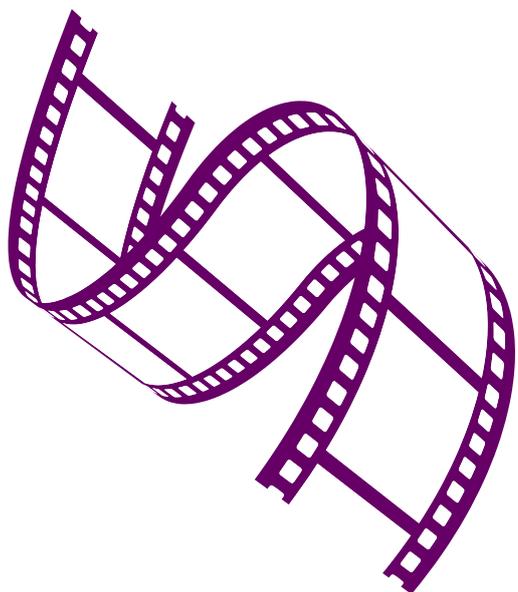


Getting into... **Film, TV, Radio and Digital Media Arts**



The route into the industry is varied and there's a range of employers from small production, independent media, digital, companies right across to large global entertainment companies.

Starting out in this industry will require being proactive, determined and adaptable in your search for opportunities. It's recommended to start networking early, find volunteer and work experience to boost your employability. Resilience and perseverance are important as you may need to explore many different avenues and ways to connect with people in the industry, as well as being open minded. It is competitive industry, but a range of roles can be found, even positions that have been created yet.

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Exploring Your Options

In this section we highlight various areas within the industry, and where you might expect to work. There will be additional roles and employers that we don't cover, so use these popular examples as a starting point when exploring your options.

It's worth knowing the creative industry overall in the UK is huge, The Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) estimated its contribution of 115.9 billion to the UK, accounting for 5.9% of the UK economy. Jobs are continuing to be created and in February 2022 the government plans to invest £50 million of support for the UK creative industries.

Across all of Film, TV, Radio and Digital Media entry level roles cover a range of positions such as; runner, production assistant, broadcast assistant, operations assistant, junior video editor, social media assistant, crew, location assistant, junior TV researcher all of these are ways to start out to progress your career.

Typical roles and employers

Film

Many films in the UK are made by production companies, which can range from large organisations like Working Title to companies with only a couple of employees. Employers will be keen to know what area of film appeals to you, documentary, feature, independent, commercials, reality programmes. Even if you are not sure when starting out, understanding the range of companies and their film expertise or genre is worth researching.

Graduates often start as runners or entry level roles as mentioned above. There are also lots of jobs to be done on set or on a production, including sound, lighting, transport, stunts, special effects, hair, make-up, and catering. Perhaps that might be a way to start out and gain experience. The position of runner may be different across companies, overall, it involves helping to coordinate the logistics of the production – booking guests, studio time, finding props, checking time slots on set, making tea/coffee, photocopying, organising lunch and any other administration help.

In addition to feature films, film production opportunities are available in advertising, animation, digital content, documentaries, short films and even TV drama.

Corporate and promotional production is an area often overlooked by graduates. This involves creating film, video and online materials for companies' websites, advertising, training, PR and sales. This sector is dominated by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and can be an excellent way for graduates to gain experience.

TV

Graduates often start as runners, but it's important to be open-minded about the variety of roles available, as admin and coordination type roles can be a great foot in the door. Researcher positions, which can involve fact checking, suggesting contributors and developing programme ideas is another alternative. See [screenskills](#) for detailed information, training, and job profiles across the industry.

In addition to the range of major UK based broadcasters (many of which run placement schemes) such as BBC, BT, Channel 4, Channel 5, Discovery, ITV, Paramount, Sky, and Viacom, Warner Bros. The independent production companies also make TV programmes, research into the type of productions you are interested in helps. It is common to work on a freelance or contract basis.

Radio

Potential employers: As well as the BBC and commercial stations, there are also small, local, non-profit-making and community stations, e.g., in hospitals and at universities, where experience may be gained. Starting out small and volunteering is the best way into radio. There is great value in talking to the right people about potential work coming up. Creating a social media presence will help make yourself known. There's even the chance to create your own radio station, which may involve applying for start-up awards for funding.

Digital media

Within Digital Media and the integration of technology, increase in satellite channels, the demand for film production, video streaming, and interactive content across the web and mobile devices is immense. New innovations for shows, sounds, apps, games and social media is open to new creative ideas from individuals and companies, and no one has the monopoly on good ideas.

There are many small and medium-sized companies which specialise in digital media, where a knowledge of, search engine optimization (SEO), web analytics and the use of social media for marketing purposes in addition to video making skills for example are valuable. Many larger organisations also have their own 'in-house' digital media teams to manage their online presence.

Visit the Prospects [Creative Arts](#) page to find out more about this industry, or see our 'Getting into marketing' and 'Getting into IT' guides for further information.

Getting Industry Ready

In this section, we will talk about the kinds of skills and experiences employers might be looking for within this industry, and how you can go about gaining them yourself. What employers are looking for will vary depending on the role, but below is a general overview of key areas you might like to think about. It is important to always read the job description carefully to see exactly what the job responsibilities are, and what skills and experiences are required.

What employers want

Qualifications

Whilst work experience is the most important factor that can help you gain employment in this industry. An undergraduate degree brings benefits in terms of subject focus and the discipline, bear in mind any relevant modules or projects undertaken can be used as experience, especially if technical. The skills gained during your studies such as research methods, critical thinking, presenting arguments, working to deadlines are all transferable skills for the industry.

Postgraduate study can provide further in depth focus on your specialism, remember it is not a substitute for work experience and as any other degree will not guarantee you a job. Various universities or education centres can provide access to equipment, and opportunities to develop your portfolio and network of contacts.

There are several private film schools, however fees tend to be high and again there is no guarantee of a job - you still need to network and apply speculatively for work. For many roles, technical skills are gained on the job, but as this is a competitive area, some people take this route as a way to make contacts. When choosing a course, consider the resources available, the experience of those teaching the course, and what their alumni have achieved. Check what industry links and placement options are offered and whether they are endorsed by a relevant Professional Association.

Don't feel you have to take a course straight after your undergraduate degree. Gaining further experience first can test whether it really is the right career area for you. It's also an opportunity to find out which (if any) qualifications are valued most by employers in the area you want to work in. Remember Professional Associations, training organisation and education centres run courses across wide areas and provide further insights, they will also boost your CV, allow you to network and explore the subject before committing to a longer and more expensive course.

Skills

Here are some key skills many employers are looking for when hiring graduates. It always important to read the job description carefully to see exactly what the job responsibilities are, and what skills and experiences are required for that particular role.

Creativity/Passion

Ability to produce creative ideas, visualise ideas, think laterally and outside of the box. Additionally real passion, as well as belief in the social value of the creative industry produces success.

Accuracy / Keen eye for detail

Keeping a close eye on the finer details of projects and processes and the ability to identify errors. Can produce consistent, high-quality work and is efficient. Demonstrates an impressive memory.

Communication

Ability to communicate across a wide range of people, take direction from senior team members. Strong written and verbal communication skills are needed.

Organisation / Planning

The ability to manage multiple projects and ensure projects are completed on time. Interpersonal and teamwork skills. The ability to collaborate, communicate and work well with others.

Digital skills

These vary depending on the role, digital skills can include original content creation, technology expertise, UX/UI, social media, data analytics.

Teamwork

Ability to take responsibility as part of the team, be adaptable, and thrive on working together, building effective working relationships is key.

Also consider the various ways you could gain the skills required for the role you are interested in. You could gain work experience in PR or fundraising to develop sales and negotiation skills, before shifting to the marketing department of a production company for example. You could also work as a PA or in project management to develop planning and organisational skills before moving into producing work - it's about being flexible and marketing your skills to future employers. Employers are looking for people who can be adaptable, problem solve, communicate, analyse information, and have a logical approach to working. [Creative access](#) has a useful top 10 tips for preparing for a role in the creative industries. Technical skills may be highly sought after, where you need a range of software packages, editing programmes, content management system or as practical as a camera ! Do your research into what the most up to date technical skills are being used.

Employers will also look for your skills to be showcased – this could be in the form of producing a showreel, portfolio or website. More useful insights on how to start building your portfolio from [Creative Access](#).

Commercial awareness

Understanding the industry, you are applying to, alongside how the business fits into the marketplace, it's customers, clients and suppliers is known as commercial awareness. As well as having an appreciation of any recent developments, opportunities and challenges is highly valued by employers. This awareness can help you prove your interest and enthusiasm for the role and company you are applying to.

If you are applying for a role in TV, a common mistake is to not watch the programmes you are being interviewed to work on, or to mention mid-interview that you want to be a presenter and this seemed a good way in. Understanding how media organisations make their money, what the life cycle of a film or production is – from initial idea to debrief meeting – and what you can bring to the organisation to help with these, can set you apart from other candidates

Freelance and Enterprise

If you're considering working in the creative industries, it may be easier to be self-employed or find contract work, this is increasingly more common, and you may end up having a portfolio career. This is where you work across different areas during your working week e.g., 2 days video editing and other days as a production assistant. The industry is project-based and so companies may hire by a set project or time rather than permanent roles.

How to gain relevant skills and experiences

Make your own opportunities

Get involved with student media such as QMTV and Radio. Although you might not want to work in print media, experience of writing engaging content for student newspapers, magazine and blogs (particularly if it is about film, TV or radio) is valuable experience.

Attend industry events and talks (on campus or across London)

You could discover new roles and potential organisations to apply to, as well as gain first-hand advice on the reality of working in the industry. Events are a particularly useful way to network (see information on page 4) and could be a way to find out about projects you could offer to help with.

Build your online profile

Create an Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn account and follow organisations or professionals in the industry who interest you e.g., local radio and TV stations or film festivals. This helps you build your online profile, learn about what's happening in the industry, and develop contacts (who could mention events or work experience opportunities). Keep in mind potential employers will check your online profile to find out more about you, so make sure it creates a professional first impression. Starting a blog about film / tv/ radio will give you experience of regular content writing and an understanding of online communication platforms and audiences - all useful in the media.

Student societies

Arranging an event for a society or gaining a committee role will again develop your teamwork and leadership skills. There could be students in the film department at this university (or other universities or organisations) who are looking for people to help them with their practical media projects.

Volunteering and part-time jobs

You could volunteer for a local charity that is looking to create a promotional or awareness raising film. Volunteering at local film festivals is a great way to develop organisational and planning skills for example and is an excellent example you could add to your CV and talk about at an interview to demonstrate initiative and motivation for working in the industry. Most part time jobs involve communication, team working and customer service skills, which are important to most employers.

Local organisations

Local organisations such as RichMix, Genesis Cinema, East London Film Festival and Hackney Futures, run a range of arts projects you can take part in. QMUL students have also taken part in BFI Future Film. London's East End area is now home to many design and advertising agencies, take time to research who's in the area. Use what you learn to inform your own work and start making!

How can Careers and Enterprise help you?

Careers and Enterprise Support for you

There are a number of ways Careers and Enterprise can help you build skills and prepare for applying to opportunities.

Appointments

We run one-to-one appointments with expert career consultants who can talk to you about a variety of topics including your CV and applications, as well as give you career guidance and advice surrounding making career decisions. You can also book [Practice Interview appointments](#) to test your skills, for when you have an upcoming interview

Events

We hold a range of [careers events](#) throughout the year where you can learn more about an industry, network with employers and find out what people look for in a graduate.

Programmes

If you are looking to develop your skills, Careers & Enterprise is home to the [Aspire Programme](#): Queen Mary's Student Career Development Programme. These programmes take place alongside your degree, allowing you to gain vital employability skills to add to your CV, as well as raise your commercial awareness. *Please note: Eligibility requirements apply*

Online Resources

Our bank of [online resources](#) is a great place to go for careers support. We have guides (such as this one), templates for things like CVs and applications, as well as tools that you can use to build or improve a CV ([QM CareerSet](#)), practice for a psychometric test ([Graduates First](#)) or practice for a video interview ([ShortlistMe](#)).

Make the most of work experience opportunities

1. Discuss your expectations with the employer at the start, so you have the same understanding of what the experience will involve.
2. Always be polite, motivated and interested. Work experience can involve boring tasks, but being flexible, helpful and willing to get involved will make a good impression.

3. Be inquisitive and learn everything you can about the way the organisation works. How do they hire? What key skills are they looking for? What are the main issues affecting the organisation at the moment?
4. Talk to people who work at the organisation and find out what they do and how they got there. You might uncover job roles and employers that are new to you, as well as pick up some helpful tips. Keeping in touch with people you meet can be a great way of finding out about future opportunities and expanding your network.
5. Ask for feedback at the end of the placement to identify your strengths and the skills you need to develop further.

For more information on where you can develop your skills and experiences, see the Resources section.

Finding Opportunities

People have come from a range of degree disciplines, training schemes or worked their way up from entry level roles.

Gain Work Experience

The most common role for students and new graduates is a runner, as well as other entry level production assistant roles. As the most junior role in the production department, runners take on any task required to ensure the smooth running of the production process e.g. helping to coordinate the logistics of the production – booking guests, studio time, finding props, checking time slots on set, making tea/coffee, photocopying, organising lunch and any other administration help.

Don't only apply for the well-known channels or production companies. Increase your chances of success by searching for smaller organisations that may receive fewer applications. Watch the credits of programmes you like to see which production companies made them, and send them speculative applications. Look for film festivals and events where you can volunteer to gain experience. Twitter is a great way to find opportunities.

Internships and Graduate Schemes

Although the most common way to gain experience in this industry is through networking and speculative applications, some organisations do offer internships and graduate schemes. These include EndemolShine, IM, Touch Productions, Tiger Aspect, RDF, Warner Bros., Freemantle Media, Sara Putt Trainee Scheme, Endemol Shine, Working Title and Princess Productions.

These schemes are very competitive, so think about how you can sell your work experience to them to demonstrate you have the skills they are looking for. Do keep in mind that this is not an exhaustive list, so use networking and internet research to find out about other opportunities.

Speculative applications

Enquiring whether organisations have any opportunities available - is the common way to find work experience and job opportunities in this industry. Many opportunities are not formally advertised, so you could find yourself in the right place at the right time! This method tends to be more effective when sent to a 'warm contact' e.g. someone you met during work experience, at an event or interacted with on Twitter.

Don't send the same application to every organisation you approach. Research the organisations you apply to so you can demonstrate interest in what they do and explain how your skills and experience will be useful to them. This will be a lot more persuasive than a general letter. Remember not all speculative applications are successful. You will probably have to send many before you get a response. Try not to get discouraged – this is a normal part of the process.

Networking

Networking is about making connections with people who can advise, help, or inform you about your area of interest within the industry. It is particularly important in this industry, as many film, TV and radio work experience and employment opportunities are never formally advertised, but found through the people you know. Your contacts can include people you meet during work experience, at an event or on a relevant course for example.

Talking to people who work in the industry is a great way to hear about different job roles, employers and the reality of working in the industry. If you are going to a networking event, think about how you will introduce yourself. Prepare a quick outline of who you are what you do, and how it relates to the contact. Students have found work experience by introducing themselves to employers at events but do this diplomatically, so you don't cause offence!

LinkedIn features many employers across the creative industry, specific groups to join and filmmakers, directors, production managers most likely will have a profile too. This is great way to reach out, be visible and find out more about their role or company. There's also an extensive job search feature, including easy apply process and you can set up alerts.

Search for existing networks and relevant hashtags e.g., @Film_London and @MyFirstJobinTV. Whether interacting in person or online, it can help to think about what questions you can ask in order to get the information you would like to know e.g. what advice would you give to someone looking to enter this industry? How can I increase my chances of gaining work experience? What is the best way to approach employers?

Resources

<https://amplifi.org.uk/>

Youth led platform, aimed at 16 – 25, training, workshops, and resources

<https://www.artsjobs.org.uk/arts-jobs-listings/>

The Arts Council jobs portal listing roles across crafts, combined arts, film, photography to museum and gallery-related jobs and internships

<http://www.bfi.org.uk/about-bfi/job-opportunities>

British Film Institute featuring industry information and range of paid employment, freelance assignments, and apprenticeships.

<https://careerssearch.bbc.co.uk/>

Jobs portal for the BBC

<https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/jobs/all/creative/>

Official jobs board for Campaign published by Haymarket Media Group. Latest news on brands, and jobs within the media, creative, marketing and advertising industry.

<https://www.commedia.org.uk>

UK representative organisation for the community broadcasting sector, volunteer work and funding schemes on offer.

<https://creativepool.com/jobs/>

Connects people across the global creative industry to agencies, brands, and campaigns. Roles across video, social media, animation, graphics, and print.

[Creative Access: creativeaccess.org.uk](https://creativeaccess.org.uk)

Leading diversity, equity and inclusion organisation supporting underrepresented groups offering training, expertise, employer links, paid internships, and jobs in the creative industries for UK nationals from BAME - black, Asian, or non-white ethnic minority

<https://careers.channel4.com/4skills>

Training, work experience, apprenticeships, and production training schemes across range of departments – research, media planning, press, advertising, production.

Screenskills: <https://www.screenskills.com/>

Industry-led skills body for the screen industries – film, TV, animation, and games. Training, insights, and career development.

The Dots: <https://the-dots.com/jobs/search>

Aimed at creatives spanning the entire industry, referred to as the ‘LinkedIn’ for the creative industry. Range of employers and jobs across design, production, music, fashion, entertainment, marketing, journalism, photography, or arts and crafts.

<https://www.designjobsboard.com/>

Design, UX, graphics, branding, and artworker roles, including junior roles.

<https://jobs.designweek.co.uk/>

Focuses on advertising, branding, digital, print and graphics

First job in film: www.myfirstjobinfilm.co.uk

Job listings and comprehensive careers tips and resources

Freelance Video Collective: www.freelancevideocollective.com

Film, TV, and video production jobs, plus directory.

Grapevine Jobs: www.grapevinejobs.com/jobseeker/mediajobs.aspx

Job board for positions in broadcast, video & media.

Global: <https://jobs.global.com>

Information and roles for Global group, outdoor advertising, and UK’s radio stations – Heart, Capital, Classic and more.

<https://ifyoucouldjobs.com/jobs>

Jobs board made by creatives for creatives, ranging from junior to senior roles in the industry.

The Knowledge Online: www.theknowledgeonline.com/

Directory including Film, TV, Production Crew, and Industry suppliers.

mandy.com

Vacancies and networking opportunities for film and TV crew, music professionals, voiceover artists and performers.

<https://mediatrust.org/>

Charity working in partnership with the media and creative industry aimed at under-represented communities and young people. Training, events, and volunteer activities to develop social media, communication, and digital skills.

[PACT: www.pact.co.uk/member-services/find-a-member.html](http://www.pact.co.uk/member-services/find-a-member.html)

UK Screen sector trade Searchable directory of 500+ TV and film production companies.

<https://www.productionbase.co.uk/film-tv-jobs>

Digital publication and network for freelancers working in TV, film, theatre, radio and commercial production companies and broadcasters. Exclusive invites, job opportunities – runners, production assistant and opportunity to showcase your profile. Promotes good industry practices: BECTU's guideline pay rates for freelancers.

[The Radio Academy: www.radioacademy.org/](http://www.radioacademy.org/)

Events, training, and careers advice for getting into radio. They run an annual under 30 competition to find UK talent in radio.

[Royal Television Society: https://rts.org.uk/article/getting-tv-entry-level-schemes](https://rts.org.uk/article/getting-tv-entry-level-schemes)

List of entry level schemes. Website also contains 'Futures' section with careers related tips and case studies.

[Start in TV.com: http://startintv.com/](http://startintv.com/)

Lists work experience opportunities. Sections include 'which TV job for me' and 'day in the life of' case studies.

<https://www.socialfixt.org/jobboard>

Aiming to bridge the gap for Black talent for entry and mid-level jobs and internships

<http://www.theunitlist.com/>

Produced by industry professionals, is not an agency, range of resources, jobs across film and tv.