

## **Witness Statement to the Leveson Inquiry**

*by Professors*

**Ian Hargreaves**

Chair of Digital Economy

**Justin Lewis**

Head of School

*and*

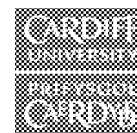
**Richard Tait**

Director of the Centre for Journalism

*on behalf of*

**Cardiff University**

**School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies**



## Dear Lord Justice Leveson,

Thank you for offering us the opportunity to contribute to your inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press. The material which follows seeks to address the five areas mentioned in your letter of 3 November 2011.

I should begin by saying that although your letter of invitation was addressed to me, this response comes from Professor Justin Lewis, Head of the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies and Professor Richard Tait, Director of the Centre for Journalism; as well as myself. I was Professor Tait's predecessor (1999-2003) and have remained actively associated with the school since then. In 2003, I became a founding board member of Ofcom and subsequently worked as Director of Corporate Affairs at BAA plc and then Director of Strategic Communications at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2008-2010). In November 2010, I took up a new, part-time chair in Digital Economy, based jointly in Cardiff's schools of Journalism and Business.

*(a) An introductory section setting out who you are, your current position and a brief outline of your career to date.*

Your letter begins by asking for my career outline. Prior to joining Cardiff University as Director of the Centre for Journalism in 1999, I was in reverse order: Editor of the *New Statesman*; Editor of the *Independent*; Deputy Editor of the *Financial Times*; and Director of BBC News and Current Affairs. Prior to that I spent eleven years as a reporter and editor on the *Financial Times*, preceded by three years as a trainee journalist with Westminster Press.

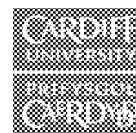
Professor Lewis, Head of School, is a distinguished media academic who has published 12 books on various aspects of media and journalism. He was a member of the media and communications panel of the government's Research Assessment Exercise and is currently a member for the upcoming Research Excellence Framework. He has led a number of research projects for the BBC, the BBC Trust, Channel 4, the ESRC, the Office of Science and Innovation and Rowntree.

Professor Tait, like me, is a news media practitioner. He was successively Editor of BBC Newsnight, Editor of Channel 4 News, Editor-in-Chief of Independent Television News (ITN), before joining the BBC Board, first as a Governor and Chair of the Governors' Programme Complaints Committee and subsequently as a Trustee and Chair of the Trust's Editorial Standards Committee.

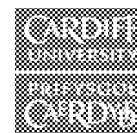
I think I can speak for all who work in this distinguished journalism school in saying that we greatly welcome your inquiry. We have been glad to note your repeated re-assurances that you place the highest possible value on freedom of expression, whilst displaying evident determination to examine what has gone wrong in at least some parts of the British news industry and to propose remedies.

This is not the place for me or anyone from the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies to offer opinions about the best approach to reforming the regulatory apparatus of the press. We have made it clear to all our colleagues that they are free to express themselves on these matters to the inquiry. I intend to make a short submission myself.

What follows corresponds to sections b), c), d) and e) in your letter, supported by the documents referred to in your paragraphs a) to d).



We note the terms upon which you have required us to submit the evidence included in this correspondence. We are content to regard this submission as belonging in the public domain, subject to any decisions made by Lord Justice Leveson in that regard. We are content to waive any right of recourse to the provisions of Section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005, working as Lord Justice Leveson's letter suggests, "in the spirit of openness and with the wish to ensure that all possible aspects of his Terms of Reference are fully considered."



***b) An overview of the courses relevant to journalism which the academic institution at which you work provide***

The Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies is one of the oldest established journalism schools in the UK, founded in 1970 by Sir Tom Hopkinson, the former editor of Picture Post. The school makes a very clear distinction between academic and vocational courses.

As a Russell Group University with a significant research reputation, it offers a range of academic undergraduate, postgraduate and research pathways – the BA in Journalism, a portfolio of academic MA courses and a MPhil and PhD programmes as described in the school handbooks for its undergraduate degree programmes (Document 1) and postgraduate degree programmes (Document 2).

These courses are not designed to prepare students for a career in British journalism; they are not accredited by the three UK media accrediting bodies (National Council for the Training of Journalists, Broadcast Journalism Training Council and Periodicals Training Council). We make clear on our website and in our applications procedure that the courses do not equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to be realistic candidates for jobs in British journalism and that the pathway we recommend for aspiring journalists is our vocational courses.

The School has always offered a vocational training course – a postgraduate diploma in journalism. This year we will for the first time be offering the students the option of obtaining an MA in journalism by adding a substantial piece of project work to the existing diploma programme. The school handbook and website make clear that the MA in Journalism and the Postgraduate Diploma in Journalism are the recommended routes into the profession for aspiring journalists.

The Diploma/MA in Journalism offers three options for students; broadcast, magazine and newspaper. All students additionally work in on-line media. Each year between 25 and 30 students are admitted to each option. The School has a very good employment record – with virtually all the students finding paid employment in the media after graduation. Its alumni include the Editor of The Sunday Times, the Chief Correspondent of Channel 4 News and the current Director of Government Communications.

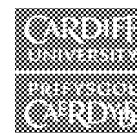
The Diploma/MA in Journalism is a university course assessed by university assignments and examinations. But it also meets the different requirements of the three media industry accrediting bodies.

The Newspaper option is accredited by the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ) which both inspects and assesses the syllabus and teaching resources on a regular basis (every two years) and requires the students to take the NCTJ's own Diploma examinations at the end of the course.

The Broadcast option is accredited by the Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC) which inspects and assesses the syllabus and teaching resources on a regular basis (every three years) and accepts success in the university examinations as evidence of a vocational qualification.

The Magazine option is similarly accredited by the Periodicals Training Council (PTC) which inspects and assesses the syllabus and teaching resources on a regular basis (every two years) and accepts success in the university examinations as evidence of a vocational qualification.

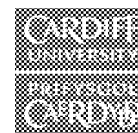
The School is in a continuing dialogue with all three accrediting bodies on their requirements and the course is adjusted to meet the changing needs and demands of the main media employers – whether it is greater focus on multi-skilling and multi-media work, or safety in the field.



The student handbooks for the three options are attached (Documents 3, 4 and 5). The three options have a number of modules in common – Online, Media Law, Public Administration and Reporters & The Reported – and a number of modules which focus on the particular skills required for the specific options. The detail of the syllabus is covered in section c) of the witness statement below.

In recent years, the School has broadened its teaching ambitions to attract students from around the world. Although these courses are not aimed at precise vocational objectives in the way that is true of the PG Diploma/Masters for UK students, we ensure that international students consider in depth the ethical, regulatory and legal frameworks that apply to journalists. We currently offer one course for international students with a strong vocational element. The MA in International Journalism attracts some 80 students a year from around the world. The student handbook is attached (Document 6).

Although it is not accredited by the UK accrediting bodies and not designed to prepare students for careers in the UK media we thought it would be helpful to include details as evidence of our overall commitment to teaching ethics and good professional practice.



*c) Details of the training on standards and/or ethics which your institution provides to students on courses for journalists or aspiring journalists.*

Ethics and good professional standards have always been at the heart of the Cardiff course. Its founder, Sir Tom Hopkinson, created the first ethics module in British university journalism education, *Reporters & The Reported*, which continues to this day.

The School's view is that high professional standards are more important than ever in an environment where citizen journalism and user-generated content is blurring the distinctions between professional journalists and others who engage in journalistic activities. The phone hacking scandal has done significant damage to the reputation of professional British journalism and needs to be met by a renewed emphasis on high ethical and professional standards as the only way to improve journalism's standing, as well as its commercial sustainability.

### **Diploma/MA in Journalism**

As detailed above, this is Cardiff's vocational course for students wishing to pursue a career in UK journalism. Ethics and professional standards have a prominent and formal part in the syllabus and in our approach to teaching.

Our approach to training in ethics and standards has three main elements: media law, ethics and good professional practice. A brief account of the Cardiff approach to the education of newspaper journalists has been provided to the NCTJ for its submission to the inquiry, but we have taken this opportunity to add more detail.

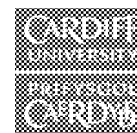
### **Media Law**

The Media Law course provides the underpinning legal knowledge that aspiring journalists will need when they enter the industry. The syllabus addresses the obvious areas of defamation, contempt of court, reporting restrictions, privacy and confidentiality, data protection, source protection, copyright, image rights and media regulation. It includes the relevant regulatory codes – PCC, Ofcom and BBC.

Media law is covered in a two semester module which deals with the major legal issues facing journalists including the implications of online dissemination of material. In doing so the students are occasionally confronted with ethical problems in the sense that industry practice does not appear to accord with or reflect the legal principles under discussion. Students are constantly referred to the regulatory codes within which they work.

Mr Justice Eady and Gill Phillips, currently Director of Editorial Legal Services at the Guardian, have visited the School to deliver lectures to the trainee journalists. The course tutors, Professor Duncan Bloy and Ms Sara Hadwin, are the authors of standard textbook *Law and the Media*, the second edition of which was published by Sweet and Maxwell in August 2011.

Professor Bloy was the Head of the University of Glamorgan Law School from 1989-1997. In this period he acted as an expert commentator on legal matters for BBC Radio Wales. He has delivered the Media Law programme at Cardiff from 2003. He is the author of 14 text books on legal matters of which 3 are on Media Law. He held the first sponsored Law Chair in Wales, has been Vice Principal of a large college in the North West and also was Chief Executive Officer at Forte-IRI in Singapore from 2000-2003.



The students have a 2000 word project and a university law examination at the end of their course and those students who are on the newspaper option are also prepared for their separate NCTJ law examinations in basic media law and court reporting. The module description can be found in the student handbooks but for convenience is attached as a separate document (Document 7).

The following are examples of ethical issues that have arisen when discussing aspects of the law:

- 1) **Defamation:** The use of the Offer of Amends procedures: Students are constantly referred to the examples provided on Media Lawyer of where out of court settlements are ratified by the courts. Often the lawyer representing a newspaper will admit that the story was untrue and 'sincere apologies' are offered to the claimant.

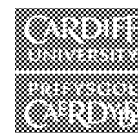
Students discuss why newspapers run false stories. As Lord Hobhouse said in the Reynolds case "There is no public interest in misinformation". A recent case study is the settlement with Sir Roger Moore's wife after 'completely untrue and defamatory comments' were published by the Daily Mail. It was admitted by the Mail that no-one had contacted Lady Moore in an attempt to verify the story or to contact the source of the information to establish its truth. The McCann defamation settlement is another case study which embraces not just the print media.

- 2) **Contempt of Court:** The Case of Chris Jefferies raises the question of whether the media has learned anything since the Huntley/Carr reporting scandal in 2003. The students learn the principles in the Contempt of Court Act and the defendant's right to the presumption of innocence.
- 3) **Protection of Sources:** The question is: why do journalists refuse to obey court orders under s.10 of the Contempt of Court Act? It is pointed out that the various professional codes refer only to a moral obligation to protect source confidentiality. So are journalists above the law?
- 4) **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Article 8 refers to respect for private life, family, home and correspondence. Therefore why do we have the phone hacking scandal when there is no public interest justification for invading privacy? This also arises when we discuss the Max Mosley/News of the World privacy case.

## Ethics

Ethics is also covered by another two semester module, Reporters & The Reported, which deals with issues of ethics and professional standards, together with an analysis of the current state of the UK media, through a series of lectures with Cardiff professors and senior editors. The module is led by Professor Richard Tait, former editor-in-chief of ITN and former chairman of the BBC Trust's editorial standards committee. The sessions cover case studies such as the current phone hacking scandal, the Hutton Inquiry, the Phillis review, privacy and FOI. The students are examined by a piece of project work. The module description is in the student handbooks, but for convenience has been attached as a separate document (Document 8).

The lecturers this year include Professor Tait; Professor Ian Hargreaves; Peter Preston, columnist and former editor of The Guardian; Nicholas Brett, Group Editorial Director of BBC Magazines; Michael Jerney, Director of News, Current Affairs and Sport for ITV; Charles Reiss, former political editor of The Standard and a member of the Phillis review of government communications; and Maurice Frankel from the Campaign for Freedom of Information. There are also lectures on professional issues such as safety and stress. A full list of the lecturers and their topics for this semester is attached (Document 9).



Each lecture session is an hour and a half, divided between the lecture and question and answer sessions. The students are encouraged to raise ethical and professional concerns and the approach is to use concrete examples as well as general principles. In addition, they are set a wide ranging reading list of books and articles on journalistic ethics and practice. This reading list also includes the three regulatory codes (PCC, Ofcom and BBC) and two examples of good ethical and professional guidelines – the recommendations of the Neil Review of the BBC's Journalism After Hutton and the Guardian's revised post-Hutton guidelines.

The students are tested at the end of the first semester by a piece of project work – a 1200 word article which tests their understanding of the issues, knowledge of the lectures and reading on the subject. This year's assignment article challenges the students to assess the significance of the phone-hacking scandal in the context of the impact of the digital revolution on journalism (Document 10).

The second semester continues the themes with a shorter programme of lectures and masterclasses, often on topical issues which have arisen during the course of the first semester – for example, last year's programme began with a lecture on the latest developments in Wikileaks and the phone hacking scandal.

### **Good professional practice**

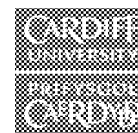
Good professional practice is also instilled in the students through intensive production work which begins in the first semester and takes up much of the course work in the second semester. The newspaper option runs bi-weekly Production Days in the second semester, producing a newspaper and lifestyle supplement to rival the local evening paper, The South Wales Echo. Each paper produced undergoes a rigorous critique at the end of the day and topical ethical issues are discussed as they arise. The course director, David English, is a former editorial training manager for Thomson Regional Newspapers.

There is a similar approach on the broadcast and magazine options. The broadcasters produce television and radio bulletins and programmes and the magazine students produce magazines to a professional standard under the supervision of their course tutors who are themselves experienced journalists and programme makers. The course director of the broadcast option, Colin Larcombe, is a very experienced broadcast producer, a consultant to the Thomson Foundation, a member of the BJTC board and a member of the Royal Television Society. The course director of the magazine option, Tim Holmes, is a very experienced magazine journalist who is both the co-author of a book on sub-editing and the coordinator of an annual conference at Cardiff on magazine journalism.

All work on production days is produced in accordance with the regulatory codes and within the law – as the production days involve real stories with members of the public and news sources ranging from the Welsh government to local sports clubs. The students learn to apply good professional and ethical standards in the most realistic environment possible – news gathering and production.

This approach allows us to embed good practice, high ethical and professional standards and respect for the law and regulation, by applying in practice the knowledge acquired through the core modules in Media Law and Reporters and The Reported. There is a rigorous process of review after each production day where all aspects of the day are discussed and lessons learned. The School invites experienced journalists to join these production days from time to time to bring their expertise and judgment into the educational process.





The broadcast group has a weekly Critical Viewing and Listening session where some of the week's important professional output is analysed and discussed. This often leads to the analysis of ethical and professional issues – for example a recent session focused on the ethics of political journalism and how close political reporters could or should get to politicians.

In addition, in all three options experienced journalists are also invited to lecture the students as guest speakers on ethical and professional standards. These include representatives of the main media regulators (PCC, Ofcom, BBC Trust) as well as leading figures in the UK and Welsh media.

### **MA in International Journalism**

The MA in International Journalism brings together around 80 students of up to 20 different nationalities working across media platforms. All practise real world journalism while with us so are taught to work within the ethical frameworks prevalent in the UK – predominantly the BBC Guidelines and the PCC Code of Practice.

These are introduced in outline to all students from week one and are covered in various ways in all three core modules. So in Foreign News Reporting (Document 11) for instance, students are lectured on and discuss issues such as conventions of confidentiality, the embedding of journalists within military units and the reporting of minorities.

In Information Gathering and Analysis (Document 12) their main first semester assignment is a Mediawatch column which focuses on the ethics of journalistic practice and audience expectation, including regulation and the role of readers' editors.

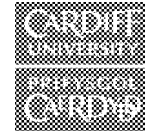
In the practical International News Production modules (Document 13) students learn the relevant platform-specific codes and apply them to scenarios and real world information gathering. So for instance, the newspaper group discusses issues of intrusion and privacy in relation to live incidents such as the M5 crash and relate them to the PCC code.

In the dissertation phase of our Masters programme, most students undertake research in the form of journalistic investigation and present their findings in journalistic formats – either as written analytical features, a radio programme or video.

Each student must complete an ethical approval process with their supervisor which is documented and based on the UK industry ethical codes. Issues are discussed in advance and planned research/outputs amended to be compliant (Document 14).

Students also attend a variety of guest lectures and workshops, notably through the DfID-financed One World Media organisation which facilitates training on the ethics of reporting in developing countries and more generally on cultures other than our own.

The MA in International Journalism course director, Sara Hadwin, has researched and published in this area. She has co-authored two editions of *Law and the Media* (Sweet and Maxwell, 2007 and 2010) with law professor Duncan Bloy examining the practical implications for journalists of media law, regulation and ethical codes. She also provided an extensive chapter on Media Law, Regulation and Ethics to the Pearson text *The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Journalism Handbook*, to be published in January 2012.



*(d) A summary of any published research undertaken within the last decade which is relevant to the terms of reference for Part 1 of the Inquiry*

The School has carried out a range of research projects in recent years germane to the subject of journalistic practices and media ethics. We note that we have been commissioned on many occasions by public service broadcasters (the BBC, the BBC Trust and Channel 4) to do research with the broad objective of improving the quality of journalism. The British press are much less likely to commission such research, the one exception being our work on the quality and independence of British journalism, which was carried out in collaboration with *The Guardian*.

### 1. Media law and ethics

Former editor Sara Hadwin and law professor Duncan Bloy have published a key text in this area - *Law and the Media* - which examines the practical implications for journalists of media law, regulation and ethical codes. Hadwin has also written a chapter on Media Law, Regulation and Ethics to the Pearson text, *The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Journalism Handbook*, to be published in January 2012.

#### References:

Hadwin, S. and Bloy, D. (2007, 2010) *Law and the Media*, Sweet and Maxwell (ISBN 978-1-84703-215-7, available in hard copy on request).

### 2. The quality and independence of British journalism

- i. Professors Bob Franklin, Justin Lewis and Dr Andrew Williams (commissioned by Rowntree in collaboration with *The Guardian*) carried out the first piece of research to look systematically at **the role of PR in news production and the ability of journalists to maintain journalistic independence**. The study looked at a sample drawn from the 'top end' of British journalism (the *Guardian*, *Independent*, *Mail*, *Telegraph*, *Times*, BBC and ITV news). In brief, the study found that:

Over the past 20 years the number of journalists working for the national press has remained fairly static, but they are, on average, producing three times as much copy. This invariably limits the time available for fact checking and independent reporting, a point made by many of the journalists interviewed for the study.

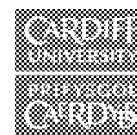
Journalists often rely heavily on public relations and press agencies for news, with one in ten stories in the press sample being little more than rewritten PR releases, and many more relying heavily on those releases.

Journalists rely heavily on press agencies for copy, but these sources are rarely attributed.

#### References:

Lewis, Justin, Williams, Andy, Franklin, Bob, Thomas, James and Mosdell, Nick (2008) 'The Quality and Independence of British Journalism' Cardiff University School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies (Reference 1).

Lewis, Justin, Williams, Andy, and Franklin, Bob (2008) 'A Compromised Fourth Estate?: UK News Journalism, Public Relations and News Sources', *Journalism Studies*, 9 (1), pp.1-20 (Reference 2).



Lewis, Justin, Williams, Andy, and Franklin, Bob (2008) 'Four Rumours and an Explanation: A Political Economic Account of Journalists' Changing Newsgathering and Reporting Practices', *Journalism Practice*, 2 (1), pp.27-45 (Reference 3).

Franklin, Bob, Williams, Andy, and Lewis, Justin (2010) 'Journalism and Public Relations', *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism Studies*. Ed. Stuart Allen, London and New York: Routledge (ISBN 978-0-415-46529-8, hard copy available on request).

- ii. Another project, based on research commissioned by the BBC, looked at the quality of 24 hour news broadcasting in the UK. It found that BBC News 24 tended to cover a wider range of stories and apply more balanced news values than Sky, although we did not find the kind of biased reporting associated with Sky's US equivalent, Fox.

The research also found that the emphasis on immediacy and breaking news worked *against* journalistic standards, and that breaking news stories were generally less well informed and less informative than conventional news bulletins

#### References:

Lewis, Justin and Cushion, Stephen (2009) 'The thirst to be first: an analysis of breaking news stories and their impact on the quality of 24 hour news coverage in the UK' in *Journalism Practice*, 3 (3), pp. 304-318 (Reference 4).

Cushion, Stephen and Lewis, Justin (2009) 'Towards a 'Foxification' of 24 hour news channels in Britain? An analysis of market driven and publicly funded news coverage' in *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism*, 10 (2), pp. 131-154 (Reference 5).

### 3. Examples of positive and negative journalistic practices: science and religion

- i. We have carried out various projects examining the state of science and health reporting. On the positive side, Andrew Williams found that the number of specialist science and health reporters has increased significantly since 1989 (although much of this increase is accounted for by the BBC). On the more negative side, the study found that an increasing workload made it difficult for journalists to investigate their own stories and to rely on press releases and PR material. Science journalists also complain that a lot of their time is spent trying to convince news desks not to run poor-quality "bad science" stories they have seen on the news wires and/or in eye-catching press releases.

#### References:

Williams, A. and Clifford, S. (2009) Mapping the Field: Specialist science news journalism in the UK national media (Reference 6)

- ii. Lewis and Speers looked at the media coverage of MMR controversy, and found that reporting often exaggerated the risks of the MMR vaccine, which had negative public health consequences as the uptake of MMR fell.

#### References:

Lewis, J. and Speers, T. (2003) 'Misleading Media Reporting? The MMR story', *Nature Reviews Immunology*, 3 (11), pp. 913-918 (Reference 7).



Speer, T. and Lewis, J. (2004) 'Journalists and jabs: Media coverage of the MMR vaccine' *Communication and Medicine* 1 (2), pp. 171-181 (Reference 8)

- iii. Boyce and Lewis have published a body of research on the reporting of climate change. This research suggested that, despite the weight of evidence and the seriousness of the issue, climate change has generally been under-reported, especially in the British press (broadcasters began to take the issue more seriously from around 2005), with the 'sceptics' receiving more coverage than the evidence warrants.

**References:**

Boyce, T. and Lewis, J. (2009) (eds.) *Climate Change and the Media*, New York: Peter Lang (ISBN 978-1-4331-0460-2, hard copy available on request).

- iv. The School's research on the British press coverage of Islam and Muslims suggested that the quality of tabloid news practices in this area was often poor, with a great deal of misleading and highly prejudicial reporting. The research was featured on a Channel Four *Dispatches* programme (*It shouldn't happen to Muslim*) and a more recent *Face the Facts* programme on *Islamophobia* on Radio 4.

**References:**

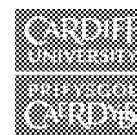
Lewis, J. Mason, P and Moore, K. (2009) 'Images of Islam in the UK - The Representation of British Muslims in the National Print News Media 2000-2008' in Marsden, L. and Savigny, H (eds.) *Media, Religion and Conflict*, Ashgate (Reference 9).

#### 4. How research can inform improving standards in journalism

The BBC Trust commissioned the School to conduct research into the reporting of UK politics in an era in which political responsibility for major areas (such as health and education) is devolved to the four nations. Our research found significant problems in reporting, with news remaining focused on England in ways that were often misleading. This research informed the King Report, and the BBC used our research to produce recommendations for improving news coverage across its TV, radio and online outlets. Our subsequent research, a year after these recommendations, found that BBC news coverage was less England-focused, more accurate, and better reflected post-devolution politics in the UK. Other broadcasters had not improved.

**References:**

Cushion, Stephen, Lewis, Justin and Groves, Chris, et al (2009) 'Four Nations Impartiality Review: An analysis of reporting devolution' in *Journalism Studies*, 10 (5) (Reference 10).



*e) The gist of any feedback which you have received from alumni who have worked as journalists in relation to standards and ethics within the media in practice.*

The School keeps in touch with many of its alumni but does not have any systematic survey of alumni experiences and feedback. Over the last ten years we can only think of one case where one of our graduates was placed in an unacceptable position – a journalist who was working for a tabloid national newspaper. She was asked to take an assignment which involved pretending to be a prostitute – she refused and moved to another newspaper.

The reaction of experienced alumni to the phone hacking scandal has been universally one of shock at the scale of illegal activities and disapproval. Many of our alumni are currently working on tabloid newspapers such as the Daily Express, Daily Mail and Daily Mirror as well as broadsheets, broadcasters and magazines.

Our alumni have worked in every possible sort of situation, from war reporting to crime and sport, but we are not aware of any who have fallen short of the sorts of standards which are ingrained into every aspect of our teaching

The main concerns which emerge from our recent alumni are more about the pressures under which young journalists now work and the speed with which they are expected to take significant editorial responsibility, including responsibility for legal and regulatory compliance.

Young journalists joining Media Wales for example, the leading newspaper/online employer in Cardiff, would be expected to write 5 leads a day, 20 nibs (news in brief stories) and one feature as well as providing a personal news list each day to the news desk. The core workload has also been increased by the need to provide material for Media Wales online operation. In tightly resourced newsrooms, promotion to positions of editorial responsibility can be rapid. A good young journalist could be working on the news desk within three or four years.

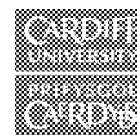
In broadcasting, it is quite common for young journalists quite soon after graduating to find themselves the only journalist on duty at night in a local radio station and/or contributing to network breakfast programming in radio and television.

The expansion of online journalism – with young journalists working either on the websites of newspapers, magazines and broadcasts or on freestanding new media sites – has also created jobs where journalists are given a great deal of responsibility very early, sometimes with less editorial supervision than in the past.

The feedback from our recent alumni is that they are glad they had a good grounding in media law and regulation as they find that knowledge being put to the test. The pressures in newspaper newsrooms, in particular, mean that journalists probably do less original newsgathering than in the past and still less in-depth, investigative journalism which can pose particular ethical challenges. All of our journalists are trained in the use of legitimate investigative techniques, notably the Freedom of Information Act which is particularly helpful when investigating local and central government.

The feedback from our recent alumni would suggest something of a cultural difference between broadcast and newspaper newsrooms.

In broadcast newsrooms, journalists operate under statutory regulation. The BBC and Ofcom issue very full editorial guidelines which give advice on how to cover a story as well as what the ethical principles are. There is a culture of upward referral of difficult ethical or coverage issues. All this creates a secure ethical framework within which the young journalists can continue to develop their skills and



experience. It is also however, a framework in which some journalists feel that the tolerated risk threshold is too low, resulting in a journalistic culture which is less ambitious than that prevailing in the best newspapers.

In newspapers, the shared regulatory framework is less explicit than in broadcasting. The Editors' Code is quite detailed, but is often supplemented by a newspaper's own editorial guidelines. There is also a culture of referral to the news editor or other editorial line manager and in serious cases the editor, who is likely to be a more accessible individual than the most senior broadcast news executives.

Our students are very aware of the current controversies over ethical standards in journalism, particularly in the newspaper industry. A question which they often pose during the course is whether they will be asked to act unethically once they start work and what they can or should do if that happens. Tutors work through real-life situations and other examples of these problems at repeated intervals during the period of the course. These anxieties are understandable given the current state of the employment market and the competitive nature of the media and the journalistic profession. However, we have no evidence from the comments of our alumni that pressure to behave unethically is a routine part of their subsequent professional experience.