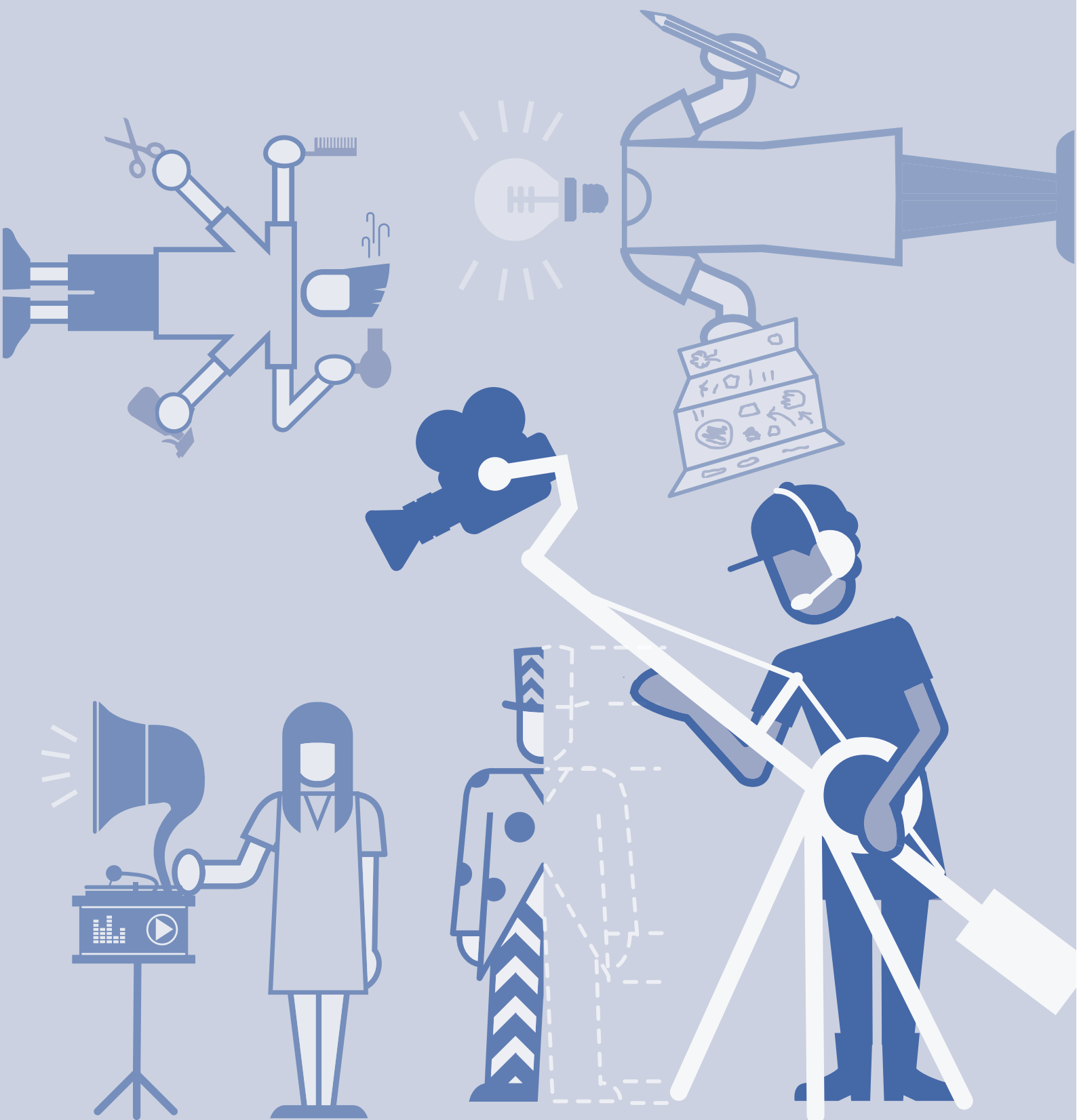


Studio Roles



Introduction to Careers in Non-Scripted TV Production

The UK is home to thousands of talented television creators and is internationally respected for delivering quality programming across all genres. Working in UK TV opens up a world of opportunities - you could even be contracted for regional and global travel.

This map will explain a little about most of the craft and technical roles in non-scripted TV production and give you an idea of the skills required. Don't forget to check out the editorial and production management TV careers map on hiive.co.uk/careers, too!

What Is Non-Scripted Television?

The term non-scripted really means 'without actors'. But it may include other performers like contributors, entertainers and presenters. In truth, every TV programme has a narrative and script. Some craft and technical roles have the flexibility to work in a mix of genres and sectors (including scripted comedy, drama or film) whereas roles in editorial or production management tend to specialise in scripted or non-scripted and rarely cross over.

Children's

All programmes produced specifically for children aged up to 15 years. Themes and language used reflect the age of the intended audience from pre-school to teen. Content is created to encourage the viewer's imagination and educate outside the classroom environment. However, there are children's dramas and sitcoms which are scripted.

Entertainment

What it says on the tin - formatted programming meant to entertain. It often contains the same segments every episode. Programmes are fast paced and visually exciting. Entertainment programmes recorded in a purpose-built studio are sometimes referred to as 'shiny floor' because the vinyl floors reflect the studio lights. Programmes include; game shows, panel shows, music events, talent elimination formats and talk shows.

Factual

Television that documents actual events and real people. Some programmes are presented by known TV personalities, journalists or professional experts. Types of programmes include; cooking, current affairs, docudrama, genealogy, natural history, observational and fixed rig documentary and survivalist.

Factual Entertainment

Television documenting real events and people with a stronger entertainment element than serious factual programmes. Often hosted by TV personalities, programmes include celebrity or expert led experience like travelogues, dating and makeover formats, daytime magazine shows and reality.

News

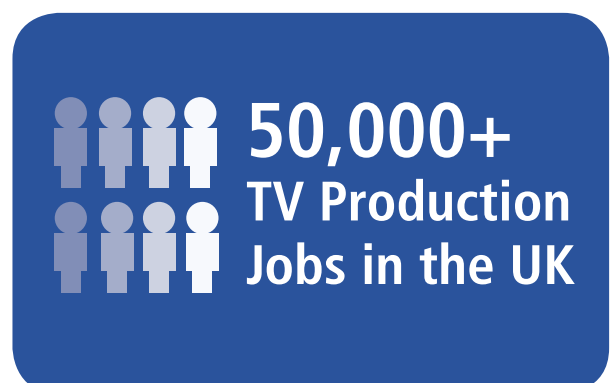
News from around the world is packaged into short bulletins through the day, with longer programmes at lunchtime and in the evening. The news is presented by a trained journalist, who will usually write their own scripts with help from a small production team. News is collated from agency reports, video from external sources, live reports "in the field" and pre-recorded interviews. There is often a guest who can comment on a story.

Sports

Often technically complex (especially if broadcast live!) television coverage of sporting events, or analysis programmes discussing the sports action. It's heavy on action replays, graphics and unscripted chat and there are many opportunities for travel.

Why Choose A Career In Non-Scripted Television?

Careers behind the camera can be exciting, stimulating, surprising and rewarding with real 'money can't buy' experiences. It could be discovering the next superstar, meeting world leaders, observing pioneering surgery or having the best seats in the house at sporting events. You'll work with incredible talent, make friends for life and develop a range of soft skills to help you succeed in your chosen career.



Routes In

Many senior professionals will tell you they just 'fell into it' and every person will have a different story about how they got started in TV, but these days you can be a bit more strategic. It's not essential to go to university or film school but most craft and technical TV careers will benefit from starting with skills-based qualifications, then on-the-job experience. Once you're working, ongoing training in new techniques and technology is pretty essential to keep up with industry developments. After a while, you can choose to become a guru in particular skills, technology and genres.

The Vocational Training Route

Some broadcasters, independent production companies, specialist facilities and equipment hire companies offer internships and graduate programmes in craft and technical roles, but there are fewer than in editorial or production management areas - competition is fierce!

Annual recruitment involves intensive application forms, assessments and interviews. On the upside, training can lead to long contracts at companies where you learn on the job and sometimes they will pay for additional courses for you. Keep tabs on company websites and social accounts to be alerted to opportunities.

The Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships combine working with on-the-job training. In technical roles, like engineering, this may be combined with an industry relevant degree. Find these official apprenticeships directly from company websites and social media.

The University Route

University courses are a great way to learn skills and progress your personal development, particularly for craft and technical careers. It's a good idea to find a course that has great relationships with professionals and access to equipment and software used by industry. It's important to recognise that a degree is not a golden ticket into a job and everyone has to start at the bottom. Some courses have been awarded the Creative Skillset Tick, a quality mark that ensures strong industry links. You can learn more at www.creativeskillset.org

Entry Level Jobs

While not very glamorous, these jobs are essential to the smooth running of a production. These jobs have a low level of responsibility but are the perfect way for new entrants to make a good impression and learn more about their chosen field. Every new entrant will start in an entry level role, including graduates. Specialist equipment hire companies and service suppliers offer entry level jobs and some graduate programmes. This could be in hires of audio, cameras, outside broadcast facilities, lighting and staging or makers of costumes, props and sets.

Common first job tasks could start with delivery driving and maintenance of specialist kit, taking reference photographs and notes, running errands and checking supplies.

In craft roles, there may also be opportunities to work with a senior professional, like a Camera Supervisor or Sound Recordist, who will train you on-the-job, as you assist them. You could be setting up and operating equipment, running errands, packing and tidying up. You'll need to approach individual professionals directly and ask if they have any openings.

Employment Prospects

Many craft and technical roles in television are freelance because work is project based. Depending on the size of the production, you may work for as little as a day or for months at a time. While working you will have to find your next job. Experienced professionals sometimes choose to join diary services or employ an agent to manage their work schedule. Every job will be different, although you'll often bump into past colleagues so don't burn any bridges! Permanent staff roles tend to be attached to facilities like studios or equipment hire and technical service companies. Places of work can include arenas, locations and studios. Most roles have a mixture of many. Work can involve a lot of travelling and being away from home for long periods.

Inclusivity

The television industry is committed to building an inclusive and culturally diverse workforce, welcoming talent regardless of age, disability, ethnic or socio-economic background, gender, religion or sexual orientation.

Pay

Craft and technical freelance pay is usually negotiated on daily rates, based on the length of the shooting day. The rates are high to compensate for potential periods without work. Entry level pay, per day, can range from UK minimum wage (NMW) to London Living Wage (LLW) with senior gurus earning close to £700 per day. Yes, really! Staff jobs will pay lower rates in comparison but are a fixed annual income.

Getting Jobs

Starting out, you'll need to identify and connect with senior professionals who can employ or recommend you to their contacts. Watching the credits at the end of a programme, reading the trade press and following social media accounts, will help you to identify them. Politely ask if you can shadow them at work, so they can meet you in person and you can see if their role is the right career path for you – you never know, they may even offer you a job if you impress.

It's essential to build a wide range of clients to ensure you always have income, so if you have one, don't give up your student job just yet - you'll need flexible, short term work while you build your professional experience and client base.

Hours of Work

Working days are usually scheduled for 8, 10 or 12 hours but there can be travel too, requiring early starts and late finishes. It's rarely a Monday to Friday job or even a five day week job, so expect to work weekends regularly. On the plus side, you can have days off in the middle of the week! If you need workplace stability and set hours, this is probably not the industry for you!

Networking

TV relies on personal introductions and recommendations. Don't believe the old saying that *'it's all about who you know'* - it's usually more about *'who knows you'*. You need to meet new people all the time but also introduce people to each other and they will do the same for you. Increase your connections by going to industry events, do some skills training, create your own content, join official organisations and Guilds and reconnect with former colleagues. Update your social platforms and let people know when you are available to hire.



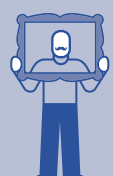
Floor



RIGGER



STAGE HAND



PROPS MASTER



STAGE MANAGER



FLOOR MANAGER



ASSISTANT FLOOR MANAGER

Studio Management



STUDIO MANAGER



STUDIO COORDINATOR



STUDIO RUNNER

Engineering



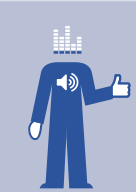
VISION MIXER



VISION GUARANTEE



VISION SUPERVISOR



SOUND GUARANTEE



VISION ENGINEER



SOUND ASSISTANT

Studio Technicians most often work on entertainment programmes in studios or outside broadcast (OB) locations. Some operate the technology or the physical set. Others direct the action required of performers and crew. Some roles are booked by the Production Manager (see the Editorial and Production roles map), some by the Production Designer and others by the Studio Manager. Many only work on a production on shoot days.

FLOOR



Riggers make the physical connection between lighting, scenic, sound equipment and the studio roof. Working to the scenic or lighting designer's plans and often at height, they suspend the equipment safely using cables or other equipment, ensuring both the roof and equipment can support the weight. They may also advise and implement the best cable routes for accessibility and Health and Safety. NVQ level assessment is common but additional specialist experience is required. Work is found via rigging equipment companies.



Stagehands* are on-hand for set construction. They need to follow the production designer's plans and connect elements of the set and staging like walls, doors, seated areas, scenery both on the studio floor and hanging from the rig. The job involves heavy lifting, working safely with materials and electrics and sometimes light construction. Work is often via event crew agencies. * AKA **Scenehand**



Floor Managers work on the studio floor and make sure everyone knows what they are doing and when to do it. They are the Director's eyes and ears for everything that can't be seen through the camera lens. It's key to have a good rapport with the key presenters. They relay instructions from the team in the gallery to the on-screen talent and floor crew, ensuring props are moved on and off the studio floor on time. They supervise rehearsals, health & safety regulations and audience participation. On large productions they may lead a team. You need to be a good communicator, with top skills in listening, multitasking, observing and time management. As you are on your feet all day, you'll need to be fit.



Assistant Floor Managers relay cues and chaperone performers between dressing rooms, green rooms, makeup, wardrobe and the studio floor. It's competitive to get onto a Floor Managers team of trusted assistants. You'll need to be active and fit! This role may also be filled by Floor Runners who work in the production office as Production or Office Runners between studio filming days. On some long-running programmes, Floor Runners may only work on the production on studio days.



Props Masters work purely for the Art Department, usually only on big entertainment programmes with many props. They manage the supply of items, working closely with the Art Director and Stage Manager. This can include supervising unloading of deliveries and checking all items are present. They need to have a good eye for detail and good organisation skills.



Stage Managers act as a go-between for the Art Department and Floor Manager. They prepare and position props as instructed, telling performers how to use them safely and returning them to suppliers. They may also take photographs for continuity. They need to respond quickly to changes and always have a backup plan. On smaller productions this role may be done by the Art Director.

STUDIO MANAGEMENT



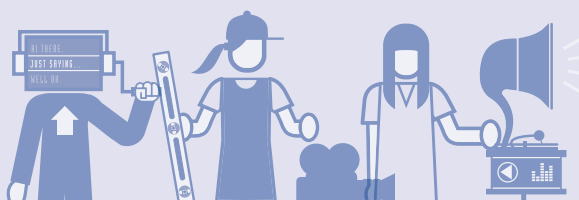
Studio Managers* run the TV studio facility. Reporting to a senior management board, they are responsible for making the studio profitable. They will be aware of changes in working regulations, oversee health and safety, manage a team of staff and specially skilled freelancers and bring in clients. You need to have a good affinity for all departments and be able to communicate effectively with clients and staff. * AKA **Resource Managers**



Studio Coordinators support the Studio Manager with admin and logistics tasks like booking freelance technicians, looking after clients hiring the studio and managing studio runners. They don't work directly on productions but ensure that recording or broadcast runs smoothly.



Studio Runners support the Studio Manager and Coordinator with whatever low-skilled task is required. Often part of a pool of entry level people keen to work in a craft or technical department, tasks include; general errands, looking after clients and assisting on the studio floor. It's also possible to move into editorial or production management roles.



ENGINEERING



Vision Mixers manipulate different images to make a visually exciting programme. This role is required for multi-camera style formats like entertainment, news and sports. Following the Director's prepared script, they

cut or mix different camera shots on the mixer desk, while listening to the Director's instructions and Script Supervisor's countdown to the next item and setting up transitions. As the Director's second pair of eyes in the gallery, they can see camera shots, VT inserts, EVS replays, graphics, subtitles and still images and make them all fit together seamlessly.



Vision Guarantees oversee the technical equipment in a studio or OB vehicle. They manage images from the cameras and playback sources, through the studio gallery equipment and onto the hard drive for future

editing or out to live satellite broadcast systems. They can be responsible for preparing all equipment for vision, sound and lighting. They need specialist knowledge of software and broadcast equipment, IT and system maintenance. They must be good at troubleshooting under pressure, keeping up with technology and communications. AKA Technical Manager in a studio environment.



Vision Supervisors work directly to the Lighting Director but may work for the studio, OB facility or be booked directly by production management. They are responsible for the overall look of the show in terms of exposure and saturation (known as "racking") and ensure that all pictures from the cameras match in a multi-camera environment. On big jobs they may also manage additional Vision Engineers.



Vision Engineers rig external equipment on an OB shoot, e.g. monitors and fibre equipment. They work closely with the Vision Guarantee on shoot days, to make sure that everything inside and outside the truck is working correctly. Working to the Vision Supervisor, they may also "rack" up to five cameras to make sure all the pictures match in exposure and saturation.



Sound Guarantees have similar levels of responsibility as the Sound Supervisor but rarely for programme audio. They plan and build the audio technical facilities and operational systems, troubleshooting any issues as they arise. Work is usually via the studio or OB company and they must know how the equipment, cabling and workflow operates. *AKA **System Engineers / Audio Engineers**



Sound Assistants* despite the title, are not always junior in experience. They are the eyes and ears of the Sound Supervisor. They are responsible for setting up sound equipment, communication and public address systems and microphones. They are specialists in hiding radio microphones in clothes or hair! It's essential to be confident and have excellent communication skills. *AKA **Sound Floor Operator** on entertainment programmes.

LOOKING FOR RESOURCES OR FURTHER ADVICE?

You can find lots of information and resources about careers in screen industries online. Start with these sites and check their social media for more.

BAFTA	guru.bafta.org
BBC Academy	bbc.co.uk/academy
BFI	bfi.org.uk/education-research
Creative Skillset	creativeskillset.org/tv
Hiive	hiive.co.uk/careers
Royal Television Society	rts.org.uk/education-training



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