

Overview of Role

The Production Accountant is responsible for the management and handling of finance and budget throughout the course of the production. They liaise with the Production team agreeing procedures for cost reporting, cash flow and vendor set ups with all heads of departments. They complete cost reports and set weekly payment schedules for cast, crew and extras during the shoot. They are responsible for preparing full and final accounts, delivering all files to auditor and responding to any queries after post-production.

Core Responsibilities:

These core responsibilities are provided as a guide and are not exhaustive. The exact responsibilities in a particular job will vary depending on the scale / budget band / genre of the production.

1. Prepare the Production's accounts

- Confirm the scope and nature of your role in the production with other members of the Production Management team
- Prepare relevant accounts and reconciliations correctly to allow the preparation of final accounts and audit
- Conduct investigations into business transactions
- Comply with the organisation's policies, regulations, procedures, and timescales relating to final accounts
- Identify discrepancies and unusual features and either resolve, or refer them to the appropriate person
- Prepare the trial balance accurately and, where necessary, open and reconcile a suspense account
- Enter totals from the general ledger or other records correctly on the extended trial balance
- Identify and trace material errors disclosed by the trial balance and refer them to the appropriate authority
- Enter adjustments not dealt with in the ledger accounts correctly on the extended trial balance

2. Process payments for the Production

- Make and release payments in accordance with organisational processes and timescales
- Enter payments into accounting records according to organisational procedures

- Refer queries to the appropriate person
- Maintain security and confidentiality according to organisational requirements

3. Conduct payroll checks

- Check all contractual entitlements for proper authorisation
- Maintain confidentiality and security of employee data
- Ensure Engagement Contracts are signed
- Ensure all payroll transactions are run according to contract, timesheets and other payroll elements
- Check the reports and journals
- Confirm all information is correct and abides to tax and employment law
- Process and post journals

4. Monitor and manage Production costs

- Authorise expenditure which is within agreed budgets
- Obtain additional authorisation for expenditure when what is requested exceeds the limits of your authority
- Keep information about expenditure against budgets to anticipate and prevent or correct cost over-runs for the duration of the production
- Confirm whether expenditure is within agreed budgets and identify variations from the budget
- Clarify the reasons for significant variations from budget and take corrective action
- Check that own or other's reports are accurate and up-to-date
- Present reports in the required format, and at the required time, for different stages of production
- Record and store information about expenditure
- Report any significant variations from budget, and the reasons for them
- Give recipients opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification
- Make recommendations and proposals for action and record agreed action
- Communicate decisions to those who need the information
- Determine the production's needs for recording, storing, retrieving and processing financial and related information
- Determine and explain the roles and responsibilities which colleagues will have in relation to systems

- Identify and rectify operating problems
- Follow up payments that need additional authorisation

5. Prepare Claims Against Insurance Cover

- Identify valid, relevant information and evidence to support insurance claims from internal and external sources
- Assess the impact to specific budgets of losses that occur on the production
- Evaluate the financial implications of any losses to the production's overall budget
- Assess the basis of potential for claims against specific insurances to cover losses affecting the production
- Identify any liabilities that the production is potentially unable to offset through claims against insurance cover
- Accurately complete the correct insurance claim forms and present them to the relevant organisation within required timescales
- Present cost and other information to support claims against identified cover of insurance claims
- Provide a clear rationale for claims to insurers where required
- Discuss implications of insurance claims with relevant people
- Access relevant cost information that is related to specific claims
- Identify these 'insurance costs' separately from 'costs'
- Identify the implications of estimated losses against specific budget headings within the production budget
- Identify any additional costs that may be accrued as a result of losses
- Negotiate with insurers or their representatives to obtain settlements against claims
- Understanding how production schedule is affected by identified losses and how this losses could affect the budget
- Insurance cover and excess that the production has and the key clauses that are affected by any claims
- Issue all the relevant documentation that must be completed for insurance claims
- Seek authority from in negotiation of insurance claims
- Refer unresolved claims to in order to pursue settlement where it cannot be agreed with the insurer or their representative

Role Specific Skills:

- Establish good relationships with Production and Accounts team members, offering assistance, to facilitate the successful completion of tasks
- Proactive engagement in discussions and meetings in order to maintain effective interaction within the Production Management team and other departments
- Apply knowledge of the screen production process and how this affects costs
- Oversee payroll and payment systems
- Prepare production accounts and financial records

Other / Transferable Skills:

- Communication: interpreting your team's requirements and communicating well with your colleagues
- Team-working: collaboration within own and other departments
- Networking: investing time in networking activities, building a network of business contacts and establishing rapport with others quickly and effectively
- Negotiation. Agreeing costs and contract terms with cast, crew and suppliers
- Problem solving. Contingency planning and resolving issues with spending so that productions remain on schedule

Attributes:

- Resilience and enthusiasm: adapt positively to changing work priorities and patterns, ensuring deadlines continue to be met. Proactive and explores new ideas and creative ways of working which will enhance and deliver the best results for the production
- Productivity: organises and prioritises work effectively and achieves required results within deadlines. Demonstrates the drive and energy to get things done in pressurised situations and escalates appropriately when necessary
- Flexibility: willing to both listen and learn and to accept changing priorities and working requirements and has the flexibility to maintain high standards in a changing production environment
- Professional development: develop an ethos to learn and seek out learning and networking opportunities, identifying those that will be most beneficial