaper and 18 per cent for magazines;
- > move into television from radio: about a fifth of those currently employed in television previously worked in radio. However, a more common route is within the TV sector, with a move from regional and cable television into national television.

The 'entry points' for journalists are regional newspapers, radio and, to a lesser extent, magazines, which is consistent with the younger average age of journalists working in those sectors.



“ ”

Over half of respondents hold a journalism qualification. Of the remainder, 3 per cent were working towards a qualification at the time of the research.

5 ENTERING THE PROFESSION

5.1 Introduction

This section looks at how journalists enter the profession, how the respondents heard about their first job, the role of journalism qualifications, the issue of debt when starting out as a journalist and views that new entrants have of the profession.

5.2 First jobs

Just under a third (30 per cent) of respondents heard about their first job in journalism via an employer's advertisement, while 28 per cent made contact or wrote to an employer and a further 18 per cent heard about the job directly from the employer. More informal routes of finding this first job are less common: 9 per cent heard about the job from a friend or relative and 5 per cent via word of mouth.

There is some evidence to support the importance of work experience and links made while at college: 5 per cent of respondents stated that they had heard about their first job by 'some other means', with 3 per cent stating their first job followed work experience and 1 per cent that it was via college.

Table 19 How journalists heard about their first job

Advertisement	30
Made contact/wrote to companies	28
Directly from an employer	18
From a friend/relative	9
General word of mouth	5
From careers service/advisor	4
Via the Internet	1
From an agency	1
Through a trade union	*
Other means	5
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

The most common entry point for journalists was as a trainee (44 per cent), with 31 per cent entering as a trainee on a formal scheme and 13 per cent as a trainee but not on a formal scheme, while 27 per cent entered directly into a journalist's job.

Table 20 Mode of entry into first job

Trainee on a formal scheme	31
Trainee but no scheme	13
Directly into a journalist's job	27
Directly into a non-journalist's job	5
Through work experience	10
As a freelance	5
On a research contract	1
Other	*
Not answered	8
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

5.3 Role of journalism qualifications

Holding a journalism qualification

The journalists were asked whether they had a journalism qualification, and prompted as to the possible nature of this by being asked whether this qualification was approved or accredited by the Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC), the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), the Periodicals Training Council (PTC), a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), an internal company scheme or an overseas, non-UK qualification.

Over half (58 per cent) of respondents hold a journalism qualification. Of the remainder, 3 per cent were working towards a qualification at the time of the research. The remainder did not have a qualification (38 per cent) or did not know (2 per cent).

Table 21 Holding a journalism qualification

	%
Hold a journalism qualification	58
Working towards a journalism qualification	3
Do not hold a journalism qualification	38
Do not know	2
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

The likelihood of a journalist having a journalism qualification varies by sector. Three-quarters (75 per cent) of journalists who work for regional newspapers hold such a qualification – the highest of any of the sectors. Furthermore, a further seven per cent are working towards a qualification.

The lowest proportion of journalists to hold a qualification work in magazines, where fewer than half (42 per cent) hold a qualification and where very few (two per cent) are working towards one.

Table 22 Whether hold a journalism qualification by sector

	All journalists	National newspapers	Regional newspapers	Magazines	Radio	Television	Other
Hold a journalism qualification	58	61	75	42	58	56	49
Working towards a journalism qualification	3	2	7	2	1	0	2
Do not hold a journalism qualification	38	36	17	56	37	44	49
Do not know	2	2	1	1	4	0	0
Unweighted base	1,238	137	368	311	129	127	100

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

The journalists who did not have a qualification were asked whether they had been on a journalism course but had not managed to get the qualification. In the main they had not (88 per cent of these respondents), although 12 per cent had done so. These 12 per cent equate to five per cent of the entire sample.

Accreditation of courses

The respondents who had (i) got a qualification, (ii) were working towards a qualification or (iii) had been on a journalism course but not got the qualification were asked who approved or accredited the qualification or course. By far the most common is the NCTJ, which accounts for nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of the qualifications.

Table 23 Accreditation Body	
National Council for Training of Journalists	64
Internal company scheme	9
Periodicals Training Council	8
Broadcast Journalism Training Council	7
National Vocational Qualification	6
Overseas, non-UK qualification	3
Other	6
None of the above	1
Base	812

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
 Base: all who have or are studying for a journalism qualification or who started on a course though did not complete

Views were expressed about the role of the NCTJ and the NCE as a 'benchmark' qualifications, often in favourable comparison with National Vocational Qualifications:



'As an experienced editor I still have faith in the NCTJ-recognised NCE. I have no faith in NVQ'
Man, aged 49, editor, regional/local newspaper

However, these views were by no means universal, with some journalists expressing disappointment at the lack of take-up of NVQs:



'I am very concerned that the NVQ for journalism seems to have failed. My own company ignores it, as do many of the other majors. We need it. Standards are very patchy, training is totally *ad hoc*. The old PTC scheme was at least a benchmark of basic core competence and was simple to administer. We need something like it right now.'
Man, aged 42, editor, business magazines

Importance of qualifications in getting started in work

Those with a journalism qualification place a high importance on the role that it played in getting them started in journalism, with 49 per cent stating that it was very important and a further 23 per cent that it was important. However, a quarter of people believed that the qualification was not important in getting their first journalist job.



Table 24 Importance of qualification in getting started in work as a journalist

Very important	49
Important	23
Not very important	12
Not at all important	13
Don't know	4
Base	812

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
 Base: all who have or are studying for a journalism qualification or who started on a course though did not complete

However, the role of the qualification in obtaining a job needs to be seen in context. While it may be necessary (for example, in order to secure an interview) on its own it will not be sufficient. Journalists who are responsible for employing other journalists stress the need for other qualities:



'I have conducted many interviews for editorial positions, and while I appreciate the commitment of a candidate who has taken the trouble of getting a post-graduate journalism course, it is enthusiasm for the job and the subject matter that count the most.'
32-year-old woman editor, magazines



'In specialist magazines, an enthusiasm for a specialist subject (cars, sport, boats, motorcycles, whatever) is as important as an ability to spell.'
Man, aged 40, consumer magazines

Relevance of qualification to work as a journalist

Similarly, the majority of journalists who have a journalism qualification, or are working towards one, believe that the skills that they learnt while gaining the qualification are relevant to their work, with 47 per cent stating that they are very relevant and 35 per cent relevant. Only a minority (15 per cent) state that they are not relevant.



Table 25 Relevance of qualification to work as a journalist

Very relevant	47
Relevant	35
Not very relevant	11
Not at all relevant	4
Don't know	4
Base	812

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
 Base: all who have or are studying for a journalism qualification or who started on a course though did not complete

5.4 Debt when starting work

The issue of social class and the difficulties of financing postgraduate courses have already been discussed in section 2. Here the extent of debt that new entrants to the profession faced when they started their first job is examined.

Respondents who had started work in the last three years were asked whether they had started work with debts incurred as a result of their time in education, including their degree and postgraduate degree or diplomas. There were 339 individuals who entered their first job in journalism in the last three years: of these, over two-thirds had started with debts.

Table 26 Whether started work with debts incurred during education

Yes	68
No	30
Prefer not to say	2
Base	812

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all who have entered their first job in journalism in the last three years

Those who did have debts were asked how much this was when they started work. The level of debt ranges from a relatively minimal £300, through to an extreme of £25,000, with a median value of £4,750.

Table 27 Level of debt when started work

Up to £1,000	5
£1,001 – £2,000	11
£2,001 – £3,000	13
£3,001 – £4,000	11
£4,001 – £5,000	13
£5,001 – £6,000	8
£6,001 – £7,000	11
£7,001 – £8,000	4
£8,001 – £9,000	5
£9,001 – £10,000	9
More than £10,001	11
Base	229

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all who had debt when started work

It is important, of course, to see these reports of debt in context of all people who leave education, where debt is now a more common feature. The last centrally collected data on the level of debt was gathered by the Department for Education and Skills in 1998/99¹⁰, when the average level of debt on graduation was £2,500, but much has changed since then. This generation of students still benefited from maintenance grants. Since their demise, students have had to rely on student loans. Anecdotal evidence suggests that students tend to leave education with debts in the order of £10,000; a recent survey of current students¹¹ suggested that they owed an average of £4,203.

5.5 Views of entry into the profession

The new entrants (*ie* those who have entered in the last three years) were asked to give their views of the openness and receptiveness of journalism as a profession. Relatively few (10 per cent) agree that 'journalism is an open receptive profession', with the average score reflecting some doubts about its accessibility.

Table 28 Views of entry into the profession

	Agree completely					Disagree completely					Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Journalism is an open receptive profession	5	5	17	12	21	10	13	12	2	4	5.2

¹⁰ *Changing Student Finances, DfES Research Report No 213, 1998/99*
¹¹ *Student Living Survey, 2002, conducted by MORI for Unite, 2002*

To look at this by sector, the mean scores have been calculated, whereby a score of 1 would mean that all agree with the statement and 10 that everyone disagrees with the statement: the lower the average score, the more people agree with the statement.

As can be seen, journalists who work in national newspapers are more likely to agree that journalism is an open and receptive profession and those working in the magazine sector are least likely to think so.

Table 29 Views of entry into the profession

	All journalists	National newspapers	Regional newspapers	Magazines	Radio	Television	Other
Journalism is an open receptive profession	5.2	4.9	4.9	5.7	5.0	5.1	5.8
Unweighted base	319	14	143	90	40	16	21

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
 Base: all who have started first job in journalism in the last three years

5.6 Summary

Respondents tended to hear about their first jobs either via an advertisement (30 per cent) or by directly making contact with companies (28 per cent). The nature of these first jobs are a mixture of traineeships (44 per cent) or directly into a journalist's job (27 per cent)

More than half (58 per cent) of journalists hold a journalist qualification, with another 3 per cent working towards one. 38 per cent do not hold such a qualification. Those who held a qualification regarded it as having been important in getting them their first job and relevant to their work as journalists. The likelihood of holding a journalism qualification varies, by sector in that 75 per cent of journalists in regional newspapers have a qualification, compared to 42 per cent in magazines.

Looking only at new entrants to the profession (those who have entered in the last three years), 68 per cent had debts incurred during their education when they started work. The average level of this debt is £4,750. This is not out of line with the average level of debt of students who are leaving education generally.

6 TRAINING, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Introduction

This section examines skill needs and learning opportunities for journalists. It covers:

- > learning activities that have been undertaken in the last year and the nature of these learning activities;
- > the perceived need for new skills and whether they have been able to access learning to address these skills needs; and
- > the overall support that journalists feel they have in order to access learning.

6.2 Learning activities undertaken

The respondents were given a long list of possible learning activities and asked whether they had undertaken any of these in the last 12 months related to their work. The list was developed to be as consistent as possible with a scheme developed for the *National Adult Learning Survey (NALS)*¹², which has become the benchmark for measuring individual participation in learning in the UK. The full list is shown in the table below.

Overall, over three-quarters of journalists (76 per cent) had undertaken some form of learning activity in the last 12 months. The most common learning activity is taught courses, undertaken by 44 per cent of respondents. A third of respondents had attempted to keep up with developments in work without taking part in a taught course and 36 per cent had attempted to improve their knowledge without taking part in a taught course. However, perhaps the most striking finding from this table is that despite the breadth and range of learning activities offered, some 24 per cent of respondents had not undertaken any learning in the last 12 months.

It is important to note that while there is a good deal of learning activity taking place, the emphasis of the majority of this is about developing and acquiring skills, not necessarily about acquiring qualifications.

Table 30 Learning activity taken part in during the last 12 months

%

Multiple response	
A taught course meant to lead to a qualification	10
A taught course designed to help develop skills that may be used in a job	44
Evening classes	6
Learning which has involved working on own from a package of materials	8
Studying for qualifications without taking part in a taught course	3
Supervised training while doing a job	23
Keeping up to date with developments in type of work done without taking part in a taught course	33
Tried to improve knowledge about anything or teach oneself a skill without taking part in a taught course	36
None of the above	24
Base	1,238

Comparisons with the NALS research have to be done with great care because the two research projects have been undertaken in very different ways, with different sample structures and different measurement criteria (the NALS research asks about participation in the last three years). However, with all these caveats, the results are of the same magnitude: the NALS research found that 32 per cent of people had not undertaken any learning in the last year, compared to the 24 per cent of journalists. Given that the NALS research covers all the workforce and potential workforce, including the inactive and unemployed, and that these groups have a lower propensity to learn, the results are quite close to each other.

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Base: all respondents

¹² *National Adult Learning Survey, 2001, La Valle I & Blake M, Department for Education and Skills, Research Report 321, 2002*

In the table below, all those who have undertaken any learning activity have been grouped into a single column to enable a clear comparison between different sectors. There are clear variations. Journalists who work for the magazine sector are most likely to have undertaken a learning activity in the last year (82 per cent having done so). At the other end of the scale, 43 per cent of journalists who work for national newspapers have not taken part in any of the learning activities over the previous 12 months.



Table 31 Undertaking learning activity and sector

	Undertaken learning activity	No learning activity	Unweighted base
All journalists	76	24	1,216
National newspapers	57	43	136
Regional newspapers	75	25	367
Magazines	82	18	312
Radio	79	21	128
Television	76	24	127
Other	68	32	102

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Part of the difference in training levels may be explained by the level at which journalists are recruited. If journalists move into national newspapers at a later stage in their career, then some of these employers may have the view that they are recruiting experienced journalists with a lower need for training:

'National newspapers are not committed to training. They expect people to come to them with all of the relevant qualifications and experience in place. It's then a sink or swim situation for that person.'

Woman, aged 40, photographer, national newspaper

There were a number of comments made about the level and quality of learning at work:

'Trainees at our paper get a raw deal. When I was a trainee, subs and news editors were constantly pulling me up, even on quite minor style points. Now they are not well supported and this doesn't happen, mainly due to pressure of deadlines, or just shoddy standards.'

Reporter, regional/local newspapers, female, 31

'I was trained on an excellent in-house course for graduates. I returned to the same company after 12 years and compared to my experiences, today's graduates seem to get very little actual training, or even feedback or constructive criticism.'

Man, aged 54, sub editor, regional/local newspaper

'Newspapers don't train and don't value the concept of continuous learning. They don't give staff a chance to gain skills outside their immediate area once they have achieved basic qualifications. There is no formal programme of career development.'

Man, 47-year-old, editor, regional/local newspapers

However, not all the 'blame' for the take-up of learning opportunities is laid at the door of the employers:

'Journalists are too arrogant on the subject of lifelong learning. They seem to think that learning, both technical and general, is no longer needed once they are working in the industry.'

Man, aged 47, editor, regional television

6.3 Nature of learning activity

The respondents who had taken part in a learning activity were asked a number of questions on the last main area of learning activity.

In the main, the learning undertaken was related to the respondent's current or previous job. Fewer than a quarter had undertaken the learning for their own personal development or interest.

Table 32 Whether learning was for work or personal development and interest

Multiple response	
Related to current or previous job	84
Related to a job that might be wanted in the future	14
For own personal interest and development	23
Base	906

Source: Journalists at work, 2002

Base: all who have undertaken learning in the last 12 months

The learning covered a range of topics. The most common was the 'generic' area of professional skills (71 per cent), with 32 per cent having undertaken learning in personal development, 29 per cent in technical skills, 27 per cent in IT and 19 per cent in business and management skills.

Table 33 What the learning covered

Multiple response	
Professional skills	71
Personal development	32
Technical skills (new equipment/machinery)	29
Information technology	27
Business or management skills	19
Health and safety	11
Other	2
Base	906

Source: Journalists at work, 2002

Base: all who have undertaken learning in the last 12 months

Table 34 Where did the learning activity take place

At work	51
Training provider	22
At home	18
College of further education	7
University	6
Somewhere else	4
Base	906

The learning activity mainly took place at the workplace (51 per cent), although in 21 per cent of cases, it took place at a training provider and in 18 per cent of cases, at home.

Source: Journalists at work, 2002

Base: all who have undertaken learning in the last 12 months

In the majority of cases (65 per cent) the learning was paid for by the employer. Individuals paid for the learning themselves in 15 per cent of cases and in another 14 per cent, the learning was supplied at no cost.

Table 35 Paying for learning

	%
Employer	65
Individual	15
Shared employer & individual	2
Family	2
Grant from body or trust	1
Other	1
Supplied free – no costs	14
Base	906

Source: Journalists at work, 2002
Base: all who have undertaken learning in the last 12 months

For the majority of individuals, the amount of time spent on learning activities has been relatively short. Excluding those who could not give a response, a quarter (25 per cent) had spent 1-2 days and a further 30 per cent had spent 3-5 days. The median value is 4.5 days training, but the mean value is skewed by a small number of new entrants to journalism who have spent all their previous year (ie 365 days) on learning activities.

Table 36 Number of days spent on learning

Multiple response		Excluding don't knows
1 – 2	23	25
3 – 5	27	30
6 – 10	15	16
11 – 20	8	9
21 +	17	20
Don't know	10	-
Base	906	814

Source: Journalists at work, 2002
Base: all who have undertaken learning in the last 12 months

Almost all (85 per cent) of individuals believed that the learning they had undertaken had been useful. Only a minority found it of variable quality (12 per cent) or not useful (2 per cent).

Table 37 Views on usefulness of learning activity

Very useful	42
Fairly useful	43
Of variable quality	12
Not very useful	1
Not at all useful	1
Don't know/not answered	2
Base	906

Source: Journalists at work, 2002
Base: all who have undertaken learning in the last 12 months

6.4 Learning new skills

6.4.1 Need for new skills

The majority (60 per cent) of respondents believed that there are new, or additional, skills that they require in order to be more efficient in their work.

Table 38 Whether there are new or additional skills required to improve efficiency

Yes, new or additional skills required	60
No	38
Don't know/not answered	2
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Base: all respondents

The extent to which journalists think that they need new skills varies between sectors. In television 72 per cent of journalists believe that they need new skills, compared to 57 per cent in radio and 'other' sectors.

Table 39 Undertaking learning activity and sector

	New skills needed	No new skills needed	Unweighted base
All journalists	60	38	1,216
National newspapers	50	50	136
Regional newspapers	60	40	367
Magazines	63	37	312
Radio	57	43	128
Television	72	28	127
Other	57	43	102

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

There is an interesting conflict at this point between the views of the individual journalists and the views of their employers. In the research undertaken for the Publishing Skills Foresight, the employers were asked the extent to which editorial staff were fully proficient at their jobs. The overwhelming majority of employers believe that all (93 per cent), or nearly all (4 per cent), of editorial employees are fully proficient at their jobs. Even where the employers stated that not all their staff were fully proficient, the majority stated that nearly all were.

We are therefore left with the conflicting views that while 97 per cent of employers think that their editorial staff are fully skilled, 60 per cent of the journalists themselves believe that they do need new or additional skills to be fully efficient at their jobs. Possible reasons are:

Table 40 Whether there are new or additional skills required to improve efficiency

IT and new media skills	27	Radio training	*
IT	11	Outside broadcast	*
QuarkXpress	3	TV graphics	*
New technology	3	Video editing	*
Digital technology	2	Computer sound mixing	*
Internet	2	Camera direction	*
Digital editing	1	Working with photographers	*
PhotoShop	1	Using illustrations	*
Software relevant to job	1	Photography	*
DTP	1		
Website design	1	Law	8
On-line journalism	1	Law	8
HTML	*	Copyright	*
Internet publishing	*		
		Business & management skills	16
Journalistic skills	30	Management	7
Shorthand/advanced shorthand	9	Managing people	3
Sub-editing	6	Managing time/time management	2
Writing	4	Budgeting/finance	2
Editing	3	Marketing	1
Interviewing	2	Commissioning	*
Research techniques	1	Negotiating	*
Features writing	1	Diversity issues	*
Reporting	1	PR	*
Newsdesk training	1	Networking	*
News writing	1	Developing training techniques	*
NCE refresher	1		
Political reporting	*	Other	8
Going to court	*	Languages	1
Scriptwriting	*	Voice training	1
Typing	*	Keeping up-to-date	1
NCTJ refresher	*	On-the-job experience	1
Copy writing	*	Presentation	1
Proofing	*	Riot & hostile environment training	1
Writing headlines	*	Health and safety	*
		Use of colour	*
Production, design & photography skills	10	Interactive processes	*
Page design & layout	2	Picture technology	*
Design	1	Knowledge of subject area	*
TV production	1	Confidence	*
Camera training	1	Assertiveness	*
Directing	1	Packaging skills	*
Radio technology	1	Professional skills	*
Production technology	1		
		Base	746

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all respondents who have need for new or additional skills

- > the journalists are more in touch with the jobs that they are doing and are aware of where their deficiencies lie;
- > employers are more aware of what they expect of their employees to 'do the job': individual journalists may be looking more to the future, to the 'next' job, while employers are content that the current job is being delivered.

Respondents were asked what these skill areas were and asked to write these into an 'open' response. As may be expected, the list of skill areas that people feel they need to acquire is very long: some 78 mentions.

The most common requirements are for IT and new media skills, journalistic skills (particularly including the need for shorthand) and law, and for business and management skills, including managing people, time and budgets.

Many journalists made comments on areas where skill deficiencies existed.

Although not mentioned about themselves, a common view from journalists, and particularly those that are managing younger and new entrants to the profession, is about the standard of basic skills – particularly the standard of English:



'The continuing decline in the standard of English taught at school remains a cause for concern.'
Male newspaper editor, aged 47



'The real problem is the school education: standards of English language are appalling.'
Man, aged 34, editor, business magazines

Others commented on the need for the core skills required in journalism, such as law, or shorthand:



'Ninety five per cent of new recruits, recently qualified, know little or nothing about basic law, such as court reporting. This is potentially very damaging and extremely costly.'
Woman, aged 49, news editor, regional/local radio



'There need to be regular refreshers for all journalists in the "basics": shorthand, keyboard and typing skills. There are also new skills which should be taught on all vocational courses: telephone interviewing, internet research techniques, e-mail interviewing.'
Man, aged 44, editor, national newspaper

The role of IT is acknowledged:



'Technology in the media is changing constantly, making it difficult for both employers and employees to keep up. At the same time, many employees are given minimal training on new systems. When we introduced ENPS (*a newsroom system*) we got one hour's training after the system had been installed and then we were expected to get on with it.'



'While this allows for the basics, there is little or no scope for taking skills to a higher level.'
Woman, aged 37, producer, national television

It is questioned by many journalists whether the skill deficiencies that they identify need to be remedied by further training or by some type of work experience. Indeed, the view that training is not as good as experience was commonly expressed:



'I am constantly appalled by the basic ignorance of new trainees, even if they've completed a shiny new media degree course. They haven't door-knocked, covered courts, etc, and it shows.'
Woman, age 47, broadcast journalist, regional TV

“I am unconvinced about academic-based journalistic training and feel that resources would be far better deployed in formal training schemes, office-based and on-the-job with short-term release for specific skills. We have heavily taught but inexperienced recruits who have not had enough exposure to reality.”
Man, aged 47, chief sub-editor, national newspaper

However, there are alternative views that suggest journalists will always tend to be suspicious and dismissive of 'academic'-based training:

“The press in general does not value academic training and is fearful of being dissected.”
Woman, aged 47, reporter, national newspaper

6.4.2 Accessing learning to address new skill areas

Those respondents who believed that they require new or additional skills were asked whether they had tried to undertake learning to address it. Nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) had done so, just over a third (34 per cent) had not.

Table 41 Whether had tried to undertake learning to address the new or additional skills

Yes, tried to undertake learning	64
No	34
Don't know/not answered	2
Base	746

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all respondents who have new or additional skill requirements

Those that had tried to access learning were asked whether they had faced any barriers in obtaining this learning. The majority (94 per cent) had, with the most common being employer-related reasons: 44 per cent of respondents state that they have difficulty in getting time off work, and a further 24 per cent that employers are not prepared to pay for training. Concerns about the availability of courses are also common: 24 per cent of respondents state that there is a lack of suitable courses, 23 per cent that the courses or training are badly timed and 21 per cent that there is a lack of information about training.

Table 42 Whether there are new or additional skills required to improve efficiency

Multiple response	
No barriers	6
Difficult to take time off	44
Lack of suitable courses/training	24
Employers not prepared to pay for training	24
Bad timing of the courses/training	23
Lack of information about courses	21
Fees too high	20
Difficulty assessing quality or relevance of training	19
Courses/training difficult to get to	9
Domestic/personal reasons	9
Possible loss of learning	9
Other	2
Base	474

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all respondents who have new or additional skill requirements who have tried to access learning

Most journalists would prefer to undertake any learning at work or on a course away from work.



Table 43 Preference for location of learning

Multiple response	
At work	60
A course away from work	55
On an attachment or placement	28
At home	16
Base	746

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all respondents who have new or additional skill requirements who have tried to access learning

6.5 Overall support for learning

In general terms, a majority of respondents believe that the volume and quality of the provision of training in the UK is sufficient:

- > 60 per cent of journalists think that the volume of available training is about right, with a further nine per cent considering it excellent; and
- > 50 per cent think that the quality of learning is about right, with a further 10 per cent considering it excellent.

However, the substantial minorities who are dissatisfied with training supply should not be overlooked. Almost a third, (31 per cent) think that the volume of training provided is inadequate and 40 per cent that the quality is inadequate.



Table 44 Views on volume and quality of provision of learning

Volume of learning provision in the UK	
Excellent	9
About right	60
Inadequate	31
Quality of learning provision in the UK	
Excellent	10
About right	50
Inadequate	40
Base	1,104

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all respondents

There are some doubts expressed about the range of courses which are available, the 'value-added' that students get from these and quality control:



'It is undoubtedly the case that there is too much training offered. In particular, undergraduate training courses are a complete waste of time, as are media studies courses.'
Male editor, age 39, consumer magazines

'The quality of people from various courses around the country is incredibly variable. Some have great enthusiasm and motivation, others a terrible grasp even of basic language skills. A three-year degree in journalism as an undergraduate does not give people any extra advantages to doing a degree in something more general.'
29-year-old woman editor, consumer magazines

A particular need is for some help from a centralised body to evaluate, quality assure and explain the numerous courses that are now available:

'It's very hard for me (as a recruiter) to assess the quality of these courses, as many of us don't have any direct experience of them and/or knowledge of their reputation. It would help to educate employers about the new forms of journalism qualifications that have arisen since they themselves did their training.'
Magazine editor, 35-year-old woman

'The level of training in the course can be misleading to employers. Some form of standardisation is required in order that the type of qualification can be easily recognised.'
Man, aged 54, editor, regional/local newspaper

There is also a view that the large number of courses available is potentially confusing for young people seeking to enter the industry and that there is a need for careers advice:

'I wonder whether provision of yet more journalism training schemes and courses perpetuates the false idea that there are plenty of new jobs in the field.'
38-year-old man, chief reporter, regional television

'Sixth formers and college students should be much better informed about what editors consider credible courses. Too many youngsters are given bad advice about courses and finish three years of hard work, still ill-equipped to get a job. There are some very good courses, but many do not offer the professional skills needed to enter the workplace.'
Man, aged 23, senior reporter, regional/local newspaper

Looking at their own management, 56 per cent think that their management is very helpful (19 per cent) or fairly helpful (39 per cent) in obtaining learning. Again, there are significant minorities who think that support for leaning is limited or not helpful at all.

Table 45 Supportiveness of management in obtaining learning

Multiple response	
Very helpful	19
Fairly helpful	39
Not very helpful	24
Not helpful at all	10
Do not have an employer	6
Don't know/not answered	3
Base	746

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
 Base: all respondents who have new or additional skill requirements

6.6 Summary

The majority of journalists (76 per cent) have undertaken some learning activities in the previous year, which is in line with national trends. The likelihood of a journalist having undertaken learning varies by sector, from a low of 57 per cent in national newspapers to 82 per cent in magazines.

The majority of this learning is employment-related in that:

- the majority (84 per cent) is related to a current or previous job. In fewer than a quarter (23 per cent) of cases was the learning for personal interest;
- in the majority of cases, the learning related to development of professional skills;
- the learning was paid for by an employer in over two-thirds of cases.

For the majority of individuals, the amount of time spent on learning activities has been relatively short, at an average level of 4.5 days training.

Well over half (60 per cent) of journalists believe that there are new or additional skills needed in order to be more efficient at their work. This finding clashes with information from employer surveys that state editorial staff tend to be fully efficient in their work. The main area of new skills required are related to the core requirements of the job: journalistic skills (particularly shorthand or advanced shorthand) and sub-editing; IT and new media skills; and other professional skills such as law. There is a smaller demand for business and management skills.

Of the journalists who thought that they had a skill that needed further development, two thirds (64 per cent) had tried to undertake learning (34 per cent had not). Nearly all (94 per cent) of these journalists had faced barriers to obtaining this learning, with the barriers being mainly particularly employer-related: not being able to get time off from work (44 per cent) or persuading the employer to pay for it (24 per cent).

Perhaps because of this, 34 per cent of journalists stated that their management had not been helpful when they had tried to obtain learning. However, more journalists (58 per cent) said that their management had been very or fairly helpful.



“ ”

The vast majority of journalists responding to the survey worked longer hours than the average figure in a 'normal working week', with the average working week being 41.6 hours.

7 WORKING CONDITIONS

7.1 Introduction

This section examines working conditions, including hours of work, income, work-life balance and existence of discrimination.

7.2 Views of journalism as a job

In the first instance, it is worth noting the positive light in which the majority of journalists view their job. The majority agree with the statement that 'journalism is a job that I enjoy doing', with only small minorities disagreeing. Similarly, journalists tend to agree that 'journalism has lived up aspirations as a job'. Only few journalists do not intend to stay working in journalism.

Table 46 Views of journalism

%

	Agree completely						Disagree completely				Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Journalism is a job I enjoy doing	35	25	18	7	5	2	3	1	2	3	2.7
Journalism has lived up to aspirations as a job	16	18	21	15	9	9	5	3	2	3	3.8
I intend to stay working in journalism	36	20	18	5	4	3	3	3	3	5	3.1

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all who have started first job in journalism in the last three years

This varies according to sector. Journalists working in national newspapers were more likely to be positive in reaction to each of the statements.

Table 47 Views of entry into the profession

%

	All journalists	National newspapers	Regional newspapers	Magazines	Radio	Television	Other
Journalism is a job I enjoy doing	2.7	2.1	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.1	2.3
Journalism has lived up to aspirations as a job	3.8	3.5	3.9	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.5
I intend to stay working in journalism	3.1	2.6	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.1	2.8
Unweighted base	319	14	143	90	40	16	21

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all who have started first job in journalism in the last three years

7.3 Hours of work

Across Britain, the 'average' working week for all occupations is 35.1 hours, while for men it is 39.6 hours and for women, 30.2 hours. For people who work full-time, average hours are 39.8 per week (41.2 for men and 37.5 for women). For part-time workers the average is 19.3 hours (18.5 for men, 19.5 for women).

Table 48 Employees' average hours, 2001: Britain

	Men	Women	All
All employees	39.6	30.2	35.1
Full-time employees	41.2	37.5	39.8
Part-time employees	18.5	19.5	19.3

Source: New Earning Survey, 2001

The vast majority (86 per cent) of journalists responding to our survey worked longer hours than the average figure (36 hours and above) in a 'normal working week', with the average working week being 41.6 hours. There is a huge range in the hours worked per week, from 2 to 70. The largest proportion (39 per cent) work between 36 and 40 hours per week, with a further 24 per cent working 41 – 45 hours per week.

Table 49 Hours normally worked

		Cumulative
Up to 28 hours	6	6
29 - 35	8	14
36 - 40	39	53
41 - 45	24	77
46 - 50	16	93
51 - 70	7	100
Average	41.6	
Base	1,238	

Source: Journalists at work, 2002



The average hours worked per week are very similar across the sectors. The longest average hours are worked in national newspapers (42.2 hours), with the shortest in radio (40.8 hours) but the range between the sectors is only 1.4 hours per week.

Men tend to work slightly longer hours than women (42.8 compared to 40.7 – mainly accounted for by a slightly higher proportion of women who work part-time (fewer than 28 hours per week) – 8 per cent of women compared to 3 per cent of men.

%

Table 50 Average hours worked by sector

	Hours
All journalists	41.6
Sector	
National newspapers	42.2
Regional newspapers	41.9
Magazines	41.1
Radio	40.8
Television	42.8
Other	41.2
Sex	
Men	42.8
Women	40.7

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

In the majority of cases (85 per cent), these hours are considered to be reasonable. Only 14 per cent of respondents considered their working hours to be unreasonable.

%

Table 51 Views on hours of working

Reasonable	85
Unreasonable	14
Not answered	1
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*

Base: all respondents

Again, this did not vary greatly between the sectors, with the highest proportion of respondents thinking that their working hours are unreasonable being in regional newspapers (18 per cent) and the lowest proportion in magazines (11 per cent).

7.4 Income

The range of incomes earned varies from less than £5,000 to more than £100,000, with a median level of £22,500¹³. A tenth of journalists earn less than £12,000, 18 per cent less than £15,000 and 34 per cent less than £20,000.

These figures broadly agree with the findings from the National Union of Journalists¹⁴, which found that nine per cent earned less than £10,000, 19 per cent less than £15,000 and 34 per cent less than £20,000.

There are variations in the mean income due to a number of factors:

- > sector: salaries are highest in national newspapers (£40,000) and television (£35,000) and lowest in regional newspapers (£17,500). Much of this variation is explained by the characteristics of journalists in the sector. As has been seen earlier, journalists in regional newspapers are younger and less experienced (25 per cent being under the age of 25), and work outside London. Journalists in magazines and radio are in the middle of this spectrum with a median salary of £22,500;

¹³ In giving average values for income, we have used a median value because this avoids the distorting impact of a few, high value distorting an average value that would occur if we used the mean. The mean value for all salaries is £28,319.

Table 52 Views of income

		Cumulative
Less than £5,000	1	1
£5,000 – £7,499	*	1
£7,500 – £9,999	2	3
£10,000 – £12,499	7	10
£12,500 – £14,999	8	18
£15,000 – £19,999	16	34
£20,000 – £24,999	17	51
£15,000 – £29,999	11	62
£30,000 – £39,999	17	79
£40,000 – £49,999	9	88
£50,000 – £74,999	7	95
£75,000 – £100,000	1	96
More than £100,000	*	97
Don't know/not answered	3	100
Base	1,238	

Source: Journalists at work, 2002
 Base: all respondents

- > job title: these follow an 'expected' distribution. Journalists in general management earn the highest average salaries (£50,000), followed by those in editorial management (£35,000) and section heads (£25,000). Broadcast reporters earn, on average, slightly more than print writers and reporters, but the differences are relatively slight;
- > years spent in journalism: average salaries show an expected distribution, being lowest for those who have least experience (£13,750 for those with fewer than two years) and rising to those £35,000 for those with between 11 and 25 years, experience. After this point there is a decline, partly caused by the small number of experienced journalists who work part-time on a freelance basis;
- > type of contract, with those on permanent contracts earning an average of £10,000 more than those on non-permanent contracts; and
- > personal characteristics, such as:
 - sex: men earn a higher average salary than women (£27,500 compared to £22,500). This is an interesting result, given from earlier data that women are in similar jobs to the men. However, the difference in the data appears to be explained by the fact that women tend to be younger than men and have fewer years' experience;
 - age: earnings in journalism peak in the 40s. As would be expected, this is almost the same pattern as that shown for experience;
- > ethnicity: there is no difference in average salary by ethnicity.

Table 53 Variations in contract status

	Average income	Unweighted base
All journalists	22,500	1,216
Sector		
National newspapers	40,000	136
Regional newspapers	17,500	367
Magazines	22,500	312
Radio	22,500	128
Television	35,000	127
Other	27,500	102
Job title		
General management	50,000	7
Editorial management	35,000	311
Section heads	25,000	65
Writers and reporters – print	20,000	407
Broadcast reporters	22,500	151
Production	22,500	181
Other	22,500	16
Years spent in journalism		
Up to 2 years	13,750	194
3 – 5 years	17,500	251
6 – 10 years	27,500	211
11 – 15 years	35,000	157
16 – 25 years	35,000	204
Over 26 years	27,500	182
Type of contract		
Permanent	27,500	982
Non-permanent	17,500	217
Sex		
Men	27,500	610
Women	22,500	594
Age		
Under 25	13,750	175
25 – 29	22,500	274
30 – 39	27,500	379
40 – 49	35,000	221
Over 50	27,500	147
Ethnicity		
White	27,500	1,114
Other ethnic group	27,500	51

Source: Journalists at work, 2002

Base: average salaries are median values, placed at mid-point of salary bands

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the wide range of average salaries, there are as many people who are satisfied with their income as are dissatisfied. Half of journalists think that they are fairly rewarded for their work, while 48 per cent do not think that they are fairly rewarded.

It would be expected that journalists who receive lower wages are more likely to be dissatisfied with the level of salary received, although the correlation will not be exact, as individuals tend to be able to balance and understand the demands and seniority of their job with the level of remuneration. It is when these two features become unbalanced that dissatisfaction occurs.

Journalists who work in radio are the most likely to say that they think they are fairly rewarded for their work. This confirms the 'reality check' belief that people are aware of a 'rate for the job', because this is one of the lowest paid sectors. However, the sector with the lowest level of satisfaction is regional newspapers, which is also the sector with the lowest average rates of pay.

Journalists at the outset of their career are more likely to be dissatisfied with their level of pay than those who have more experience. Again, there is a direct correlation between length of experience and salary levels, which appears to correlate with satisfaction levels.

0%

Table 54 Views of income

Yes, fairly rewarded	50
No, not fairly rewarded	48
Don't know/not answered	2
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Base: all respondents

Table 55 Satisfaction with salary

0%

	Satisfied	Unsatisfied	Unweighted base
All journalists	50	48	1,216
Sector			
National newspapers	64	36	136
Regional newspapers	30	70	367
Magazines	56	44	312
Radio	65	35	128
Television	54	46	127
Other	63	37	102
Years spent in journalism			
Up to 2 years	44	57	191
3 – 5 years	41	60	252
6 – 10 years	53	47	214
11 – 15 years	61	39	157
16 – 25 years	59	41	208
Over 26 years	53	47	180
Type of contract			
Permanent	51	49	991
Non-permanent	50	50	212

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Note: average salaries are median values, placed at mid-point of salary bands

Salary is obviously an issue, and particularly so for those who work in the regional newspaper sectors. However, it is a complex picture because while journalists are not happy with their salary, they are content with the hours that they work and the majority state that they enjoy their job, that they intend to stay working in journalism and that journalism has lived up to their aspirations. Those working in regional/local newspapers are just as likely to state this as those working in other sectors. So the dissatisfaction with salaries needs to be seen in context, as some journalists commented:

'I think the wages are bad it is quite insulting to think I could earn more money working in a shop. However, although the wages are bad, I really love my job: it is challenging, exciting and really varied.'

22-year-old woman, working in regional/local newspapers

'Journalism is one of the worst paid professions, particularly for new starters, yet also one of the most popular. It strikes me that the latter point strangely justifies the former.'

Woman, aged 24, journalist, regional/local newspaper

There is, however, evidence of concern about the low wages paid to young people:

'Young people with a strong enough passion for writing will suffer low wages for the chance to work in journalism. But is a disgrace to the industry as a whole that they should have to. The industry cynically manipulates our ambition.'

24-year-old man, trainee reporter, regional/local newspaper

'So many young people, many highly-skilled and with high expectations, are being dumped on the job market and are being exploited.'

Man, aged 62, national newspaper

Despite satisfaction levels with their jobs, the perceived low salaries are seen as having an impact on other factors such as the ability to recruit and retain high quality staff:

'I love working in journalism, but pay levels mean that I'm beginning to think that I can't. I'm building up more debt, not paying off those I had from college. I think the standard of journalists, certainly in radio, is low because the right calibre of people just are not interested.'

25-year-old male radio journalist

'I love being a reporter and will be very sorry to leave the industry, but I feel I have no choice. I work in the South East, where the average wage is £27,000, the average house price is £195,000 - £240,000 and I get paid about £14,000. Our paper has struggled to find senior reporters and a news editor - is this because we can't afford to stay in the industry? I know I can't.'

Woman reporter, regional/local newspaper, aged 29

'There is a real lack of good staff around at local level. This is due in part to low pay, but it's also due to the way news is treated in commercial radio (a lack of importance and understanding) and immense pressure due to a lack of resources. It's hard to keep staff as they go to work in a bigger station, offering more money, more quickly.'

Women, 31, head of news, regional/local radio

'Salaries for trainees must be improved if we are to attract best applicants to the profession. We are losing far too many to PR and internet jobs.'

50 year old woman, regional/local newspapers

'Experienced journalists are leaving, mostly to go into teaching. Talented young people who come in for work experience change their minds and go elsewhere.'

Woman, aged 50, arts editor, regional/local newspapers

There are views that being a journalist is becoming more difficult, but still the feeling surfaces that it is a job that people enjoy despite the difficulties:

'My impression is that over the last 30 years, journalism has become harder to enter, less secure, harder work and less financially rewarding. But I still love it!'

Assistant editor, national radio, male aged 53

7.5 Work-life balance

The concept of work-life balance is one that is gaining prominence, helped by the Government's *Work-Life Balance Campaign* (launched in March 2000). The concept of a work-life balance involves employer use of a variety of policies that attempt to accommodate family and working life. It has been argued that some employers are introducing these as a response to equal opportunity policies, rising levels of female labour participation, demographic changes and skill shortages in an attempt to attract staff. However, central to the work-life balance campaign is a belief that everyone benefits from good practice in work-life balance: the economy and businesses as more skilled and experienced people can participate in work; parents and carers, who can spend quality time at home as well as providing financial support via work; people with disabilities through improved access; and the workforce generally, who are better able to balance their work with the rest of their lives.

The actual policies that make up a promotion of work-life balance will vary from employer to employer and, indeed, will vary in suitability from person to person. Typical employer policies are those that:

- > permit some flexibility with respect to hours of work;
- > allow people to work from home;
- > grant leave arrangements that allow people either to met their non-work commitments and realise their non-work goals;
- > provide workplace facilities to assist employees to attend work;
- > promote communication and consultation between employers and employees over relevant issues.

There was insufficient space in the questionnaire to allow for a full exploration of these issues, and it was restricted to a single question as to whether the journalists thought that it was important to their manager that they had a balance between work and the rest of their personal life. Just under two-thirds (62 per cent) of journalists did think that it was important, but a third (34 per cent) thought that this was not important to their managers.

Table 56 Importance to manager on balance between work and rest of personal life

Very important	22
Fairly important	40
Not very important	24
Not at all important	10
Not answered	4
Base	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Base: all respondents

Comments from journalists suggest that there are improvements being made in this area:

“Complete changes in management have made it a lot easier to return to my place of work, with every effort now being made to accommodate my “young family” circumstances. It’s an absolute delight!”
Woman, aged 35, senior journalist, regional/local newspaper

7.6 Discrimination

The respondents were asked whether they had ever suffered disadvantage at work because of discrimination. Seventeen per cent had, with 66 per cent stating that they had not. 15 per cent stated that they did not know.

The main variants on the likelihood that an individual will feel that they have been discriminated against are:

- > sex, where women are twice as likely as men to feel that they have been discriminated against;
- > ethnicity: where people from non-white ethnic groups are more than twice more likely to feel that they have been discriminated than those from white ethnic groups. In addition to this, a further 28 per cent of journalists from non-white groups state that they do not know if they have been discriminated against: in total only 39 per cent of journalists from non-white groups feel able to state that they have not been discriminated against.

Table 57 Whether have ever suffered discrimination work

	Yes	No	Not answered	Base
All journalists	17	66	15	1,238
Sex				
Men	12	76	13	611
Women	24	59	18	592
Ethnicity				
White	17	69	14	1,108
Non-white	33	39	28	51

Sources: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Base: all respondents

In the overwhelming number of cases, the nature of the discrimination is gender. Although lower proportions reported discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, this actually equates to a higher proportion of the journalists from ethnic minorities. In more detail, of the ten journalists in our sample from Asian/Asian British ethnic groups, five feel that they have been discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, as do three of the 10 black/black British journalists.

Table 58 Nature of discrimination

	Respondents who have suffered discrimination	All respondents
Multiple response		
Gender	59	10
Family circumstance	14	2
Ethnicity	10	2
Physical disability	3	1
Religion	2	*
Other	33	6
Base	210	1,238

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Base: all respondents who have suffered discrimination at work

Some of the comments in the questionnaires highlight the nature of this discrimination:

'I took a sabbatical to take time off to start a family. When I got back I had been effectively demoted and others had leap-frogged into the grade above mine. My career hasn't caught up, and I don't think it will.'

Women, aged 34, assistant programme editor, national TV

'Much of journalism is still a boys' club, with women struggling for professional acceptance. Single women without children or partners are particularly scorned.'

Editor, national newspaper, woman aged 41

'There are still a lot of dinosaurs in this profession who perceive women as a bit of fluff. Things are slowly changing, but journalism still regards itself as a profession apart, able to set rules and standards that no other industry would tolerate.'

Woman, aged 26, journalist, national newspaper

The discrimination is by no means limited to gender:

'Newspaper journalism fosters a culture of the clique. Anyone who does not fit into the prevailing clique's clearly defined pigeon-holes tend to be viewed with suspicion and end up being marginalised or forced out. People may be tolerated for their usefulness, but few are promoted to the hierarchy, which remains a club that promotes only those who they recognise as younger versions of themselves.'

Man, aged 43, sub-editor, national newspapers

A number of comments indicated that attitudes are changing and that for many, the discrimination was some time ago, and that attitudes had changed:

'The discrimination I suffered was a long time ago: things have been much better over the last few years.'

Woman, aged 42, production editor, national newspapers

'I did encounter sex discrimination in the 1970s, but since the 1980s it has been, if anything, an advantage to be a woman in my part of book publishing. Other barriers also seem to be falling.'

Woman, aged 54, book editor

“ ”

7.7 Summary

Journalists react positively to statements that 'journalism is a job that they enjoy doing', that 'they intend to stay working in journalism' and that 'journalism has lived up to all aspirations as a job'. They tend to react less well to a statement of 'journalism is an open and receptive profession'.

While there is a huge range in the 'normal' working week of journalists, the majority (86 per cent) work longer than the average 35 hours across all UK industry. However, the image of journalism as having a particularly long-hours culture is not borne out by this data: the average working week across all journalists is 41.6 hours. This varies relatively little across the sectors (from 40.8 hours in radio to 42.2 hours in television). Men work an average of 42.8 hours compared to 40.7 hours for women – a difference accounted for by a small minority of women (eight per cent) who work part time (compared to three per cent of men).

In most cases (85 per cent) of journalists thought that their working hours were reasonable. Again, this does not vary greatly between sectors.

As with hours worked, there is a huge range of salaries. The average salary is between £22,500, with 10 per cent earning less than £12,000, 18 per cent less than £15,000 and 34 per cent less than £20,000. There is considerable variation in average salary levels caused by two main factors:

- the sector in which they work (with television and national newspapers paying the highest average salaries, regional newspapers the lowest);
- the length of experience.

Women receive an average of £5,000 less than men. On the face of it, this may appear surprising, as women are employed in each of the main job groups in the same proportion as men. However, the gap would appear to be at least partly explained by the younger average age of women, the corresponding fewer years of experience and relatively higher proportion of employment in low-paying sectors.

Given the range of salaries being paid, it is perhaps no surprise that there is a range of views about the salaries: 50 per cent believe that they are fairly rewarded for their work, 48 per cent believe that they are not. Patterns of dissatisfaction do not exactly follow the distribution of average salaries – journalists who work in radio (a sector with one of the lowest levels of pay) are the most likely to say that they are fairly rewarded for their work. However, it is among journalists who are at the outset of their careers where more people are dissatisfied with their levels of pay.

Just less than a fifth (17 per cent) of journalists believe that they have been discriminated against at work. Women journalists and journalists from non-white ethnic groups are twice as likely to believe that they have been discriminated against than men or those from white ethnic groups.



Annexe 1: Job titles of respondents

The table below shows all the job titles of respondents to the survey and the broad groupings to which they have been coded.

%

Table A1 Job titles of respondents

General management	2	Reporters, broadcast	12
Managing Director	*	Broadcast journalist	5
Station manager	*	Senior reporter	3
Head of development	*	Presenter	1
Publisher	*	Senior broadcast journalist	1
Director of programmes	*	Correspondent	1
		Broadcast assistant	1
		Sports commentator	*
Editorial management	28	Production	16
Editor	17	Sub editor	6
Assistant editor	3	Producer	2
Deputy editor	3	Assistant producer	1
Chief sub-editor	2	Photographic team leader	1
Managing editor	1	Production editor	1
Editorial director	1	TV producer	1
Executive producer	*	Page editor	1
Programme editor	*	Technical editor	1
Scottish editor	*	Senior producer	*
		Graphics editor	*
Section heads	7	Radio producer	*
Features editor	2	Production journalist	*
Sports editor	1	Graphic artist	*
Section editor	1		
News manager	1	Other	2
Head of news	*	TV researcher	1
Producer/director	*	Researcher	*
New media editor	*	Personal assistant	*
Web editor	*	Events manager	*
Book editor	*	Press officer	*
Bureau chief	*	Copy taster	*
Picture editor	*		
Writers and reporters/newspapers & magazines	35	Don't know/not answered	3
Reporter	14		
Journalist	13	Base	1,238
Feature writer	2		
Sports writer	2		
Staff writer	1		
Trainee journalist	1		
Deputy features editor	*		
Editorial assistant	*		
Features assistant	*		
Senior political correspondent	*		
Special report editor	*		
Film critic	*		
Food writer	*		
Writer/director	*		

Source: *Journalists at work, 2002*
Base: all respondents

the Ques

1. What job title do you normally use to describe what you do?

2. Which sectors do you work in and which do you work mainly in..?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> National radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional/Local radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National TV/Regional TV/Cable or satellite TV | <input type="checkbox"/> National Newspapers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional/local newspapers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer/leisure magazines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public relations | <input type="checkbox"/> Books |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Independent production company | <input type="checkbox"/> On-line |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

3. Are you actually working at the moment?

- Yes No

If Yes, please go to question 5, if No please continue with question 4

4. When did your last contract/period of work finish?

- Within the last month
 One month or more, but less than three months ago
 Three months or more, but less than six months ago
 Six months or more, but less than twelve months ago
 Twelve or more months ago

5. Which of the following best describes your current or most recent employment? *Tick one only*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working for your own company | <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent contract |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freelance with a temporary contract of 365 days or longer | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed term contract |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Freelance, with a temporary contract of 364 days or less | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work placement | <input type="checkbox"/> Trainee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer on an unpaid basis | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

6. How long have you been in continuous work or (if not working at the moment) how long did your last period of continuous employment last?

- Less than 6 months
 Six months or more but less than 12 months
 12 months or more but less than two years
 Two years or more, but less than five years
 More than five years

7. How many hours per week do you normally work?

(Please write in)

8. Do you consider your hours of working: *(Tick one only)*

- Reasonable Unreasonable

PREVIOUS WORK HISTORY

9. In what year did you start your first job in journalism?

(Please write in)

10. How did you hear about your first job?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> Directly from an employer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Made contact/wrote to companies | <input type="checkbox"/> Through a Trade Union |
| <input type="checkbox"/> From a friend/relative | <input type="checkbox"/> From an agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> From careers service/advisor | <input type="checkbox"/> General word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> Via the internet |

11. Did you enter journalism as a *(Tick one only)*?

- Trainee on a formal training scheme
 Trainee, but with no formal scheme
 Directly into a journalist's job
 Directly into a non-journalist's job
 Through work experience
 As a freelance
 On a research contract
 Other (please specify)

12. Thinking about your last four jobs (including internal job moves but not including your current job), which sectors were these in? (If you have not had four previous jobs, then give information for as many jobs as you have had).

National radio • Regional/local radio • National TV • Regional TV • Cable or satellite TV • National Newspaper • Regional/local newspapers • Business magazines • Consumer/leisure magazines • Other magazines • Books • Public relations • On-line • Independent Production company • Journalism training • Non-journalistic job • No previous job

13. Have you got a journalism qualification?

- Yes Working towards one
 No Don't know

If Yes, or working towards one skip to question 15, if No or Don't know, please answer question 14

14. Have you been on a journalism course but did not get the qualification?

- Yes No Don't know

If Yes, please answer question 15. If No or Don't know, skip to question 20

Questionnaire

15. Who was this approved or accredited by..?

(Tick as many as apply)

- Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC)
- National Council for Training of Journalists (NCTJ)
- Periodicals Training Council (PTC)
- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)
- Internal company scheme or diploma
- Overseas, non-UK qualification
- None
- Other (please write in name of body)

16. How important was this qualification or course in your getting started in work as a journalist..? *(Tick one only)*

- Very important
- Important
- Not very important
- Not at all important

17. Why do you say this? *(Please write in)*

18. How relevant has the qualification or course been to your work as a journalist..? *(Tick one only)*

- Very relevant
- Fairly relevant
- Not very relevant
- Not at all relevant

19. Why do you say this? *(Please write in)*

20. If you were advising a young person on entry to the profession, which of the following would you recommend, in rank order (with one being the most favourable and seven the least):

- General university degree
- Direct entry without journalistic qualification
- Journalism course at undergraduate level
- Journalism course at postgraduate level
- Journalism course at Further Education college
- Commercial journalism course
- Entry position with in-house training

PREVIOUS LEARNING ACTIVITIES

21. During the last 12 months have you taken part in any of the following activities related to your work..?

(Tick each that applies)

- A taught course that was meant to lead to a qualification
- A taught course designed to help you develop skills that you might use in a job
- Evening classes
- Learning which has involved working on your own from a package of materials provided to you
- Studying for qualifications without taking part in a taught course
- Supervised training while actually doing a job (eg when a

manager or experienced colleague has spent time helping you to learn or develop skills as you do specific tasks at work or by personal coaching)

- Spent time keeping up to date with developments in the type of work that you do without taking part in a taught course eg by reading books, manuals or journals or by attending seminars
- Tried to improve your knowledge about anything or teach oneself a skill without taking part in a taught course
- None of the above

If none of the above, please go to question 28. If you have undertaken any of the activities please continue with question 22. Please give details of the last main area of learning activity that you have taken part in the last 12 months:

22. Was this activity you have taken part in...?

- Related to your current or previous job
- Related to a job that you might want to do in the future
- For your own personal interest or development

23. What did the learning activity cover?

(Tick as many as apply)

- Professional skills
- Business/management
- Personal development
- Technical (new equipment/machinery)
- Information technology
- Health and safety
- Other *(please write in)*

24. Who mainly paid for the learning activity?

- Your employer
- You personally
- Your family
- Grant from body/trust
- Supplied free – no costs involved
- Other *(please write in)*

25. Where did the activity take place?

- College of Further Education
- University
- Training provider
- At work
- At home
- Somewhere else *(please write in)*

26. How many days would you estimate that you spent on this activity in the last year?

Number of days *(please write in)*

27. Has the learning activity been..?

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Of variable quality
- Not very useful
- Not at all useful

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

28. Are there any new or additional skills that you require in order to be more efficient in your work?

- Yes No

If Yes, please continue with question 29. If No, please go to question 34 and continue.

29. What are these skills areas?

Area 1

Area 2

Area 3

30. Have you tried to undertake learning in any of the areas described above?

- Yes No

If Yes, please continue with question 31, if No, please go to question 32

31. Have you experienced any of the following barriers in obtaining the learning in the skills that you think you require? (Tick all that apply)

- Lack of suitable courses/training
 Fees too high
 Difficult to take time off
 Courses/training difficult to get to
 Bad timing of the courses/training
 Possible loss of earnings
 Lack of information about courses/training
 Difficulty assessing quality or relevance of course/training
 Employers not prepared to pay for training
 Domestic/personal reasons
 Other (please specify)

32. How supportive is your manager in helping you get the learning that you think you need to develop your career?

- Very helpful Helpful
 Not very helpful Not helpful at all
 Do not have an employer

33. Would you prefer any learning that you undertake to be (Tick all that apply):

- At work On an attachment or placement
 In the form of a course away from work At home

34. Thinking about the issues of education and training in journalism generally, do you think

that in Britain the (i) volume and (ii) quality of provision is:

(Tick in each column)

	Volume	Quantity
Inadequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
About right	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NEW ENTRANTS TO JOURNALISM

The questions in this section are to be answered by individuals who have entered into their first job in journalism in the last three years. If you have been a journalist for more than three years, please proceed to question 39.

35. Have you started work with debts that have been incurred as a result of your time in education? This may include your degree and any postgraduate degrees or diplomas

- Yes No
 Prefer not to say

If Yes, answer question 36. If No, go to question 37.

36. How much was your debt when you started work?

(please write in)

37. What is/was your parent/s main job?

(if none, please note so. If either parent has retired, please give their main job when they worked.)

Father Mother

38. Could you tell us whether you agree with the following statements using the scale of one to ten, where one is 'agree completely' and ten is 'disagree completely'.

- Journalism is an open, receptive profession
 Journalism has lived up to my aspirations as a job
 Journalism is a job I enjoy doing
 I intend to stay working in Journalism

EMPLOYER ATTITUDES

39. In your opinion how important is it to your manager that you have a balance between work and the rest of your personal life...?

- Very important Fairly important
 Not very important Not important at all

40. Have you ever suffered disadvantage at work because of discrimination?

- Yes No
 Don't know

41. If YES, what was the basis of this discrimination?

(Tick as many as apply)

- Gender Ethnicity
 Religion Family circumstances
 Physical disability Other (please specify)

42. Do you think that you are fairly rewarded for your work?

- Yes No

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

43. Are you:

- Male Female

44. Are you:

- Single Married or in a long term relationship
 Divorced
 Widowed

45. How many dependent children *(under the age of 16)* do you have living with you?

- None 1
 2 More than 2

46. What was your age last birthday? *(please write in)*

47. Which, if any, of the following qualifications do you hold?

- NVQ in journalism
 A postgraduate qualification in journalism
 A postgraduate qualification in another subject
Please give details of other subject

- An undergraduate degree in journalism
 An undergraduate degree in another subject
Please give details of other subject

- A-Levels
 GCSEs/O Levels
Other, including industry qualification (please specify)

- No qualifications

48. Please tell us which of the following groups you consider that you belong. Your answers will help us to learn how diversity policies are working

(please tick one only)

- Asian/Asian British Black/Black British
 Chinese Mixed ethnic group
 White Prefer not to say
 Other (please specify)

49. Do you have any health problems or disabilities that limit the type of work that you can do?

- Yes No
 Prefer not to say

50. In which of the following nations/regions are you mainly located *(tick one only)*

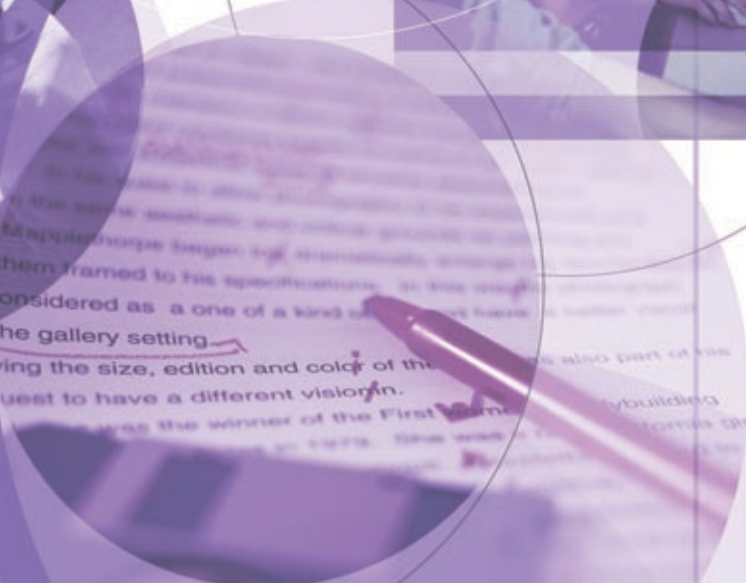
- North East North West
 Yorkshire & the Humber East Midlands
 West Midlands East of England
 London South East
 South West Wales
 Scotland Northern Ireland

51. We would like an estimate of your income in order to assess income levels in journalism. Please can you indicate your income from all work for the last financial year for which you have information?

(please give earnings before deductions)

- Less than £5,000 £5,000 - £7,499
 £7,500 - £9,999 £10,000 - £12,499
 £12,500 - £14,999 £15,000 - £19,999
 £20,000 - £24,999 £25,000 - £29,999
 £30,000 - £39,999 £40,000 - £49,999
 £50,000 - £74,999 £75,000 - £100,000
 More than £100,000

52. Finally, if you have any other comments that you would like to make about any of the issues covered in this questionnaire please do so in the space below:



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